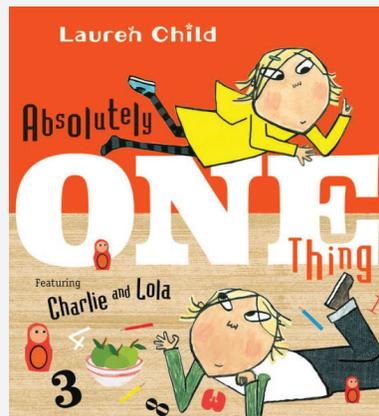


Second Reaction: Learning About Sharing and Counting with *Absolutely One Thing*

Child, Lauren. *Absolutely One Thing*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2015. Print.

Julie Brown Krause



Absolutely One Thing, written and illustrated by Lauren Child, is based on siblings Charlie and Lola and the ONE thing that they can each pick from the store. Lola, the younger, witty sister, tries her hardest to trick both her mother and brother into buying her more than one thing. Charlie's patience is tested over and over again as Lola manipulates many situations in order to get the most out of her ONE thing. He helps her along the way as she learns to count through a variety of unique and comical situations. The book is filled with number sentences, which helps readers imagine just where Lola's and Charlie's minds are going, especially related to mathematics. The text uses bold print, vibrant colors, and lively images to keep us entertained as we read all about Lola's VERY long journey to the store and her misadventures in counting. Lauren Child adds a touch of humor to everyday life and learning of mathematics skills as she tells the tale of Charlie and Lola and how Charlie helps his little sister with mathematics. There are instances when Lola either miscounts or says words incorrectly, which gives students opportunities to correct her and invites teachers to talk through what Lola did. There was a big mathematics theme in this book with concepts around counting both forward and backward, time, division, multiplication, and place value. The illustrations are full of numbers, and many pages offer places to engage learners with mathematics.

I shared this book with my kindergarten students, many of whom are English language learners. My students are not always familiar with many of the topics I teach; however, my students found this book easy to relate to. Many of my students have younger siblings and found the interaction between Charlie and Lola comical. Charlie is constantly getting annoyed with Lola, who takes more time than Charlie would like when getting ready to go to the store and when at the store. Most of my students could relate to having a younger sibling who asks for toys relentlessly and annoys their parents while at the store.

It was a cute story filled with great illustrations and relatable characters with a large focus on counting. I am a reading teacher and do not do much with numbers, so it was a unique situation for me to hear how my students interacted with a counting text. As I am the reading specialist, I pull small groups of students to work on their reading skills. I read the story aloud to my students, who loved chiming in on the repetitive sentences and the counting of numbers. They had the opportunity to count forward and backward in the story. They all attempted to follow the number patterns even though many were silly and nonsensical, as Lola often counted incorrectly and Charlie had to help her. Many of my kindergarten students felt as though this text had to do with sharing. If I was to use this text again as a read aloud, I would include a follow-up lesson on sharing with others. This would support their understanding of division as fair sharing and support early learning of how to partition numbers.

Even though my main subject is not mathematics, I enjoyed sharing this story with my young readers and felt as though they engaged well with the text. My students also loved sharing stories about their silly younger siblings, and I was able to gain a better understanding of my students' lives outside of school. Many of my students loved how outrageous and annoying Lola was about wanting the MOST of everything while ultimately being happy with just ONE thing.

About the Author

Julie Brown Krause is currently a Literacy Specialist at the International School #45 in Buffalo, New York. She has spent the last fourteen years working with refugees who have resettled in Buffalo and have been placed at the International School. She enjoys reading, traveling, and spending time with her two dogs.