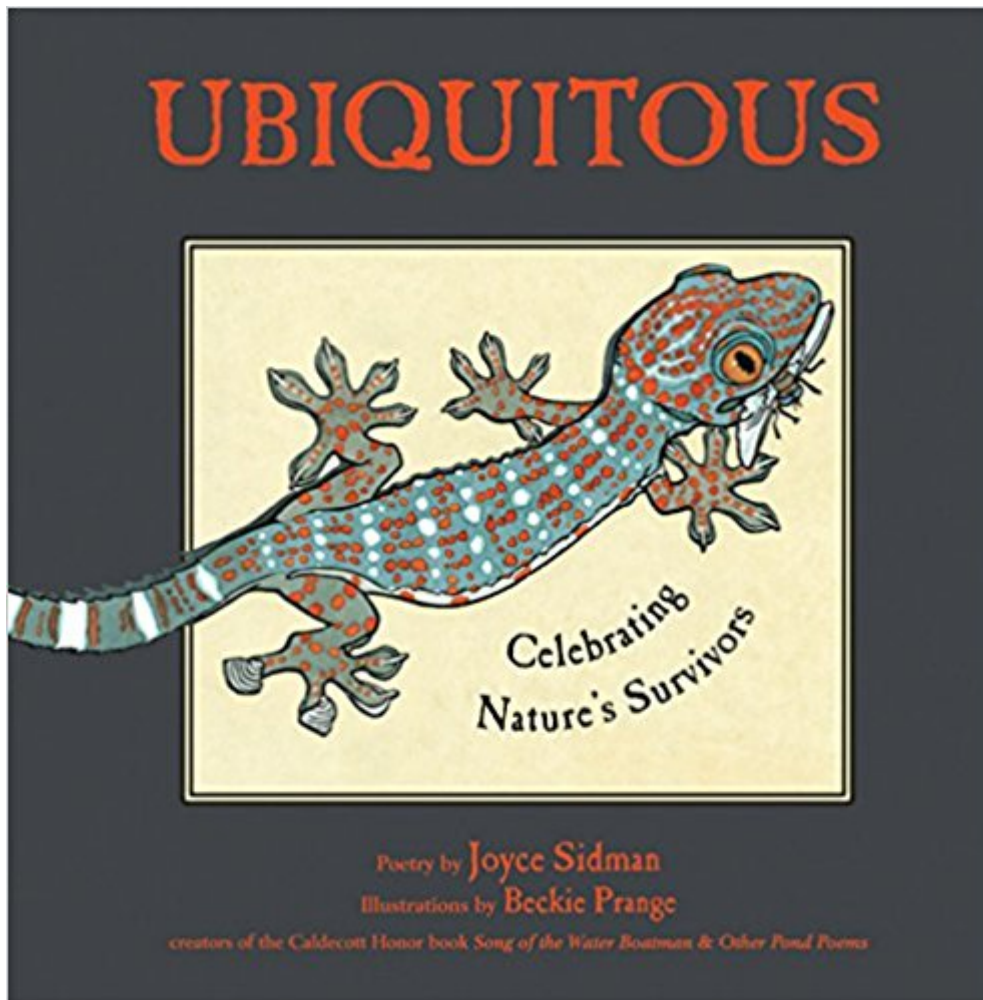




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Ubiquitous: Celebrating Nature's Survivors



Synopsis

Summary: About the Author: Joyce Sidman lives in Minnesota, where she battles dandelions with great respect for their survival techniques. joycesidman.com Beckie Prange lives in Ely, Minnesota, where she spends as much time as possible in the woods looking at lichens, crows, and other hardy northern species. Her first book received a Caldecott Honor. beckieprange.com Author: Joyce Sidman Illustrator: Beckie Prange Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children Published Date: 04/05/2010 Format: Hardcover ISBN: 0618717196 # of pages: #N/A

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (21 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

Customer Reviews

Throughout time innumerable species have called Earth its home, yet a full 99% of these life forms have disappeared. Which ones have adapted to the relentless changes over the course of countless millennia and just how did they manage to survive when so many others perished? In this book you will learn about fourteen of them. You will learn about which botanical division they are in the hierarchy of life, how long they have existed on Earth, their size, and just how they managed to survive. You will begin with the first life form, bacteria, which began 3.8 billion years ago and will complete your journey with the human being and learn how our species survived after arriving 100,000 years ago. In between you will learn about the mollusks, lichens, sharks, beetles, diatoms,

geckos, ants, grasses, squirrels, crows, dandelions, and coyotes. Gecko on the Wall Her jaws dart out To crunch up flies. Her tongue flicks up To wipe her eyes. She climbs up walls With eerie cries. Her tail comes off: A wriggling prize! She sprints and leaps and slinks and spies . . . Sigh. Don't you wish you were a gecko? This superbly crafted blend of poetry and the "celebration" of Earth's rare "survivalist" life forms is simply stunning. This blend brings something as simple as the lichen and actually makes it seem exciting. Each life form is accompanied by a poem and vibrant illustrations that animate the pages. The poems are varied and range from the diamante to an incredible free flowing verse that takes the form of a shark. I found and sensed a lot of excitement in a topic that normally many children would bypass as dull. This book brings new meaning to the phrase "survival of the fittest" and could easily be used as a stepping stone for a school report on one of the species noted in the book. If you want an engaging read about the ubiquitous survivors of the world, you might want to take a look at this marvelous book!

UBIQUITOUS by Joyce Sidman and Beckie Prange is the most exciting book I encountered last month at ALA in Boston. UBIQUITOUS gracefully intertwines poetry, prose, and illustration on the topic of why certain life forms have beaten the odds and remained viable on our planet over unfathomable lengths of time while the vast majority of life forms have come and gone. UBIQUITOUS exposes readers to a great variety of poetic forms and to the concept of having poetry and prose side by side. (Thus, modeling the concept of having a poem introduce a topic.) It is exactly what we -- well, I -- want to see happening with poetry in science and math and history classrooms and in the gymnasium and...well, does anybody out there still teach drivers ed? UBIQUITOUS is a true picture book. The poems, prose, and illustrations interact and each contributes fully to the presentation of the concepts and to the enjoyment of the book. The prose segment of the spread on lichens (as with the others) runs approximately 150 clear and well-chosen words. The last book this duo designed was the Caldecott Honor book SONG OF THE WATER BOATMAN & OTHER POND POEMS. I'm not going out on a limb -- just stating the obvious -- in predicting that members of several ALA committees, NCTE committees, IRA committees, and poetry award committees will all be fully aware of what is accomplished here. UBIQUITOUS begins and ends with a creative and eye-catchingly colorful and swirling endpage timeline which depicts where many of the book's subjects fit into the scheme of things. (For those of us who remember high school science, that means that bacteria is way over to the left and everything else is way over to the right.) I am teaching a class to library students this summer on children's and young adult poetry and UBIQUITOUS will be the first trade poetry book each of them will be required to read for

the class. It's that good.

Sometimes, it is the chart that makes a book unique. There is a book called "Down, Down, Down" by Steve Jenkins that has a descending chart of the ocean depths - wow! And there is a book called "Subway" by Christoph Niemann with a graphical depiction of the New York subway system that will knock your socks off. And then there is this book, with a 4.6 billion year timeline squiggled across the end pages that really grabs your attention and shows you... just how long, just how vast, just how amazing the time on earth has been. There is telling, and then there is SHOWING. This book SHOWS you. I have a house full of VISUAL boys. Show them. All the illustrations in this book are top-notch, but that timeline really steals the show. This book includes a poem for each survivor-life-form - these are the tough life forms that have withstood and will persevere.

A friend who is a research librarian shared this with me and I ordered it for myself within 24 hours. I am a teacher and love all the subjects, but this book highlighted two of my favorites, science and poetry. Too many poetry books choose an interesting topic, but the poetry is lame. Or it has nice poetry: wonderful imagery, meter, rhyme, etc. , but the science is not very enlightening or exciting (or even correct sometimes). This book has it all! Even the illustration inside the cover engages the visual thinker in the vastness of time over which life has evolved. Someone observed that it looks like a fingerprint! In fact, the art deserves its own recognition. Its simplicity and true but vibrant colors are the frosting on the cake - but it's all nutritious! Every viewing reveals new beauties. Thank you to everyone who had a part in producing such a fabulous tome! It is a gem in my collection.

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