



The Acorn People

Ron Jones

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This true story of a boy who must overcome prejudice and weakness to treat a group of special needs children with the respect—and love—they deserve “will give your innards a bear hug. . . . You will read this book with a lump in your throat.” (*Lincoln Journal*)

From Ron Jones, a teacher who started the classroom program that inspired the movie *The Wave*, comes a memoir about a life-changing summer.

Ron expected that his time as a counselor at Camp Wiggin would be filled with sunny days spent hiking, swimming, and boating. But when he arrives on day one, his illusions are quickly shattered. He knew that the kids would be “handicapped,” but he didn’t anticipate having to care for children who can barely walk or see or retain the use of their limbs. At first, the severity of the campers’ disabilities seems too much to bear. But everything changes once Ron gets to know his group—kids who call themselves “the Acorn People” because of the acorn necklaces they wear around their necks. The campers teach him that, inside, they are the same as any average kid, and with encouragement, determination, and friendship, nothing is impossible.

“A fantastic and beautiful story.”—*Seattle Times*

“Uncomfortably moving, yet told in surprisingly unsentimental terms. . . . Succinct and tender, it will haunt the reader long after the brief passages have been read.”—*Houston Chronicle*

The Acorn People Details

Date : Published June 11th 1996 by Laurel Leaf (first published January 1st 1976)

ISBN : 9780440227021

Author : Ron Jones

Format : Paperback 89 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Academic, School, Read For School, Childrens, Middle Grade

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From Reader Review The Acorn People for online ebook

A.J. says

This book is written from an able-bodied perspective that comes off as glorifying the able-bodied for dealing with disabled children rather than teaching about differences and acceptance. I feel that the author intentionally exaggerated the physical disabilities of the children to the point that they were grotesque and unreal. The book was short and many passages were vague and nondescript. And many times when a passage commented on some triumph or the children acting "normal," he slams it back down with "Oh, remember, these kids are severely disabled and/or going to die!" The author assumes too much about living with a disability. He paints a picture that all parents of disabled children are tired and unenthusiastic about their kids, that their siblings resent them, and that all conditions are a death sentence. It might be heartwarming and inspiring for able-bodied people, but I would not recommend this to a young reader with a physical disability.

Liz says

"nice" book in that you feel a glimmer of hope and encouragement, but I really did not care for it, and will not use it in my classroom again. On a personal level, the description of what MS is was awful. I recognize that research has come a long way since this book was published, but I dealt with explaining to my students that, just like each of them, not every disability is the same and what MS really entails. (I am not an expert, nor am I a neophyte, I have MS)

Joyce says

A story about a group of young children that find friendship through a necklace of acorns. This camp filled with children who have many differing disabilities and counselors are all in an adventure of a lifetime. Through water aerobics and hiking trails, these children show us that nothing will stop them from achieving their dreams.

I really enjoyed the ups and downs of the book. It was a heart wrenching and warming story that I would recommend, especially to those thinking about special education. It was a great introduction into my special education course and it really helped me appreciate the strength these children have.

Allison Gann says

The book I was reading is called The Acorn People, written by Ron Jones. I did like this book because it was talking about what camp was like back then. I would recommend this book to middle school students because the book has kids and about the age of middle school students.

The book was about some handicapped people and a camp. In spite of Mr. Grumpy, the director of the camp, he didn't want to have fun or do anything. Spider, who has no arms and no legs, he was taught by other adults to learn how to have fun. I like the character Spider because he had no arms and legs and he still tried

his best. Teenagers now should understand to never give up even if things are hard.

Estefani says

The book I read was The Acorn People by Ron Jones it was a good a really good book and a sweet book. what I liked about the book was how happy they all felt and how they weren't judging people the way they were. And how they all felt comfortable and they became friends. I believe that I didn't dislike anything about the book. I believe the people who will enjoy the book would be Junior High and High schools kids, I believed Adults as well. I believe that Elementary age still wouldn't understand the book and there some words that wouldn't be used.

Tommy Weston says

This book was about a camp. The camp was made for specific people. These people were called handicapped. Their handicap was that they were in wheelchairs or mentally handicapped. Mentally handicapped means that their brains aren't developed fully or develop slower than normal. So they go to this camp to have a fun time and to give their parents a well deserved break. When the children arrive at this camp there really isn't any emotion like they aren't sad to leave their parents or happy or mad nothing. Then at the end when it is time for them to leave they feel sad to leave the camp and they feel something about the camp which is a real happy thing for the book. There are little romances in the book crushes and stuff like that. There is good leadership and even bravery, this book was very good and I very much enjoyed reading it and I think you will to. This book was very interesting and caring and thoughtful and if you like books like that well there's one more reason that you will enjoy this book.

Alanisv says

not as interesting as i thought that it was going to be

Emmy Habib says

the acorn people by ron jones is a good book and i enjoyed it alot, this book is about a camp for disabled people. throughout the book they talk about that it doesnt matter what you look like on the outside its how kind you are that really matters.

Luis Munoz says

The Acorn People by Ron Jones is a small and simple book that manages to give an enormous emotional

impact to those who read it. This is done by showing us some of the struggles that people who have special needs face compared to someone who doesn't have special needs, and how they enjoy their life despite their needs. It does this by showing us the perspective of Ron, someone who isn't disabled but volunteers to be a counselor at Camp Wiggin a summer camp for those with special needs. The beginning of the story starts with Ron think his days as a counselor will be full of sunny days spent hiking, swimming, and boating. However over the course of the first day during which the campers arrive he learns that he was perhaps to wishful thinking in how his time at Camp Wiggin would be spent. This is because the campers he and another counselor are in charge of need constant attention and aid do to their disabilities. However over the course of the book Ron comes to realize that the campers he's in charge are more than their disabilities and that on the inside they same as any other kids. I definitely recommend that others read this book as the book isn't too complicated or long and story is interesting.

Michael says

This is a short, simple little book with an enormous emotional impact. It is a book about the meaning of humanity, and how acceptance can bring joy and understanding, and why it is important to cherish each moment.

The author is not a brilliant writer, but they do know how to tell a story, probably from their background as an educator and a camp counselor. However, the simplicity of the writing increases its impact a bit because 1) the story is so compelling, you realize the author just had to get it down on paper, whether it sounded poetic or not, and 2) it feels almost unbearably authentic, like you are right there in the cabin with him taking notes in his diary each night with a flashlight. The book is a little dated in its language (we would probably call "handicapped" children "differently abled", for example), but the themes are intensely relevant today. He does not sanitize his thoughts, he is uncomfortable with the situation and he shares this information, but we are right there with him as his eyes are opened to a whole new way of experiencing the world, and he grows right along with us.

This book is extremely short, just 80 small pages with some sketches (in my original edition anyway, I don't know what the newer ones look like). But that is why I give it 5 stars. It does not include even one more sentence than is necessary to share the story. This is what happened at that camp. This is who was there, and what they were like, and what their dreams were, and how they made a few of those dreams come true. Highly recommended.

Jdavis58 says

I read "The Acorn People" by Ron Jones and I recommend this book for someone who is ten or up. I also would recommend this book for anyone that may need something to cheer them up. I would give this book a five out of five stars.

The book is about handicapped kids at camp. When the kids got to camp they were sad. When they knew they could be just like the other kids that were happy. So they asked if they could climb a mountain.

I think it is great that I can relate to the people in the book in some way because I am in the same boat as them. I also love the fact that the caretakers in this book are taking time to keep these kids feeling like they're

not different, such as climbing a mountain.

One thing that I liked about this book are very caring. Another thing that I liked about this book is their willingness to do things with the kids. One thing that I did not like about this book is that they did not let other kids that were camping hang out with other kids until the very end of the camp.

Gfroeschk25 says

The Acorn People is written by Ron Jones and is about a camp counselor and a group of handicapped boys having adventures in Camp Wiggin. The group consists of the speedster Benny B, the talkative Spider, the quiet and mysterious Thomas Stewart, the shy but ruddy Arid, and the blind but navigating Martin. These boys and reluctant-at-first counselor Ron climb mountains and become kings and pirates and have fun in the camp (and get help from one camp nurse). I recommend on reading this book if you like heartwarming stories with adventure in between.

Glittery Mango (Ealee) says

I had to read this book as an assignment in English class, and this book was so short that I just went ahead and finished it. I'll admit it, I hated the book in the beginning, Ron annoyed me, and I kept rolling my eyes. But in the last parts, it started to get a whole lot better. There was some humor, and this book I get the message and all that, but it didn't relate to me or have as big an emotional impact. The epilogue was beautiful though, that was my favorite part of the book. I thought this book was OKAY, I didn't necessarily dislike it, but it's something I probably wouldn't mind THAT MUCH reading again.

Lxsrbsn9 says

This is a great story for young adults very inspiring

Sanya!! says

It was a good story but didn't wasn't really long enough to grasp it.... and the ending.... really?
