

The Meanest Teacher in the World: A Collection of Miss Flint Stories.

Grades 2-4 / Ages 7-9.

Review by Tanya Boudreau.

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Excerpt of The Meanest Teacher in the World:

One the first day of school, Miss Flint had lined us all up at the back of the room, told us to stand at attention, and handed out numbers on pieces of paper. She glared at us until we were all perfectly still. Then she took the silver whistle, put it in her mouth and gave one shrill blast. We had to scramble to our seats, all numbered on the upper right corner, within five seconds or we got detention. And when Tom Bigelow was caught throwing spit balls at Marileta Kenney, Miss Flint made him wad up a whole piece of paper, stuff it in his mouth, and sit for the rest of the morning in a corner on a high stool she kept there. Tom was a little fat, and he looked kind of like a big chipmunk sitting there.

Haywood Elementary is not your typical elementary school. Inside is a classroom that is "as interesting as an empty freezer." If you walk by the door, you might hear a loud whistle blaring through a student's moan or laugh or the sound of a snapping pencil that has had enough of writing the same line over and over again- sometimes up to five hundred times. Sitting behind the desk at the front of this room is Miss Flint - the meanest teacher in the world - and conveniently, her desk seems to "mysteriously" lose students' possessions. The students in Miss Flint's class are not happy. They have to practically beg to go on school trips like the annual picnic, and no amount of pleading with her will result in a Halloween party or the purchase of a classroom pet. From September until June, the students in Miss Flint's classroom will have to find ways to endure her boring lessons, severe punishments, and crazy beliefs. But students are not the only ones suffering in this book. Miss Flint does too. She'll probably never forget how her students even the score when they feel they have been treated unfairly.

The Meanest Teacher in the World contains seven chapters. Each chapter tells a story about the evil Miss Flint and is illustrated with black and white drawings in a variety of sizes. The full page illustrations are large and clear, but the smaller illustrations located near the middle of the page get lost in the gutter.

Don Sawyer lived in Michigan when he was in grade four. Like the characters in this book, he, too, survived a year with a teacher like Miss Flint. Today, Sawyer lives in British Columbia with his family. Sawyer has been working in West Africa for the past fifteen years teaching and managing development projects. Sawyer, who has written books for adults as well as youth, has written a second book featuring Miss Flint called *Miss Flint Meets the Great Kweskin*.

Miss Flint may have her students' best interests at heart, but her students don't see it that way. With this book, young readers can have fun reading about the capers both in and out of Miss Flint's classroom, and they then breathe a sigh of relief that they don't have such a teacher- or be inspired to tell their own story that will rival a Miss Flint one!

Recommended.

Tanya Boudreau is a librarian at the Cold Lake Public Library in Cold lake, AB.

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