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Serafina's Promise



Synopsis

NAACP Image Award winner and ALA Notable, this luminous, celebrated novel in verse is now in paperback. Serafina made a secret promise to go to school and learn to read so she can become a doctor with her best friend, Julie Marie. But following her dream isn't easy—endless chores, little money, and stomach-rumbling hunger all test her resolve. When an earthquake hits and separates Serafina from friends and family, she encounters her biggest test of all. Serafina made a secret promise. Will she survive to keep it?

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (29 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Burg's novel-in-verse is perfect for younger students. As we've said with almost every novel-in-verse we've read for *Vamos a Leer*, this is a great format for developing, struggling, or hesitant readers. All of the white space on each page keeps readers from being overwhelmed. The dialogue is simple which minimizes any frustration for a reader trying to track who is talking. But it's not just the genre that makes it a good choice for younger students. Haiti's history is both traumatic and violent, some of which continues to manifest in the present. For those of you familiar with other young adult novels like *Krik? Krak!* and *In Darkness*, *Serafina's Promise* may seem like a fairy tale version of life in Haiti. While Burg alludes to the traumatic history, it's not nearly as explicit as in some of the other above-mentioned young adult novels. While this can certainly be

a critique of the book, I also think that this is one of the reasons it can be useful in the classroom. Novels like *In Darkness* and *Krik? Krak!* are excellent resources for both the teaching of quality writing and realistic portrayals of life in Haiti. But we can't use these books with our elementary school students. For most of these students, even if the reading level isn't too advanced or the books are used as read alouds, the themes aren't appropriate. Burg provides a novel about Haiti that we can use with younger students. She allows us to introduce these students to Haiti so that they can learn about a country rarely mentioned in our classrooms and begin to think about what life might be like there. One of the more powerful pieces of the novel is in the experience the reader can have in comparing his or her life with that of Serafina.

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