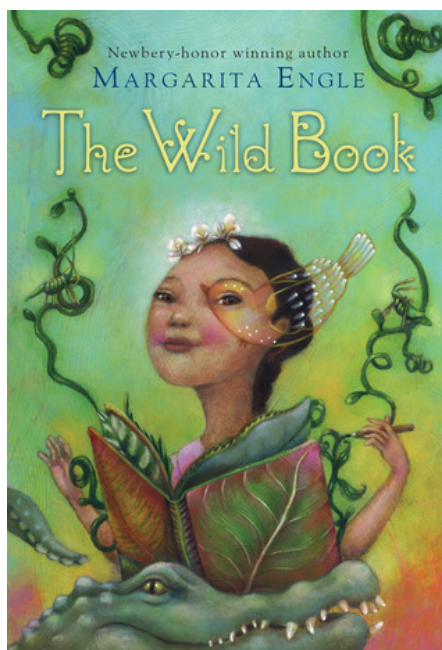




The Wild Book

Margarita Engle

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Fefa struggles with words. She has word blindness, or dyslexia, and the doctor says she will never read or write. Every time she tries, the letters jumble and spill off the page, leaping and hopping away like bullfrogs. How will she ever understand them? But her mother has an idea. She gives Fefa a blank book filled with clean white pages. "Think of it as a garden," she says. Soon Fefa starts to sprinkle words across the pages of her wild book. She lets her words sprout like seedlings, shaky at first, then growing stronger and surer with each new day. And when her family is threatened, it is what Fefa has learned from her wild book that saves them.

The Wild Book Details

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Author : Margarita Engle

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From Reader Review The Wild Book for online ebook

Carol says

This book is about the author's grandmother who grew up in Cuba in 1912. She has dyslexia and tries to get her words out with poems and uses this to tell her story. I really like the idea of this book and the subject matter but to be honest I got kind of bored about half way through and lost interest. Finally I got tired of seeing it on my shelf so I decided to finish it. Not sure who I would recommend it too? It was okay, I'd give it 2 1/2 stars if we could give 1/2 stars.

Kristie says

I LOVED this book! It belongs in every child's home and every teacher's library. Here's my detailed review: <https://bookreviewsbykristie.wordpress...>

Adela Bezemer-Cleverley says

This was a sweet book. The writing is not particularly brilliant or beautiful, but the story is interesting and told well, a fascinating glimpse of childhood in Cuba in somewhat recent history. Plus the story would be great for children with dyslexia because the main character is dyslexic and the story is written as if she is writing it, in short, simple verses that are less daunting than traditionally narrative formats for anyone who has trouble reading.

Amber says

Read for: quick juve fiction, girlhood, life in Cuba, word-blindness/dyslexia, prose

Really sweet and lovely, but not super substantial. I wanted more poetry, and the plot point at the end felt thrown in. I think it just needed a bit more work. Still, you don't get to read much regarding Cuba. I just found this author but I'm really looking forward to what she is doing.

Joy Kirr says

1912 - From Trinidad, Cuba, Fefa struggles with words. Through this beautiful quick book, she begins to see beauty and patterns as she heads into her 12th year. I'm so glad a student turned me on to this author.

Christy says

Fefa struggles with words. She has word blindness, or dyslexia, and the doctor says she will never read or write. Every time she tries, the letters jumble and spill off the page, leaping and hopping away like bullfrogs.

How will she ever understand them? But her mother has an idea. She gives Fefa a blank book filled with clean white pages. "Think of it as a garden," she says. Soon Fefa starts to sprinkle words across the pages of her wild book. She lets her words sprout like seedlings, shaky at first, then growing stronger and surer with each new day. And when her family is threatened, it is what Fefa has learned from her wild book that saves them.

Cindy Dobrez says

I love Engle's verse novels of Cuban history and this one is based on her grandmother's experience growing up with "word blindness" or dyslexia as we know it today. A blank book, a gift from her mother, helps the girl have a place to explore language. A wild book. My sixth grade girls keep raving about this at our book club so I had to get to it. They are right. It is lovely.

Laura says

Excerpts:

FLY TO THE TRUTH OF DREAMS
After my mother finishes her seascape,
one of my uncles recites
a long poem about the sky,
where sun spirits
ride glowing chariots,
and there is someone
who knows how to fly
toward the truth
of dreams...

I don't understand
the whole thrilling verse,
but I love the way poetry
turns ordinary words
into winged things
that rise up
and soar!

DISCOVERING MY VOICE
The parrot on the roof
wails and shrieks, copying
Mamá's desperate prayers
as she begs for a miracle
of healing.

Tear-streaked and silent,
I feel so useless, so helpless-
until an imaginary wild book
opens up, inside my mind.

Quietly, I begin picturing letters,
syllables, and invisible wings,
sending a trail of bird-words
soaring toward heaven.

My silent voice feels
powerful and LOUD.

Donalyn says

Fefa cannot read because she suffers from "word-blindness" or dyslexia. Her mother gives her a blank book to write her own words. Scrawling her wild words into the book gives Fefa growing confidence and provides her insight that saves her family at a crucial moment.

Based on Engle's grandmother's childhood experiences growing up during the chaos after Cuba's fight for independence from Spain.

This novel in verse contains so many wonderful images. One of my favorites:

Storytelling

No one in my family
ever throws anything away.
not even an old story
that can be told and retold

Heather says

Review of an advance copy:

This book, featuring Margarita Engle's lovely free-verse, is based on the life of Ms. Engle's grandmother. 11-year-old Fefa (Josefa) has dyslexia. The local doctor calls it "word blindness" and suggests that Fefa will never be able to read or write. Fortunately, Mamá has faith in her daughter and insists on patience and perseverance. And, despite the teasing from her siblings and the doctor's harsh verdict, Fefa also has an indomitable spirit. Her persistence begins to pay off as reading becomes less of a challenge, and Fefa's careful studying of words even leads her to save her family from the threat of a bandit. I enjoyed Fefa's voice and her story and her portrayal of family life. This is one of Margarita Engle's strongest books yet.

Alexandra says

Funnily enough, I struggle with reading verse-novels, but it didn't take long for me to be drawn into Fefa's

story. The setting is beautifully shared and learning more about the characters as Fefa's strength and confidence in her own writing grew was great.

Hlluce30 says

A book, written in verse, talking about the struggle a young girl with dyslexia faces with words each day. Each page is another entry in her book that shows the progression of her struggle. I am excited to share this book with my middle school readers to give them a unique perspective on dyslexia set in the backdrop of Cuba.

Gina says

"The doctor's tired voice
no longer sounds like a hiss.

Perhaps my way of hearing
has somehow
changed."

Fefa is diagnosed with word blindness (dyslexia) and the doctor says she will never read or write. In a family and community that composes poems as gifts and celebrates holidays with poetry contests, that disconnect is catastrophic. But Fefa's mother gives her a book of blank pages, where the words can grow wild, and slowly, s-l-o-w-l-y, the words began to come together.'

Based on the true story of the author's grandmother, this story in poem form is beautiful and hopeful.

Ariana says

I think this is such a cool book for many reasons:

The main character, Fefa, struggles with dyslexia (the book uses the term from the time, word-blindness) and is also a hero. The book offers an interesting glimpse into how people lived with dyslexia in times where there was less understanding of the disability and fewer resources available.

The book takes place in 1912, during Cuba's first years of independence from Spain. It depicts some of the chaos and lawlessness of the time. I don't know much about this time period in Cuba, so I enjoyed reading about it.

This book is also a love letter to poetry and the oral tradition. It is written in non-rhyming verse, with each poem functioning as a different "chapter". Fefa enjoys adivinanzas (riddles) and shares them in the book. Her mom is a fan of poetry who names two of her sons "Rubén" and "Darío", and several of the characters participate in a poetry-reciting contest. It brought back memories of my own Cuban grandparents sharing poetry with me.

DD1 enjoyed this book as well!

Kris says

This book is a beautifully written free verse novel, and I felt like I had a better grasp on the struggle people with dyslexia have after I read it. I also learned about the situation in Cuba in the early 1900s, which I was completely unaware of before. I gave it four stars instead of five because I don't know that the format and lyricism will be as appealing to the young age of the readers it is geared toward as it is for me as an adult.
