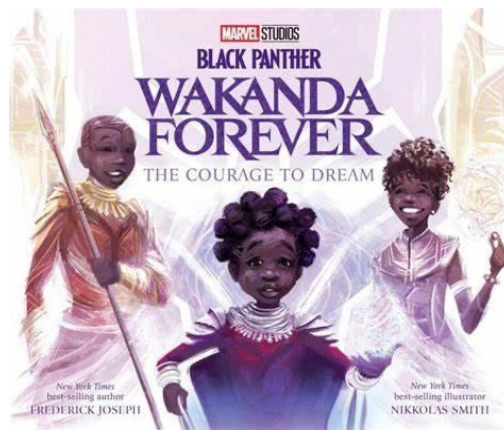


First opinion: Wakanda Forever: The Courage To Dream

Frederick, Joseph and Smith, Nikkolas. *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever: The Courage to Dream*. Marvel, 2022.

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Federick Joseph's *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever - The Courage to Dream* is a heartwarming, inspiring, and visually captivating story that resonates with readers of all ages. The main character, Assata's journey serves as a powerful reminder that everyone, regardless of their physical abilities, has the potential to achieve their dreams through courage, confidence and hard-work. Everything about this book is well-developed, from the storyline, illustration to character, all of these elements provided students a chance to discuss the topics of inclusion, courage and dream. Federick takes the readers into the Black Panther movie world. Since many kids have watched the movie, the background and illustration of the story could help students to be more engaged while read-aloud. The theme of inclusion, courage and dream is beautifully woven throughout the narrative.

The book's illustration is one of my favorite parts of this picture book. The book was illustrated by Nikkolas Smith. He added another layer of depth and vividness to the narrative. The color of the illustration and how he uses the stroke to abstract yet detailed depict this picture book. Which not only immerse the readers in the world of Wakanda but also make the story more engaging and relatable.

In this story, Assata was born with a rare disease, which led to her disability. Assata's disability was a hindrance at the beginning of the story, her dream is to join Dora Milaje, which is the team of warriors that protects Wakanda. However, with her disability, she has to turn away from her dream. But she was able to use her intelligence to enroll in Wakanda University at the age of ten. And recruited by Wakanda Design Group, which is the laboratory that creates all of Wakanda's most advanced technologies. After all, Assata still wants to become a Dora Milaje. With everyone's doubt and comments on how it is impossible for her to fight the enemies on the wheelchair, she felt hurt and discouraged. With Lord M'Baku's words of wisdom, Assata decided to follow her heart and asked Okoye to train her. With her own hard-working and people's help, Assata was able to turn the hindrance into a unique characteristic that makes her journey even more inspiring.

Dreams and courage are the central theme of the book. Assata's strong desire to join the Dora Militia becomes the driving force of the story. Inspired by the Black Panther, T'Challa, and other Dora Milaje, stories of bravery and heroism fueled her dream. Assata's unwavering dream sends a powerful message to young readers: The Power of Dreams. Despite Assata's physical

challenges, her determination shows the reader that with perseverance and faith, dreams can come true. It also serves as a reminder that, just like Assata, every individual can overcome challenges and pursue their dreams with unwavering determination.

"Black Panther: Wakanda Forever - The Courage to Dream" is an inspiring and heartfelt story that transports young readers into the world of Wakanda while emphasizing the important themes of inclusivity, courage, and the pursuit of dreams. The book underscores the importance of celebrating differences and embracing diversity within society, just as Wakanda does. This book is a must-read for those seeking a beautifully crafted story that empowers and uplifts while immersing readers in the enchanting world of Wakanda.

About the Author

Xuwei (Sara) Luo is a Ph.D. student at Purdue University's College of Education, with a focus on curriculum studies. Her academic pursuits revolve around teacher education, with a particular emphasis on pre-service teacher education, social justice, and culturally responsive teaching. In addition to her academic studies, Sara is actively involved in various projects. She currently serves as a teaching assistant and co-instructor at the College of Education. She was involved in the LLDC Project (Literacy and Language Development Clinic) and the Purdue Freedom School Project previously. Sara also assists as an editor's assistant for FOSR (First Opinion, Second Reaction).