



The Tub People

Pam Conrad , Richard Egelski (Illustrations)

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During an unseen child's bath time, the seven members of a wooden toy family ride on the floating soap and compete in swimming races. But after the near loss of the Tub Child down the drain, they are all reunited on a warm bed, where they mountain climb on the ridges formed by soft quilts.

The Tub People Details

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From Reader Review The Tub People for online ebook

Julie says

What is it about this quiet, quirky kids' story that makes me cry every time I read it?

Samantha says

Perfect for kids who love bath time!!

Stan says

I actually read this in The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury. The illustrations are cute and the story is sweet. Love prevails.

Heather says

Such a good one! I think every child is fascinated with the idea of their toys coming to life. This is one of those that leaves a lot to the readers' and listeners' imagination.

Savannah Olson says

The Tub People is a story of six little people that live in the bathtub, along with their dog. They play in the water and like to rescue each other and at night they line up on the edge of the bathtub. One night when the bath water began rushing down the drain before the tub people could get to the edge the tub child began to sink further into the whirlpool and soon he was washed down the drain and his father could not rescue him. His family was worried, they called out for him hoping for him to return, but one afternoon a big man came and pried off the drain and pulled out the tub child! Now that the family was back together they were carried to a bedroom where they were placed on a big soft bed instead of the bathtub edge.

A theme for this book could be family and how everyone's family is different, but yet they are not complete with even one person missing.

A classroom activity that would go great with this story is to have to students discuss their own families and how each one is different from their classmates. Students can talk about their siblings, pets, parents, etc. I think that this could be a great way to help the students realize that all families are different and that doesn't mean they are not complete, but their differences are what make them special for each person. You could also tie in the fantasy aspect of this story and it could be a good basis to discuss fantasy as a genre especially because fantasy is a children's favorite!

Janet Luch says

The wooden tub people live on the edge of the tub and get to play in the water at bath time. All is going well until the tub child is sucked down the drain. The big people come and the tub child is eventually saved. The tub people move, however, to the bed and line up along the window after this incident.

This book was recommended to me by a young man who still fondly remembers playing with toys in the bath tub when he was little. This book helps children imagine a life for their toys. A three-year-old I read the book to also enjoyed identifying the tub people as they lined up on the tub and then the window sill.

This book is part of a series.

Sarah says

I know this book was mentioned in our textbook, but I just didn't find this book very enticing. I tried to look at it from a young child's point of view, but just wasn't sure if they would find it interesting enough to suspend disbelief. Are the toys moving about and interacting with each other on their own or with the help of a child? I think there could have been more cleverness either way. If there had been less text and of a more basic level, then I would understand. But why devote that much text without more detail or cleverness?

I also wasn't sure about the idea of wooden bath people--usu. bath toys are plastic, at least in the U.S./ in my experience. Likewise the dad's clothes look like they are of a different era. If this was set in a time period other than the last 20 years--copywrite, I believe, is 1980s or 1990s--then there should be more clues towards this. Perhaps this book takes place in a different country or culture? (The dad's suit and hat just look like a very specific choice to me.)

I would love to know other people's experiences with this book. Has anyone used this with students or read it to their own children?

Susan S.C.C.L. says

Always a favorite with the kids at our house when they were little.

Asho says

We were home visiting my family last week and when we visit my two-year-old now sleeps in the room that was my brother's when he was a kid, so while we were in town I read her several books that had belonged to him when he was little. I remembered this book, but only vaguely, so I grabbed it off the shelf and thought, "Oh yeah, Tub People! Let's read this one!" And then I realized the story is basically about a child that gets sucked down a bath tub drain. I immediately regretted the choice and hoped I wasn't setting my little girl up for a bath time fear she doesn't currently have. Fortunately, she was so busy looking at the dog in the story and making barking noises that I think she didn't concern herself at all with the boy in the drain. At least it has a happy ending! (And, truthfully, I don't remember being concerned at all about the concept when I was

a kid, so I think most kids will just find this entertaining. Who doesn't like the idea of toys that have their own lives when you're not around?)

Margaret Chind says

This is a very imaginative story in that it calls for the reader to have imagination. While reading it I could envision it being an entertaining "animated short" but as a storybook story it is not the most thrilling or enthralling unless your vivid imagination is at work. Not one to read if distracted and doubtfully a favorite but cute nonetheless. We read this in The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury: Celebrated Picture Books and Stories to Read Aloud on recommendation from Sonlight P3/4 but I wouldn't mind an individual copy especially if we came across The Tub People's Christmas.

Paige Cedergreen says

Personal Reaction: I thought this was a cute story. None of the characters were very round they all tended to be fairly flat characters but there was a problem and solution to the story.

I think that this book is better for kindergarten and first graders. It is rich in figurative language specifically personification such as stating that "the soap danced over to the drain". The vocabulary is appropriate for this age range but is not too challenging or new for them. There are a few words that could maybe be introduced such as "dizzying" and "faucet". I would use this as a read aloud for enjoyment or specifically to talk about personification and how it can add to a story. This book could also be used to demonstrate what a flat character would look and sound like.

Chris Go says

"The Tub People" is about a set of figurines that have a life of their own outside of bath time. The Tub People are made up of the Tub mother, father, child, grandmother, doctor, police officer, and dog. One day, the Tub Child goes missing down the drain. Reactions to this book definitely vary. Some find it too long. Others see it as spooky. But at its heart it is about loss and the importance of family. The illustrations are amazing. Despite that the Tub People's faces never change to show emotion, there is much heart in this book. If you like this book, definitely check out "The Tub Grandfather". You might need to use inter-library loan to get a copy.

Mackenzie Sipes says

Reaction: I thought this book was a little weird but had a unique story line. As an adult, I thought it was really silly but I can see the appeal to children. It is kind of like a mediocre version of Toy Story.

Purpose:

Read Aloud:I would read this book aloud to preschoolers. The imagination is so silly it would probably be very entertaining to them. They could relate to it because they all have dolls they play with and create imaginary lives before. Overall, it would just be entertainment to them.

Independent: I think this would be a good read for children in second or third grade. They would enjoy the similarity to Toy Story and the imaginary world of the dolls. The pictures are fun to view which would only be the other value i see to this book. It really only holds entertainment value, which is okay too.

Baleigh Hendrix says

I loved this book! Such a good book for children!

Inhabiting Books says

This story is about a little wooden family of dolls who live on the edge of a tub, and play in the bath. One day the little Tub Child is lost down the drain, which causes the water to not be able to drain properly, and a plumber is called in to fix the problem. Then the tub people are reunited and given a new home in the bedroom.

The story is told entirely from the point of the Tub People. Although a human child is obviously present to facilitate the Tub People's adventures, the child is unseen in the illustrations and unmentioned. The only human that seems to be noticed is the plumber.

A perennial favorite at our house, I think it resonates with my girls first because it deals with the lose and return of family members, always a big issue in little minds, and second, because my girls like to play with little figures in the tub, and have probably had similar "adventures" with their little people.
