

Because of Mr. Terupt

Rob Buyea

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School- a place that some love, some tolerate, and others simply cannot stand being in. A crucial component of the academic experience is teachers. We have all had teachers that we felt could use some improvement. In addition, we've all had teachers who are great at their work and whom we feel a connection towards. *Because of Mr. Terupt*, a novel written by Rob Buyea, surrounds a teacher who has a special impact on his students.

Because of Mr. Terupt is written from the viewpoint of seven fifth graders, all students of Mr. Terupt. Each student possesses unique characteristics and is influenced by Mr. Terupt in a different way. The seven narrators in the novel are Luke, Peter, Jessica, Danielle, Anna, Jeffrey and Alexia. A number of these characters come from complicated households, which adds a mature tone to the book, but also furthers the message that a teacher can influence a student far beyond the classroom. The students all realize that Mr. Terupt is different from any teacher they have ever had. He does not treat them like little children. He puts responsibilities on them and believes they can be the best version of themselves if they try hard enough. Furthermore, he teaches them in an active, engaging style which pushes them to interact with one another. He awards them for good behavior, which is actually the cause of the pending accident in the novel. What makes Mr. Terupt so special is that he possesses the quality that all students look for in a teacher- he cares.

The most special part of *Because of Mr. Terupt* is how relatable it is. In the novel, we are introduced to 7 distinct characters. We see Peter, a boy who has difficulty staying out of trouble and has a knack to fool around. We see Jessica, the new girl who just moved from California and loves reading. We see Jeffrey, a boy who has a deep resentment for school and a difficult life at home. Rather than simply finding yourself in one of the seven characters, you may find a little piece of yourself in all seven of them. Rob Buyea does a spectacular job at leading readers to the impending accident that occurs in the novel. As the novel leads up to this climatic point, the narrators say phrases that express guilt or regret of what awaits their favorite teacher.

There is truly only one critique I have for this novel. Personally, I feel that the scene towards the end of the novel where the students learn about the fate of their teacher could have been crafted with more creativity and detail. Considering the length of time readers spent waiting for this news, the scene felt somewhat rushed and not very climatic. However, this does not take away from the amazing message and story this novel conveys; it is simply one little opinion of mine about this beautiful story.

I believe that this book would be best suited for readers ages 9-12. I would say that this is a book that could be picked up from the library. After reading *Because of Mr. Terupt*, I would

recommend three more novels written by Rob Buyea: *Mr. Terupt falls Again*, *Saving Mr. Terupt* and *The Perfect Score*.