

BOOMING BELLA

G.P. Putnam's Sons; ISBN 978-0-399-24277-9; ages 3-7

K-Gr 2-This charming picture book celebrates a child's enthusiasm for her world. From the moment she arrives in class, through the bus ride and tour of the museum, Bella's lively interest in everyone and everything she encounters earn her reprimands from the adults and the cold shoulder from her peers. Bella's excitement is finally cowed by the guide, who scolds her, and a classmate who tells her she is "ruining everything." Bella flees the museum in despair, planning to take refuge on her bus, but she accidentally boards the wrong one. Upon realizing her error, she bellows, "Stop the bus! I'm on the wrong bus!" Bella's self-esteem is restored when the chaperone on that vehicle comments, "Good thing she has a loud voice." Bella's teacher agrees, which helps restore the child's happy mood. Mai-Wyss's colorful watercolor cartoons are a nice match for the text. Bella's irrepressible personality shines through in the active cartoon illustrations. The scenes in the museum are particularly pleasing as the child admires framed works of art done in traditional styles. The book's design adds to the story's appeal; Bella's speech appears in large and various colored fonts. An enjoyable read-aloud choice.-Maura Bresnahan, High Plain Elementary School, Andover, MA

—*School Library Journal*

Bella is a little girl with a big voice, and she's especially loud when excited—and she's positively thrilled about today's field trip to the art museum. Despite repeated reminders from her teacher to "use [her] inside voice," she shouts out answers to the museum guide's questions. Nettled, the guide tells Bella that if she doesn't stop, the class won't be able to continue. Bella feels terrible. When it's time to leave, she runs and gets on the bus, but it's the wrong one! Now is the time to speak up—loudly! Outside, Bella's teacher races to meet her and brings her back to her cheering class, and Bella takes a picture to memorialize the best trip she's ever been on. While not specifically about ADHD, this could serve as a very useful introduction to the topic. Mai-Wyss's appealing illustrations depict Bella as an ebullient blond miss who even dresses loudly. Children will doubtlessly identify with Bella's impulsive enthusiasm and mercurial moods—or know someone who behaves in just such a way. (Picture book. 3-7)

— *Kirkus Reviews*

This exuberant little girl, Bella, is in love with the world. She's just a little too loud about it. She's told to be quiet and is stifled sometimes, and oh how sad that makes her. When she needs and uses her loud voice again and saves the day, she knows it's good to be different. A positive story with wholesome and loving messages. I read this story and wish it had been available when I was a child and my mother had read it to me because I was always being told I was "too loud" and "too much." It turns out I'm gifted! This book is terrific!

— *Amazon Customer Review*