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Midge and Mo

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Editor's Choice:

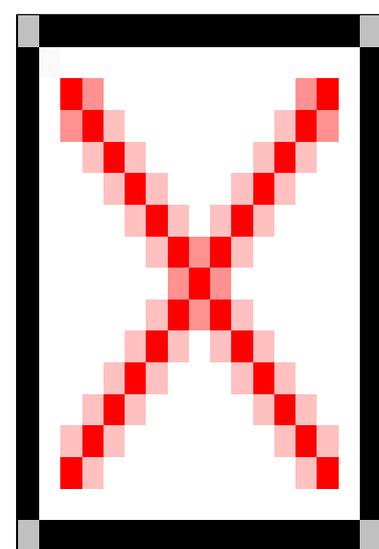
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4



[4]

We first meet Midge, a small pale, frightened boy peering up at the entrance to his new school. It is his first day in his new surroundings and he is struggling to cope with the unfamiliarity of the situation. We learn his parents have recently separated and that it is more than just starting a new school that is causing Midge great sadness. Everything has changed for Midge and he wants everything to go back to the way things were.

?'If I was on a bike, I'd make it go backwards not forwards,?' he thinks to himself. ?'If I could, I'd walk backwards too.?'

His new teacher pairs him with Mo, a friendly, positive and animated character to help show him around the school and keep him company. Mo is determined to cheer Midge up but it seems the harder she tries the more distant and sad Midge becomes, as though her attempts to cheer only serve to remind him of happier times. Mo begins to despair that she cannot help Midge and seeks advice from her teacher and her parents. We discover that Midge and Mo have more in common than it first appears and begins to draw on her own experiences to support her new friend. Mo helps her friend to understand that feeling sad is okay and slowly and patiently, through kindness and understanding, waits for the cloud of sadness to lift.

The wonderful illustrations by Becky Cameron add depth, beautifully reflecting the feelings of the main characters. Williamson has triumphed in capturing the sense of fear, confusion and anxiety that change can cause to children. Most importantly, both author and illustrator have also perfectly portrayed the beauty and healing power of friendship and understanding, thus helping to build empathy in young readers. **KF**

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