

The Secret Language of Girls

Frances O’Roark Dowell

Reviewed by: Elisabeth Suarez, 14

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11-year-old Kate and Marylin are best friends. They are basically inseparable, hanging out since nursery school. Kate doesn’t care about what others think and loves basketball. Marylin wants to fit in and hang with the popular girls at school. The two girls start to grow apart as Flannery, a seventh grader with a narcissistic personality and a rude attitude, moves in their neighborhood. Flannery takes Marylin under her wing while Kate is left out feeling sad. Suddenly, Marylin is worrying about boys, cheerleading, and being invited to parties, while Kate is only worried about their friendship. Is Marylin being snobby or is Kate just not grown up?

I found this book to be very sweet and heartwarming! *The Secret Language of Girls* is recommended for 8-11-year-old girls, particularly those just going into middle school. It gives them the message of not being so caught up in popularity and to not care about others’ opinions of you. Cherish your friends that have your back and have been there for you when you needed them the most.

Middle school and growing up can have a big impact on young girls’ friendships. This could be the time where a girl might grow apart from her closest friends from elementary school, and that is perfectly ok! This book does a good job of reminding young girls to find their own interests, while staying in touch with the ones who have been kind to you.

The book also deals with peer pressure. The idea of being popular and fitting in is a big theme that is portrayed really well in this book. Marylin is heavily influenced by others to have her first kiss, dress, and act a certain way. In the end, the story all unfolds in a pleasant way and I think this book is a great read!

Recommended Books:

Lucky Luna, Diana Lopez

Jelly Bean Summer, Joyce Magnin

Fish in a Tree, Lynda Mullaly Hunt