



Brave Jane Austen: Reader, Writer, Author, Rebel

Lisa Pliscou , Jennifer Corace (Illustrations)

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Brave Jane Austen: Reader, Writer, Author, Rebel Lisa Pliscou , Jennifer Corace (Illustrations)
A picture-book biography of the English novelist.

Born in the late 1700s, Jane Austen was a smart, creative girl in a house full of boys, all of whom could aspire to accomplish many things as adults while girls were raised primarily to become good wives. Jane didn't have much opportunity to go to school but she read everything she could, including the books in her father's study. And before long, she began to write her own stories, filled with funny, clever, and inventive characters.

Today, Austen's novels ? including *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *Emma* ? are widely read around the world. She's recognized as one of the most important and influential writers of all time; about her J.K. Rowling has said, "Jane Austen is the pinnacle to which all authors aspire."

Brave Jane Austen: Reader, Writer, Author, Rebel Details

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From Reader Review Brave Jane Austen: Reader, Writer, Author, Rebel for online ebook

Meredith (Austen-esque Reviews) says

An Inspiring Jane Austen Biography for Children!

Illustrated by: Jen Corace

After reading and greatly admiring Lisa Pliscou's attractive and enchanting biography of Jane Austen's childhood in *Young Jane Austen*, I was delighted to learn that she has published a picture book biography for elementary grade students titled, *Brave Jane Austen: Reader, Writer, Author, Rebel*. In this charming and comprehensive book, Ms. Pliscou highlights many of the significant events in Jane Austen's life: such as her education, writing and publishing efforts, and the men in her life.

Weaved into the story are historical context and expectations for a young woman who lived during Jane Austen's time. In a subtle yet direct manner Ms. Pliscou shows many examples of how Jane Austen was brave and a bit of a rebel! I greatly appreciated seeing a portrayal of Jane Austen that accentuates her bravery. For she was indeed courageous, independent, and forward-thinking. Through this tale young readers, who are used to our modern rights and freedoms, will be able to grasp how during Jane Austen's life it was unique and almost unthinkable for a woman to have a profession, write novels, or remain single. While there might be an aspect or two of Jane Austen's life that young readers may not understand, hopefully this will prompt them to ask questions and engage them in conversations about Jane Austen's life and times.

The watercolor illustrations by Jen Corace splendidly enhance this inspiring retelling of Jane Austen's life. With each page there is a medley of beautiful colors, details, and textures that cannot help but catch the reader's eye and make them pause to take in all the elements of the illustration's design. Two of my favorite pages are one that is a series of silhouettes depicting Jane Austen engaged in various activities and another that shows Jane Austen in bed under the patchwork quilt she made with her mother and sister (which is now on display at Chawton Cottage). On every page there are delicate prints, fine details, and variety of colors and shapes that are simply wonderful to behold.

With some lovely supplementary material in the back providing even more information of Jane Austen's life, this book is a complete and thorough introduction to Jane Austen for young readers. Skillfully written and gracefully illustrated, *Brave Jane Austen* is an inspiring and captivating look at how anyone, no matter what humble beginnings they come from, can grow up to accomplish extraordinary achievements. I highly recommend!

With the magnificent illustrations in *Brave Jane Austen* by Jen Corace, I thought my review would not be complete without showing a little video preview. I hope you enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/-ItApSVo2eo>

Linda says

Women, young and old, continue to read Jane Austen's books. I like to imagine that she is aware of the influence her stories have had through all the years since they were published. This book takes the time to show her family circumstances from the beginning of Jane's life until her death at a very young forty-two. Like other books about her, Lisa Pliscou tells of the trials Jane and her sister had because they were women. They were sent away to school so that their room could be filled with their father's "paying" students. That did not last because of Jane's sudden and serious illness, but soon enough they were sent off again. Girls did not receive the same education as boys in that time period, but Jane did learn to read and had the advantage of a father who had a library with hundreds of books and a mother who supported her ambitions to be a writer. She once was proposed to, said "yes", then changed her mind the next day, writing later "Anything is to be preferred or endured rather than marrying without affection." She was brave because she had turned down an easier life without money worries. She wanted to write!

There is added information at the back, quotes from her admirers, herself and from her books. Illustrations by Jen Corace seem demure, almost kindly, as Jane's life seemed to be. Although she defied most expectations for women, she led her life in a quiet household, wearing the clothing of the day. Here is a quote from the Kirkus review: "They effectively evoke the historic period and include a nod to a popular decorative style of the day in an attractive double-page spread of silhouettes that conveys Jane's determination as she "read, sewed, planned menus...went to parties, helped to take care of her parents, and...kept on writing her funny, thoughtful stories."

Like other stories about strong women who persisted in following their dreams, it was interesting to read about Jane Austen's challenges, triumphs and influence all the way to today.

Susan Morris says

Great picture book on life of Jane Austen, for young readers. There are many terrific books like this coming out lately; one challenge is to get young students to read them! (Library)

Vanessa says

great way to explain Jane Austen and her life to young readers.

Laela says

It is everything I ever wanted and need for Jane.

QNPoohBear says

Finally, a succinct biography of Jane Austen I actually like! It's a cradle to the grave biography to introduce Jane Austen in the context of the time period she lived in. It's simple enough for young readers to listen to and casual fans to learn more about the author's life in an entertaining way. It does tell a little story about

Jane but it doesn't make assumptions about her personality or feelings. It shows how she read, observed and finally wrote what she knew only changing it up a bit. The author sums up the plot of First Impressions and it sounds like a silly romance but added to the context of Austen's life, it's a fine enough summary for a children's book. Kids get the idea that Jane wasn't like ordinary girls and therefore Lizzie wasn't like ordinary girls. I also enjoyed the quotes from the novels at the end. The author explains what they mean so young readers have the understanding of Jane Austen's language and time before they read the books or see the movies. This is SO important in understanding the novels. If you don't have the context you can't understand the complexity and richness of Jane Austen's beautiful stories. My only quibble is Austen's first novel was "Susan" (Northanger Abbey) even though it wasn't published until after her death.

The illustrations are not my favorite but I liked seeing a depiction of Jane Austen with dark hair and hazel eyes. Mrs. Austen resembles the stylized portrait done after Cassandra's watercolor sketch of Jane. The way the people are drawn feels a little off to me. They're too angular or something for my taste. I'll see what the artists in the family think. In this book the Rectory looks like a house and not a grand mansion and Chawton Cottage is depicted accurately with Jane's writing desk and her bed with the quilt the Austen women made. I liked those little details that Janeites will adore.

I can't wait to share this book with my nieces and hope they learn enough about one of my favorite authors to want to read her books. (Not including BabyLit and Cozy Classics they read when they were toddlers).

Selah Pike says

Read a second time with my daughter. I love the way this book pointed out how Jane was being brave and bold by writing and publishing her books!

Tasha says

This picture book biography looks at the childhood and life of Jane Austen, focusing on how she was raised in a poor family where her father ran a boarding school in their home for boys, including Jane's six brothers. Jane's mother worked hard keeping the house, the garden and the animals. It was a bustling household and Jane spent her childhood listening and learning. Her father had a large library with hundreds of books and they spent their evenings being read to. Jane knew that boys and girls were treated very differently from one another and that her family was struggling financially. She was sent away to a boarding school herself but returned home after becoming ill. She spent her recovery time reading the books from her father's library. She returned to school once more, but money soon ran out and she came home. She began to dream of being a writer and started creating characters who did not match society's expectations either. Jane continued to write, even though her books were not published at first. Once published, she began to live more comfortably than before but died at a young age of 41, not seeing the last of her books come to publication.

Pliscou shows Austen's tenacity in this picture book biography. This is not a biography for very young children, but one with plenty of detail and interesting tidbits for those in elementary school. The focus here is on Austen's personal struggles, her intolerance for societal norms, her wit and her skill. Corace's illustrations are filled with rosy-cheeked characters surrounded by detailed settings that embrace them. The greens of the countryside, the purple blush of first love, and wallpapers all wrap this book into a colorful package for readers.

A nonfiction picture book about one of our greatest women writers, this belongs in all public libraries. Appropriate for ages 6-9.

April says

This was absolutely darling! Actually made me tear up! A picture book about the world's greatest author is just what we need! #janeismyhomegirl !!

Barbara says

Although this is a somewhat romanticized depiction of the life and times of Jane Austen who died in 1817 and whose books continue to be read by many today, I was delighted to find it in my box of books. After all, I grew up reading all the books Austen wrote, and I am astonished that they continue to appeal to a modern audience. Imagine that--books that were written more than 200 years ago still finding some relevance for readers today! The lively illustrations, created with gouache, ink, acrylic, and pencil, take readers back to the rural setting in which Jane grew up, and the images sometimes contain fantastic objects or show a wistful Jane watching quietly yet carefully as others went about their lives. The text carefully points out the societal pressures and expectations for girls and women growing up in those days and hints at the challenges of being poor or unmarried. Still, throughout her life, even at boarding school, Jane found solace and her voice through her writing. The author's admiration for this creative spirit is evident in every line in the book, and I am pleased to have a picture book about her to add to my collection, perhaps encouraging the next generation or readers and writers who aren't sure what they have to say or how to say it, but I wish the book had contained a list of suggested books by Austen in the back matter. Some of the references to her plots and characters will pass over readers' heads otherwise although at least there is mention of her famous *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. As I closed the book, I couldn't resist wondering how she had the courage to defy the societal mores of the time and how few of us would have dared to do so had we lived during that era.

María Eugenia says

Las ilustraciones me encantan, hay un montón de detalles, sobre todo en los estampados. El texto es mucho más completo de lo que me esperaba. Aún así faltan algunas cosas o matices*, obviamente, porque es un libro muy cortito. El libro físicamente es bastante grande, como los álbumes para niños, que es lo que es aunque hayamos caído muchos adultos ?, de tapa dura y con solapa. Al final trae un poco más de información sobre Jane, citas de cartas o libros, o dónde encontrar más información sobre ella.

Además de los datos sobre la vida de Jane hace hincapié en lo difícil que era para una mujer en aquella época dedicarse a escribir o a otra cosa que no fuera casarse. Eso es verdad, pero a lo mejor se podía haber mencionado, al ser un libro para niños, que había muchas mujeres menos afortunadas que Jane, que tenía una familia que podía ayudarla, que trabajaban como institutrices** o en tiendas o como costureras o cocineras o personal de servicio o muchas cosas más. En condiciones muy malas y no tenían acceso a puestos de trabajo como abogados o médicos o demás profesiones más lucrativas, pero sí trabajaban.

*Insiste, por ejemplo, en lo importante que fue el reconocimiento del príncipe regente, que sí, pero no dice que a ella no le hizo ninguna gracia tener que dedicarle Emma o que dijo en una carta sobre la princesa: "Poor woman, I shall support her as long as I can, because she is a Woman, & because I hate her Husband". XD

**De hecho, en una de sus novelas inacabadas, *The Watsons*, uno de los personajes dice: "I would rather be teacher at a school (and I can think of nothing worse) than marry a man I did not like.". Las alternativas eran malas, pero alguna había. ?

Fatma says

update: i read it and it was indeed very cute with wonderful art

i read a sample of this and omg its so cute the art is wonderful

LOOK! HOW! CUTE!

Baby Bookworm says

This review was originally written for The Baby Bookworm. Visit us for new picture books reviews daily!

Hello, friends! Our book today is *Brave Jane Austen: Reader, Writer, Author, Rebel*, written by Lisa Pliscou and illustrated by Jen Corace, a picture book biography of the world-famous author.

Little Jane was born to a humble household in England, loving parents, a sister and six brothers, and a household full of the boys her father tutored. Raised in a time when girls were expected to be wives and mothers (and little else), Jane found a passion for stories: the ones her father told by the fire, the ones she read in the family's extensive library and the ones she soon began to write for herself. The family loved Jane's stories, especially the one she had written to help heal after a broken heart, and her father submitted it to be published – but no one was interested in publishing work written by a woman. Jane continued to help her family as best she could, but always writing. At last, after years of trying, two of Jane's books were published and proved to be smashing successes. She went on to write and publish four more, though she sadly passed away at a young age. Still, Jane had the courage to go against the norm and follow her dreams, and is still a much-beloved author 200 years later.

A fantastic introduction to Austen and her works. The story touches on all the major plot points of Jane's life: her childhood illness, her brief and tragic romance, the sources for her inspiration and creative style and so on, giving a richly detailed look at what made Jane so unique, especially for her time. The soft yet colorful art captures the feel of the Regency era, and gives Jane's expressions a spark that little dreamers can connect with. The length is definitely for older bookworms, though JJ was engaged nearly all the way through. A

great way for little ones to learn of this literary pioneer, and it's Baby Bookworm approved!

(Note: A copy of this book was provided to The Baby Bookworm by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.)

Be sure to check out The Baby Bookworm for more reviews!

Sarah says

Excellent, fairly-meaty-for-a-picture-book, bio of JA for kids. Loved the illustrations.

Shiloah says

Well done!
