

**STAR TEEN BOOK REVIEWERS: 2024 Update**

**Welcome to the STAR TEEN BOOK REVIEW TEAM. If you enjoy reading and writing, this is a wonderful volunteer opportunity for you.**

**IMPORTANT GUIDELINES:**

Please follow the guidelines below very carefully. All approved book reviews will be published on various web sites, including our Express Yourself creative site. (<http://www.BTSYA.com>)

**People to know:**

1. Cynthia Brian is Executive Director: Email cynthia@star-style.com

2. Be the Star You Are! Charity email: be\_the\_star\_you\_are@yahoo.com

3. Book Review Coordinator for Book Reviews at Express Yourself is Stephanie Cogeos at WP-D-Cogeos@comcast.net or cogosteph@gmail.com

**Community Service Hours:** Each book review equals THREE (3) hours of community service hours for school or other requirements. Please wait until you have 15-20 hours-worth of service before sending us a form or request for service confirmation. You must send us a LIST of your book reviews and if there are forms to be filled out, YOU fill out the dates worked and then you can email us your form via WORD attachment. NO GOOGLE DOCS. We cannot open them. We will then sign and return to you. If you need to send by mail, send your completed form to our attention at **PO Box 376, Moraga, Ca. 94556** with a SASE so that we can return the form to you promptly. If you need your form signed in person, we ALWAYS need a week’s notice to schedule an appointment. Everyone is a volunteer and the office is not staffed every day.

**Reading and Writing the Review:**

**A sample of a great 3 paragraph book review is pasted at the end of this document. Follow the format.**

**Also, read what a book reviewer said about this program.**

**READING THE BOOK:**

**Our BTSYA guidelines supersede any rules or guidelines from our partners. We give credit for all books with approved written reviews for all ages.**

a. You may choose any book you wish. DO try to avoid reviewing a book that has been reviewed many times already – we want to expand our review base.

b. Please don’t review best sellers or stuff that has been made into movies as the goal is to connect kids and families with books they might not otherwise consider.

c. Check out the hard copy books at the library or if your local library has an audio or Ebook download section, feel free to use that. These systems allow library card holders to borrow a book, read it on their own computer for a designated amount of time, then the book disappears like the due date on a book.

d. You may read any book you wish. Please do check out our book review site at [www.BTSYA.org](http://www.BTSYA.org) under Book Reviews to see if the book you want to review has already been reviewed.

NOTE: We are not looking for book reviews from Shakespeare, Austin, Bronte, Dickens, Hemingway, or books required in schools. These will not be accepted. Book reviews MUST be from current popular books.

We do publish books for ALL AGES!.

**WRITING THE REVIEW:**

1.Font to be Times New Roman, Size 12

2. Each review must have the following at the top of your page in **BOLD:**

**Book Title**

**Book Author**

**Reviewed by: Your Name, Age**

**Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity**

**www.bethestaryouare.org**

3. Double space between the bolded section and the beginning of your review. Your review should be 3-4 paragraphs, **single-spaced**, well written where you will give a short synopsis of the story, write what you liked and what you didn’t like. PLEASE USE THESE GUIDELINES and not the ones at the Google Doc. Let us know what age group you feel this book is most appropriate as a target audience. Would you suggest that a person buy this book as a gift, or is this a book to get from the library? Anything else you want to write about the book is appreciated. Again, your review MUST be a minimum of three -four paragraphs.

4. Check for spelling and grammar. You want to make a great impression.

5. DO NOT copy any material from the flaps, back cover, or anywhere in the book. DO NOT copy or reword someone else’s book review. The publishers notice and your review will be rejected and not eligible for service credits. These reviews are published, making you a published reviewer, so please take pride in your work and in being a member of our select **STAR TEEN BOOK REVIEW TEAM.**

6. Do not use vulgar language in your reviews; make it appropriate for readers of all ages.

7. Write each review in a separate WORD document. Email by attachment your reviews in batches of THREE or more as it is easier for us to upload in groups. Please email each review in a separate WORD attachment as a .DOC or .DOCX with the TITLE of the book (example: Twelve Kinds of Ice.doc) to these THREE email addresses: cynthia@star-style.com , Stephanie Cogeos at WP-D-Cogeos@comcast.net and be\_the\_star\_you\_are@yahoo.com. We will download it, and if appropriate post on our Express Yourself site., <http://www.btsya.com/book_reviews.html>

Keep a list of all your individual reviews.

8. At the end of each review, use a double space, then include a list of 3-5 other titles you would suggest to readers after reading the book you reviewed. Write:

**Recommended Titles:**

Name of book, author

9. For tips on how to be a better writer, visit the Writing Center at <http://www.accreditedcolleges.com/writing-center>/. This site will help you with grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.

10. Be honest.

Acceptable reviews will be published on the web site. at <http://www.BTSYA.com.> You then become a published writer. You can view all published reviews at <http://www.btsya.com/book_reviews.html>.

This is a volunteer project and as such may garner community service credits at your school. If you need a form signed indicating that you participated in this program, we are happy to give you a recommendation. Please send your completed form along with a list of your reviews that you are submitting plus send a SASE to our attention after you have completed and turned in your book reviews. **Three hours of credit** is applied for each book review written. See above for sending us your form or making an appointment for signing.

There is no financial compensation and by joining our **STAR TEEN BOOK REVIEW** **TEAM**, you and your parents, if you are a minor, give Be the Star You Are! and publishers permission to post and publish your reviews and use them as empowerment tools for teachers, parents, and librarians. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Be the Star You Are! Charity, be\_the\_star\_you\_are@yahoo.com .

Once you submit reviews, we will acknowledge receipt and will let you know if any changes need to be made. If there are no changes, your reviews will be uploaded to our Book Reviews at [www.BTSYA.org](http://www.BTSYA.org). It may take a month or more to see your submitted reviews. Everyone working on this project is a volunteer and things take time to do. PLEASE BE PATIENT.

REMEMBER DO NOT SEND US GOOGLE DOCUMENTS of any kind for any reason. Always WORD or PAGES can be attached to emails.

Thank you and congratulations for being chosen for the STAR TEAM!

Keep reaching for the stars and shining brightly.

Cynthia Brian

Founder/Executive Director

Book Review Coordinator Stephanie Cogeos at WP-D-Cogeos@comcast.net or cogosteph@gmail.com

Be the Star You Are! 501 c3 charity, empowering women, families, and youth through improved literacy and positive media

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<http://www.btsya.com>

**Sample Book Review**

**El Deafo**

**By Author, Cece Bell**

**Reviewed by: Anika 17**

**Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity**

[**www.bethestaryouare.org**](http://www.bethestaryouare.org/)

After falling terribly ill at the age of four, Cece finds that her hearing has been impaired. Because of it, Cece’s doctors give her the ultimate Phonic Ear! The device helps her hear better and interact with other people, but it’s super noticeable on her chest and ears. Things weren’t too bad for Cece in her old school. She had been in a class full of people just like her, but it’s different at her new school. Cece feels out of place with her giant Phonic Ear, which seems to repel everyone away from her with all the awkward stares. But surprisingly the Phonic Ear has a lot more perks to it than Cece thought! Cece can hear her teacher anywhere in the school building, almost like a superpower! Calling herself El Deafo, Cece sets off on a journey to find a true friend that will stand by her side.

Cece Bell’s semi-autobiographical novel is one I found truly worthwhile! It helped shine a light and accurately portray the experiences people may have with hearing loss and deafness. The variations in hearing difficulties and coping mechanisms were things I found to be very informative. Cece Bell uses a nice blend of humor and cute adorable illustrations to present her serious experiences growing up deaf, which really helps the reader to easily understand and empathize. This makes for a child friendly novel that allows for  discussion on issues like conflict management, loneliness, fitting in, and self-acceptance. Cece is an all-around likeable character with personality and a growth that all children can take part in to learn from.

El Deafo, for the most part, is a child friendly novel. There aren’t any instances of anything extremely graphic that jump at attention. There is one scene where Cece’s runs into a tree and hurts her eye, but it’s minor. Cece also has a few fantasies about her crush, but they’re all just the musings of a young child. Knowing this, I would recommend this novel for readers of all ages as new perspectives and empathy are vital to the human experience! More specifically, I would suggest this charming graphic novel to anyone 5 or 6 years or older. El Deafo would make a great gift to younger children and fans of graphic memoirs.

**Recommended Titles:**

Drama by Raina Telgemeier

Ghosts by Raina Telgemeier

I Yam a Donkey by Cece Bell

Rabbit and Robot: The Sleepover

Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson

What teen book reviewer, Alisha, says about this volunteer program:

“From this community service opportunity, I chose to volunteer for the organization *Be The Star You Are!*, an organization that strived to change lives inspiring women, families, youth at risk, and many more. The volunteering role that I chose to partake in was a book reviewer. As a member of this role, I was encouraged to write book reviews spreading inspiration amongst my community of readers. There were many things I loved about this activity, I had no limitations on what sort of book I wanted to review, and I was able to indulge in my personal hobby while also giving back to my community.

Participating in this activity allowed me to learn about the transformative potential that comes from books. Writing reviews gave me the opportunity to share and express my thoughts and feelings about books that I adored. Additionally, this opportunity taught me the importance of empathy, connection, and reflection, as I myself was able to feel inspired all over again, as I thought and reflected upon books that have left an impactful mark on me, as I strove to offer reviews that I believe would resonate with readers’ experiences and emotions. My time as a book reviewer with Be the Star You Are! is not over yet, as I will continue doing book reviews as my own personal interest, but has already been a fulfilling journey of self-discovery, and I hope to bring back a similar sense of fulfillment in other readers.”