



SCHOOLWIDE BOOK REVIEW

***More Stories Julian Tells* by Ann Cameron**

Yearling, ISBN 0394824547

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More Stories Julian Tells is the sequel to Ann Cameron's well-received book *The Stories Julian Tells*. Interestingly, Cameron's narrator for these tales, Julian, is based on an actual friend of hers by that name. He told her some stories from his life, and they inspired her to create a character who shared some of the real-life Julian's qualities, but the fictional Julian has become his own person, so to speak; someone to whom *all* students can relate.

For example, this five-story book begins with a common theme to which all students can relate: being bored. In "A Day When Frogs Wear Shoes," Julian, his younger brother Huey, and his best friend Gloria cannot find anything to do. They decide to go visit Julian's dad who owns a car repair shop. Julian's father tells the kids that on hot days like this, frogs wear shoes, so the children scamper off to find evidence! At the river bank, they see that the frogs do not have on shoes. They go back to report the news to Julian's father and discover that inside their own shoes are frogs! Frogs do, in fact, wear shoes sometimes!



Each of the other stories offers tales of the trio's further adventures and reveals their wondrous discoveries, as in "A Curve in the Water" where readers learn, along with the children, that if you want to send a message in a bottle, you need to be careful about where you place the bottle in the water. Cameron is especially adept at capturing the way children really talk to each other—a revealing realism with a sense of humor that you and your students will appreciate and enjoy. You'll also share a laugh or two as you listen in on the friends' conversations, such as this one between Julian and Gloria from "The Bet."

"Bet I can jump farther than you," I said.

"Bet you can't," Gloria said.

We made a starting line on the ground and did broad jumps.

"I win!" I said.

"But not by much," Gloria said. "Anyway, I jumped higher."

And so the conversation goes until Gloria tells Julian she can do the impossible: make the sun move. And she does.

In the Classroom

In addition to being a fun read, this book is a versatile text for use in your classroom! You can use this text as a springboard for your writing instruction by helping students see how writers tell stories from their lives. You might allow your students time to think of a time with friends or family when they had an adventure or shared a laugh. Have them recreate dialogue or describe the personalities of the people involved. To generate ideas for their own topics, students can orally describe some stories from their own lives. You might have them focus on a smaller aspect of the story to test comprehension. For example, a student could explain how it was possible for Gloria to know how to use mirrors to move the sun. Have the class create their own note, place it in a bottle, and discuss orally where in the sea they should place it. Consider using the text to teach other concepts as well, such as:

- Punctuating dialogue;
- Creating character's voices and using dialogue that seems "real";
- Creating a table of contents and chapter titles.

Look for this book used in **Testing Fundamentals** program in the grade 3 unit!