



## **Agate: What Good Is a Moose?**

*Joy Morgan Dey*

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Agate is a moose with low self-esteem. He feels inadequate and plain, like an ugly brown rock, especially when he compares himself to his beautiful friends who are named after birthstones. These friend help Agate to see that just like his namesake, true beauty lies within. Stunning original watercolors, a witty, positive message about self image plus bonus pages with birthstone and agate facts. Perfect for reading aloud.

## **Agate: What Good Is a Moose? Details**

Date : Published April 1st 2007 by Lake Superior Port Cities

ISBN : 9780942235739

Author : Joy Morgan Dey

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Animals

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## **From Reader Review Agate: What Good Is a Moose? for online ebook**

### **Hannah says**

The illustrations in this book are very intriguing and unique. This is a great book that shows students what the importance of word choice looks like in a book. Lexile: 650L DRA level: 36 6+1 Traits: Word Choice

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### **Amanda says**

I just saw this at my local independent bookstore and loved the story and art, so I bought it for my cousin's 3 yr old for Christmas. Bonus, they'd had an event with the author a few months back, so it's signed. Initially, I'd gone in looking for Wonder Bear, but they didn't have it. Maybe it was fate.

Anyway, Agate the moose feels like he's not as impressive as all the other animals (all with precious and semi-precious stone names), but in the end discovers that each has a role. In the back there is a description of each stone. The art looks somewhat like fingerpainting on glass or something, which isn't nearly a good enough description for its beautiful effect. I'll probably read this to my son a time or two before I wrap it up.

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### **Sara says**

Category: picture book

Author: Joy Morgan Dey

Illustrator: Nikki Johnson

Title: Agate: What Good is a Moose?

Publisher: 2007 Lake Superior Port Cities, Inc.

ISBN: 978-0-942235-73-9

Genre: rhyming book

Reading level: grade 1 and up

What good is a moose?

Agate thinks to himself...

Through the pages of this rhyming book Agate describes the wonderful qualities of his friends, each a special gem, and finds that he just doesn't measure up. After all, his knees are wobbly, his coat is not sleek, he is not graceful or beautiful or clever. But Agate's friends see him in a different light and they help Agate to see that he is also a gem, with a lot of beauty on the inside, and he turns from a nondescript moose into a beautiful agate.

This book is a great introduction to birthstones/gemstones and at the end there is a 2 page spread devoted to the history of birthstones and the meaning behind each one. There is also an informative page about agates, "the secret jewel." The illustrations in Agate are done in water colors using a running technique whereby the artist allows the paint to pool and dry. Gorgeous!

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### **Maggie Harshaw says**

DRA Level: ~36

Lexile: ~650L

Applicable Traits: word choice, sentence fluency, and presentation.

This book is an awesome book for kids to learn about word choice while also learning about gems and birthstones. The pictures are beautiful and really catch your eye.

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### **jacky says**

This book was alright. Most of the water color paintings were very beautiful and the overall message to be yourself was good. However, I felt that the gem stones didn't match the animals and that the ending was tacked on. Some of the lines and rhymes were fun.

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### **Jessica says**

This book has amazing, colorful pictures that describe different kinds of animals.

Lexile Measures: 650L

DRA Level: 36

Six Traits: Word Choice, Sentence Fluency

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### **Mikaela Fu says**

This is about a moose and the different experiences that he has. This book is a fun book for kids to read and can kids can relate too.

Lexile Measures- 650L

Guided Reading- N/A

Six Traits plus One- Word Choice and Sentence Fluency

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### **Bridgette Redman says**

The children's picture book Agate is an example of how there can be too much of a good thing.

Agate is a moose with a self-esteem problem. She has many delightful and colorful friends whom she

respects and admires. However, she is constantly comparing herself to them and believes herself to fall short.

"What good is a moose?" she asks herself, believing her to be dull and bland compared to her talented friends. She shares a poem about each of the animals from alligators to hippos to birds. Each poem is accompanied by a gorgeous watercolor (by Nikki Johnson) and each animal is named after a different gemstone.

The problem is that there are simply too many animals and too many lines for each poem. It deflates all the air in what would otherwise be a great idea for a children's book. The format invites lightness and then the excesses weigh it down.

One of the primary criteria for a picture book is its readability and, just as essential, its re-readability. Children will demand repeated readings and this book will simply be exhausting. It isn't necessary to belabor a point. The point will get repeated as the book is read multiple times.

That said, I do think the author, Joy Morgan Dey, was trying to go for a theme. There are 12 animals, each with a different gemstone. While the relation to months and birthstones makes sense, you have to infer that on your own. If that theme is desired, then shorter poems or some sort of more overt relationship to the months would be appreciated.

Another complaint I have about this 32-page book is that it suddenly switches voices toward the end of the book. Most of the poems are told from the point of view of the moose. Toward the end, the poems begin with "we." It's unclear who the "we" refers to unless Agate has suddenly split her personality.

The story is sweet and it's certainly a healthy message—that we can appreciate the beauty of our friends without diminishing our own beauty. While it didn't hold the interest of either my 9-year-old son or my friend's 5-year-old daughter, Joy Morgan Dey is quite good with the lyrical sound of a poem. She plays with her words and in doing so, encourages her readers to have fun with them too.

It's also hard to go wrong in using talking animals for a children's book. Despite this, it isn't a book that I'll again purchase for another child. Not when there are so many other, more readable options.

Review first posted at Epinions.com [http://www.epinions.com/content\\_41941...](http://www.epinions.com/content_41941...)

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### **Elena Nagornaya says**

This is a beautifully represented book with wonderful colors. It connects animals and colors wonderfully.

Levels

Guided Reading: NA

Lexile: ~650L

Traits

Presentation

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## **Gail says**

Have you ever gone searching for an agate? They have a very special appeal to many rock hounds. This wonderful story is about a moose named Agate. He does not feel special. He is surrounded by friends are all named after gemstones and appear beautiful to him. Agate learns that true beauty lies within. The watercolor pictures are the perfect compliment to the text. A page with informational facts about each gemstone and agates is an extra surprise. Agate has his own website with dot-to-dot, drawing, and writing activities. <http://agatethemoose.com/index.html> The book and a poster are available from Lake Superior Magazine. <http://lakesuperiormagazine.com/cat/a...> Agate was awarded the Midwest Booksellers Choice Award - Best Children's Picture Book in 2008. Agate is a wonderful book to give as a gift to kids and adults of any age. Add a bag of chocolate rocks to make the story, even sweeter.

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## **Courtney Heard says**

This book is a good example for students to learn about sentence fluency.

Six + 1 Traits: word choice, sentence fluency, presentation

DRA Level: ~36

Lexile: ~650L

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## **Makenna Wheeler says**

ATOS: 1.5

Guided Reading:

6+1 Traits: Presentation and Word Choice

I love this book because of the presentation and the way it connected the animals to gems.

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## **Julie says**

Agate would be an excellent text for teaching young children about stones and/or animals. It profiles one animal/stone at a time, presenting the information in a poetic and rhythmic style. In the end, the author conveys a valuable lesson about the unique skills and attributes that each individual offers.

My favorite part of the book was the imaginative watercolor illustrations. Each illustration is of one particular animal in one particular color. Using varied amounts of water, the artist creates a sense of depth and texture. The illustrations could prove helpful in art lessons about shades of color.

I also enjoyed that the publisher included reviews by children on the back of the book. Additionally, the end of the book features a two page spread on birthstones by birth month, as well as a page dedicated to detailed information on agates. I like the book's blend of a story and nonfiction content, and I think this blend could

help draw in students with a broad range of interests.

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### **Megan Mulder says**

"What good is a moose?" asks the title character, Agate, to his friends. He's disappointed in his outward appearance, comparing himself to all of his colorful animal friends. To him, colorful means bright and interesting characteristics that are highly desirable. Agate visits all of his friends, trying to find his place in their rainbow of colors; at the end of the story, he's delighted to discover that he's made up of a rainbow of beautiful and charming characteristics that make him perfect - just the way he is.

Adults and children will be thoroughly entertained by the beautiful artistry in the book - watercolor is used to accent the colors of each animal, signifying the color of their hair or skin. The text describes physical and emotional characteristics of animals such as a giraffe, penguin, and a bat, all the while including fun facts that are informative and interesting.

In the last few pages of the book, a list and explanation of each birthstone is detailed - it's a fun addition to this lovely story!

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### **Katie says**

A book for children feeling less than others, tells us we can appreciate what's special about our friends without it diminishing us.

The book can incorporate a nice guessing game about which animal shape is depicted on each page, but I don't know if I would read this to a child that wasn't currently struggling with low self esteem.

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