

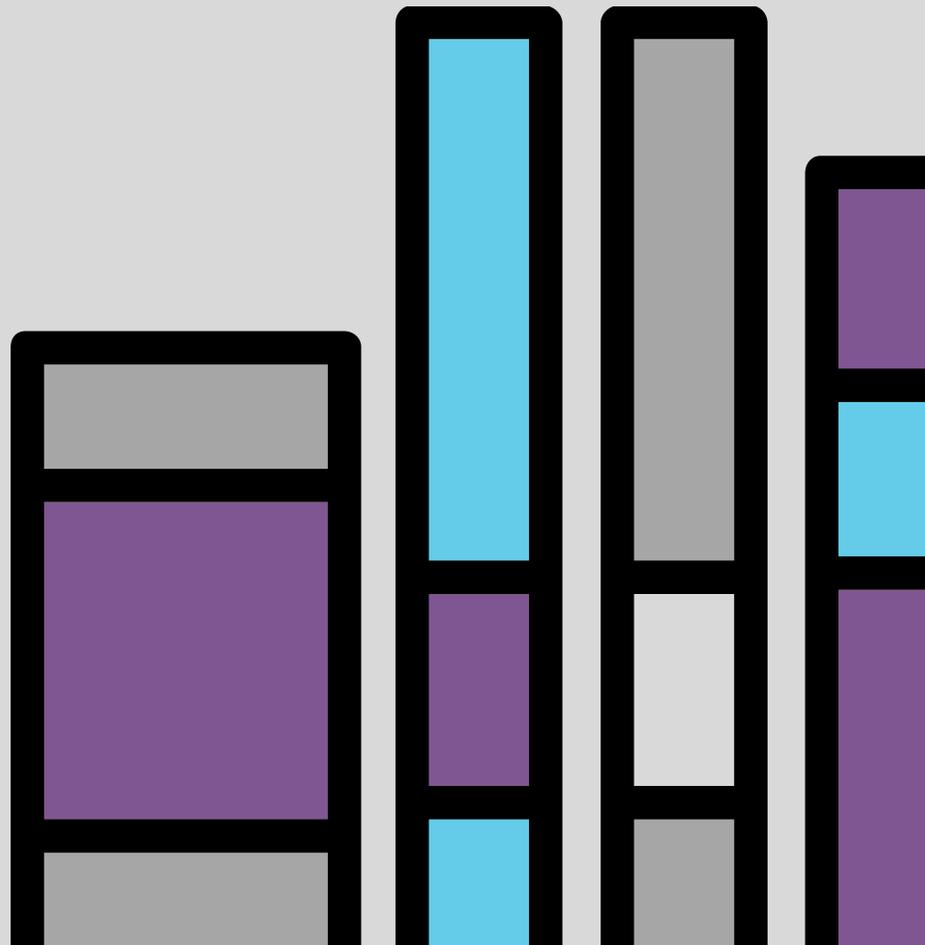


CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY WRITING  
AT EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

# SMITH/SHIPLEY SUPER STAR BOOK REVIEWS

Reviews of Jerry Spinelli's *Manic Magee* by students  
from Creekside Intermediate School in Dexter, MI.

2018-2019



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## Review by Addison

Jeffery Lionel Magee was a normal kid until his parents died in a crash on the P&W trolley, now he was an orphan. So he was sent to live with his Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan, they did not talk to each other they had two of everything he felt like two people. So Jeffery ran away he ran all the way over to the East End to find a home. On the way through his run he earned the name Maniac Magee. Maniac Magee heard a loud whistle so he went to it and found the Pickwells having dinner so he went inside and ate with the large family. Nobody noticed him so after he was done he left and met a girl carrying a large suitcase, her name was Amanda Beale and the suitcase was filled with books. He asked her if she was running away too, she chuckled and replied "No". He begged for a book and she was stubborn but eventually she gave him a book and said that he HAD to meet her to give the book back. Then she brought him to her house and her mother invited him to stay so he stayed. He felt he found a home, he fit in perfectly. He did chores that he did not have to do and if something was asked of him he did it. But he felt that he was not affecting them in a good way after a old man pointed out to everyone that he was a "Fishbelly" and wrote it on their house. So he left again.....After he ran away for awhile he found himself at Cobble's Corner untying the famous Cobble's knot and earning free pizzas for a year but he found out he was allergic to it so he didn't have anything to do with it. He couldn't find a place to go so he went to the zoo and slept in the buffalo pen until a old zookeeper named Grayson showed up and watched over him for several years. He showed Maniac marvelous things from his baseball career to what a real friend is like. He did so many astonishing things for Maniac, Maniac had a home for now. After their best holidays ever Grayson was gone, his time was up. Maniac arranged Grayson's funeral after the pallbearers never showed up, he felt alone again. He yearn for somebody who would care for him and be his friend. Then he met Piper and Russell McNab so they brought him to their house and he saw garbage everywhere, it was a and a cement pillbox. Piper's birthday was coming up and he was planning on going but when he found the boys playing with the glove that Grayson gave him he had enough. He tried to change their ways but it did not work and he was sick of being so disrespected so he left. He felt so alone, he waited for death. But when Piper came crawling back by asking him to come to his birthday he didn't feel as alone anymore, so he couldn't say no so he went but he brought a friend, an unusual friend, in their eyes. He showed up to the party and walked in with Mars Bars. John McNab was furious but he tried to pay no attention to him at all, but when he requested to play "black vs whites" it was obvious and that was what Maniac was he wanted to do. After that he never went back to the McNab's and he still had nowhere to go so Mars Bars invited

him to stay at his place until he found somewhere to stay then he ran into Amanda and she invited him to stay at her place. He had a tough decision to make, but he felt so loved, he had friends, true friends. What decision do you think he made? Did he Make the right one? I can't tell you until you read this book!

I liked how kind and generous Grayson is he cared for Jeffory when nobody else was there for him. He even offered Jeffory to stay at his home when he had nowhere to go. He showed Maniac Magee great things. Grayson showed Maniac the "Stopball" and what a real friend was like. I did not like the book because, everybody was so mean to a child. I was shocked that kids would treat each other that way, but yet it is reality so I really can't blame it. I liked this book because Maniac is persistent and courageous. Maniac would not stop until he found a home. Maniac was also courageous because, he has been through so many things, like Grayson dying and the McNab's but he does not show his emotion often in the book, but he keeps going. I felt emotion in the book when Grayson died, it made me feel so bad for Maniac. Grayson understood him and he was so comfortable around Maniac. Overall I enjoyed this book and I would give it 4 stars out of 5 stars.

I would recommend this book, because it has a lot of meaning and it has the message to keep trying even if it may be hard. I love this book! I think kids who are age 10-15 should read this book. Younger children may not understand it and there is some content that may not be advised for younger children. I love this book and I encourage you to read it.

### **Review by Amelia M.**

In the beginning, Maniac (who was Jeffery at the time) was orphaned when he was three. Then he went to live with his Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan for 8 years of misery. Jeffery thought that it was a misery because he had to be shared between his Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan. They were so Christian they did not want to divorce, so they had two of everything in their house. Then he ran away screaming when he was estimated to be at an age of 11. When Maniac had wandered wild, he had met a mean guy named John McNab. When John got a band of kids on his side, Maniac was chased. Then he was nicknamed Maniac. Eventually, a girl named Amanda was going to school and Maniac met her. Maniac saw a suitcase of books with her and he got a book from her. Later, Maniac got an invitation to her house and when Maniac got there he met Mrs. Beale, Hester, and Lester. They were very nice to him. Then, when Maniac was returning from a run, Hester and Lester wanted to run away from the house with Maniac, but Maniac told them he needed a drink. Then Amanda came riding up on her bike, looking all out of breath. Maniac then sensed there was something that they were trying to stop him from going to the house and it was very early, earlier than most of his runs in mornings. When he got to the house, he saw the words plain as day: ISHBELLY GO HOME At this, Maniac was very upset. Maniac did not understand that Blacks were different than Whites. Segregation was definitely NOT Maniac's thing. These words stung his very heart like a wasp stinging over and over in a repeated pattern, making him convinced that he was causing much trouble for the Beale's, the family that he knew and loved back as much as they loved him.

When Maniac knew that he had to leave The Beale's house, Amanda tried to stop him. After Maniac left and didn't come back at dinner or lunch, Amanda went searching. She did not find him. When Maniac came home and in the morning a little kid came with a yo-yo and a yo-yo string with a very big knot in it, Amanda told him about the Cobble's Knot and how he should untie it. Maniac untied the Cobble's Knot but while he untied it he thought that Amanda wanted him to untie it for a year of free pizza. He is allergic to pizza. Then Amanda's precious Encyclopedia A was shredded and used for confetti at Cobble's Corner for the Knot (which was the size of a lopsided volleyball) getting untied. Then Maniac knew it was too dangerous for him to stay at The Beale's house, so he left for good. Then Maniac meets Grayson, it is when he passes out at the buffalo lean-to. Grayson took him to the Band Shell so that he could be somewhere while he recovered. Maniac told Grayson he would teach him how to read at the bandshell. Grayson knew how to read after Maniac taught

him, this took lots of time, but eventually, Grayson learned to read. Five days after their best Christmas ever, Grayson died.

Maniac wandered a lot for a few months and then he found a cabin that he stayed in for a night. In the morning he heard a few voices and after that Maniac met Russell and Piper. He met them in a cabin in the winter. He took them home to their house the McNabs and he stayed there for a while before returning to the zoo. After returning to the zoo, Maniac makes friends with Mars Bar. Mars Bar is also known as Snickers to Amanda. This I do not understand. I also know that the McNabs also are nice to Maniac, especially after he visits them and takes the McNab boys home.

Review:

I would recommend the book because it is a cool legend that really catches your brain and the cover really catches people's attention. I think it is nice that Maniac Magee's adventure ends happy, as he ends up with the Beale's, his favorite family of all that he encountered.

“When his original supply of food ran out, he fed himself at the zoo or at the soup kitchen down at the Salvation Army. He did odd jobs for housewives, ran errands for shopkeepers. He would not beg.”

This happened when he is wandering wild with no place in particular to live or to stay. But he did stay in the range of the East End, West End, Bridgeport, Schuylkill, and Hollidaysburg. He did not wander far from the people he knew.

I recommend this book to 5<sup>th</sup> grade and up. I do not recommend this book to a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade because of Grayson dying. I think it is too sad that Grayson dies in the story for a little girl or boy in second grade to handle because Grayson was so nice to Maniac when he needed help for a place to live.

### Review by Amelia S.

When Jeffrey Lionel Magee was 3 years old his parents took the high-speed P&W trolley to the city, on the way back the P&W had its famous crash. Jeffery was sent to live with his Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan who had 2 of everything and never talked. After 8 years of that Jeffrey ran away. He first ran to East End where he met Amanda Beale a black girl that carried a suitcase full of books. Then he ran to West End where he met John McNab, chased by McNab, Jeffery ran back to East End where he met Mars Bar Thompson. Jeffrey gets nicknamed Maniac. Maniac stays with the Beale's for a while. Somebody chalked up the front of Beale's house and wrote FISHBELLY GO HOME. Maniac goes to Cobble's Corner a pizza shop to untie a huge, complicated knot called Cobble's Knot. Maniac leaves Beale's house to protect them, he was protecting them because somebody destroyed one of Amanda's books and he was worried that it was all his fault. Maniac went to the buffalo pen in the zoo. A man named Earl Grayson finds Maniac and takes Maniac to live in the band shell. Five days after Christmas Grayson died. Maniac meets McNab's little brothers Piper & Russell Maniac stays with the McNabs. At Piper's party Maniac brings Mars Bar to the McNabs attempting to change their minds about blacks but Mars Bar was terrified. Maniac goes back to the buffalo pen because he had nowhere else to stay. Maniac walked very early every morning once he saw Mars Bar walking too. One of McNab's brothers was on top of the high-speed P&W trolley Mars Bar saved him. Mars Bar visited Maniac at the buffalo pen. Amanda visited Maniac at the buffalo pen and started yelling at him but he wasn't listening to her because he knew that she was here to give him what he really wanted. He wanted a home.

One of the main events in the story was when Maniac ran away from Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan, he was tired of living with two of everything. Maniac ran to East End where he met Amanda Beale. Another main event was when Maniac untied Cobble's Knot after Maniac untied the Knot somebody tore up one of Amanda's books and used it as confetti. After this happened Maniac decided to run away from the Beale's because of stuff that had been happening. Maniac ended up in the buffalo pen in the zoo. Maniac is selfless and friendly, I think he's selfless because he leaves the Beale's for what he thinks is their own good. I think Maniac is friendly because he almost always says hi when he sees someone. I think that when Maniac untied Cobble's Knot it was very suspenseful because I was thinking *is he going to untie it?* I was thinking that because the text says "after an hour, except for a few more finger-size loops, all Maniac had to show for his trouble were the flakes of knot crust that covered the table." the text also says "He ain't even found the end of

the string yet” somebody grumbled.” When Grayson died it was very sad because Grayson was one of the people who had given Maniac a home.

I recommend this book because it really holds your attention. I recommend this book for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders who like realistic fiction. I enjoyed this book immensely and I hope you do too.

## Review by Aspen

Jeffrey Lionel Magee became an orphan at 3 years old when the trolley which his parents were on took its famous crash. Jeffrey went to live with his Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan who could not get a divorce. Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan did not share anything and simply did not talk to each other. When Jeffrey had enough, he ran away to the east end of two mills where he met Amanda, daughter of the Beales. She brought him home to her family that he lived with and loved dearly. On his way to two mills, Jeffrey earned the name Maniac because of all the amazing things that he did. Maniac loved his new home. He loved his home with the Beales so much. When he thought he was causing the Beales trouble because he was white and the Beales were african american, he ran away. Then he went to live with the zookeeper Grayson. Grayson who had spent part of his life playing for the minor league baseball team, and Maniac bonded and shared information they had learned over the years. Maniac even taught Grayson how to read. Five days after their best christmas ever, Grayson dies. Then Maniac goes to search for a new home. After Grayson dies, Maniac goes to live with the militaristic McNabs for a few days. He tries to bring a sense of order to the family, and even tries to introduce a black boy named Mars Bar and try to make them treat him like he was white. But the task was to great for Maniac. Next, Mars Bar and Maniac become uneasy friends and learn to respect each other. What home did he end up in?

I really recommend reading this book because it makes you think more deeply about other people. Also this book has events that will make you feel down in the dumps then you will feel like being able to fly. I think that Maniac Magee is humble, selfless, and curious. Maniac is selfless because when Maniac finally has a warm and caring home with the Beales, he feels he is bothering them and moves out because he cares about their happiness more then himself. Maniac is humble because he only takes his sare and does not seek fame. Maniac is curious because he questions lots of things and looks for answers.

## Review by Audrey

Jeffrey Magee was orphaned at 3 years old when the trolley his parents were on plunged into the river. He was sent to live with his aunt and uncle, a couple that never talked. (They had two of everything.) Eventually Jeffrey couldn't take it anymore. He deserted that awful household. Jeffrey, now a homeless orphan, looked for someone to take him in as their own. He discovered Amanda as she headed to school with her suitcase of books. He kept bothering her, and eventually she gave in, giving him a book. When he crossed the line into the other side of town, a vulgar "black" boy rips the book. This set off a chain of events. Amanda came crashing in and yelled at Mars Bars. They headed to Amanda's house to repair it and he ended up staying there. When he starts causing difficulties for them because he's "white", he adores them so much, so he leaves. People are doing stuff to the Beale's house, like writing "Fishbelly go home!". They are also verbally telling him to leave. To solve this problem, he unties Cobble's knot. (A feat that will make him more popular because, Cobbles knot is a knot that has been tried many times, but never untied. This is because it was hard as rock, moldy, and had a colossal mass of loops.)

He hides from the Cobras, who are chasing him, but gets himself injured. An old park hand named Grayson, a former pitcher from the Minors, found him and Maniac starts living with Grayson, in 1-0-1 Bombshell Boulevard. After an amazing christmas, Grayson dies. Alone again, Maniac lives for a while with John McNab and his family. It's too much to handle. They are just too segregated. After Pipers B-D where he brought Mars Bars, as a experiment. He becomes sort of friends with Mars Bars. (They don't hate each other.) Maniac starts living in the buffalo enclosure until...

To think that all of this started when Maniac's parents plunged into a river. I bet Maniac doesn't even remember who they were or what they acted like. This is how good this book is. I am talking like the characters are real. I was very upset when Grayson died, because I loved how he treated Maniac. He took Maniac in, not because he wanted to use Maniac, but because he liked how Maniac talked and acted and was. The McNabs were basically the opposite of how Maniac thought. They were oh so segregated, and Maniac didn't understand.

Maniac is gentle, kind, affectionate and unselfish, yet he is also ignorant. He doesn't understand when people treat each other differently when they look different. Mars Bars, in the beginning was vulgar and argumentative. As the story wore on he became more cooperative and sincere. Amanda was a take charge gal. She was affectionate on the inside, but tough and seemingly rude on the outside. When we first met Hester and Lester, the descriptions of what they did, made my heart melt. Hearing that these tiny kids loved Maniac, and didn't care that he was a different "Color". This was so heart meltingly cute, that when they stood up for him I was just too happy, with how Jerry Spinelli crafted these people. Somewhat like this, Earl Grayson was artfully crafted to break people's hearts. He was a old man, and became Maniac's best friend. When he died everyone went home with a broken heart... While racing Mars Bars, Maniac found out that he showed off, but didn't know why. He turned around and ran backwards. He found that he didn't know why he wanted to embarrass Mars Bars, he just did.

I would recommend this book because, it is artfully crafted in the setting, characters, mood, tone, and details. Jerry Spinelli drops hints about how the characters are feeling, explains the setting while telling the story, and uses characters to explain the story while making them seem real. Anyone could read this book but 5th-7th graders would like it the most. They might be learning about segregation and there's a lot of that in this book. They could see how people may have segregated in half "white" and half "black" communities.

### Review by Ben C.

Once there was a kid Named Jeffrey Lionel Magee. At the age of three his parents died and he became an orphan. He was sent to live with his aunt and uncle. His aunt and uncle didn't like each other but they didn't have enough money for a divorce. Their was pretty much two of everything in the house. Then one day Jeffrey had a baseball game and there was only one baseball game so his aunt and uncle both came but they sat on opposite sides of the field. After 8 years of this Jeffrey Lionel Magee ran away. He ran into the east end where the blacks are, Jeffrey was white. When he went to the east end he met a girl named Amanda Beale. Amanda had a whole suitcase of books and he asked if he could have one. Amanda gave him a hard time but she still gave him a book. After a little while of Jeffrey Magee running around the Beales they invited him to live with them. Now that Maniac is living with the Beales he is kinda making some friends. Once he met this kid named John Mcnab who is the best pitcher in little league baseball. John pitched Jeffrey a frog and Jeffrey hit an inside the park home run with it. After that his new name was Maniac Magee. Then one day an old man came up to Maniac and said "Fishbelly go home." Also when he went back to the Beales house on the door it said "ISHBELLY GO HOME." Only one letter was erased so it was still easy to read. Maniac said to himself maybe I should go back to my own kind. Amanda said, "Well if you untie this one knot you can become famous." Maniac went to Cobble's Corner and untied the knot, they never really said how Maniac untied the knot but he untied it. On the way back he saw ripped pages everywhere and it was Amanda's encyclopedia A. Then Maniac decided to run away. He ran away because he felt he was hurting the beales because his skin color. When he ran away he went to the zoo and met Grayson. Grayson and Maniac took a equipment closet and made it into a home, they even painted an address. Five Days after their best Christmas Grayson died. At Grayson's funeral Maniac was the only one there. During the end of the funeral Maniac ran away again. One night he saw these boys and the boys names were Russell and Piper. Maniac didn't realize that they were the Mcnabs until John came. Russell and Piper invited Maniac to stay. He stayed for a while and then ran away because he did not feel like he was giving anything to Russell and Piper, now Russell and Piper were even going to school by themselves. He saw Mars Bar this time and they ran together every morning from then on. Then one night Mars Bar invited him to his house and Maniac said I can't. So then Mars Bar woke Amanda up and they all had a talk. During the talk Amanda invited Maniac to live with them forever.

Maniac Magee was my favorite character because he was so brave and adventurous. I think he is adventurous because he went to all these different places with all different people, and I think he is brave because he did all these brave things he went into the east end, he ran away from a lot of places, and went on to Finsterwalds yard and knocked on the door. I didn't like when Grayson died, it made me feel really sad, I almost cried, but I did like when Maniac found a home because that made me feel happy. I liked that Maniac found a home because he tried so hard to find a home and he had finally got one.

I would recommend this book. I would advise this book because I found this book to be very interesting and I think you would like it to. I suggest 4th graders and above to read it because below 4th grade I don't think you would be at a high enough reading level, but if you think you could read this book I would read it.

### Review by Ben W.

Jeffrey Magee was an orphan at the age of three when his parents fell off a trolley into a river. He was forced to live with his aunt and uncle and they hated each other. They even chose to have Maniac once a day but one day Jeffrey ran away far far away until he ran to a place called East End.

He ran into a girl at a school called East End and Jeffrey ran up to her as she was walking. She was carrying a briefcase with books. Jeffrey came up and said "what's in the case" her name was Amanda, Amanda Beale. Jeffrey got a book from Amanda and Maniac soon lived at The Beales. He loved living with the Beale family. The kids Hester and Lester loved Maniac they were his best friends. But one day he had to say goodbye to everyone. Because a boy named Mars Bars wrote fishbelly on the wall of the house and he thought he was creating too much trouble because he was white. So he began to run. Then one day he ran to Cobble's knot to try to untangle it. Amanda tried to convince him to stay but he said no. He had to sleep in a buffalo pen at the zoo. He then met a man called Grayson. Grayson was very old but they so loved each other Maniac even slept at Grayson's house. Five days after the best Christmas ever Grayson died. Maniac was real sad when Grayson died.

On the day Grayson's coffin was buried there were two garbage men carrying the coffin. Maniac was very sad. He went back to the McNabs house. John McNab lived there but it was too crazy there so he began to run again. Then one night he heard something from the buffalo pen while he was sleeping "Maniac Maniac" he stood up it was Mars Bars "yes said Maniac" Mars Bars said what are those buffalo said Maniac Mars Bars very scared are you sure buffalo don't bite yes said Maniac and then Maniac went on a walk with him until Amanda Beale came in and she said alright Maniac time to go home. We're said Maniac home said Amanda. So Amanda brought Maniac home Maniac was very happy because now he had a real home.

In this book I liked that every part was a hook hanger. Every chapter was the same they would leave you at a good part. I did not like that Hester and Lester were two of the main characters because they took up a lot of the story. I think the mood of this story changes throughout the story but the main mood was sad. I think the tone is showing how Maniac is not afraid to do good and not afraid of a lot of things but has a heart to stay in a family even though he does not really show that on the outside.

I would recommend this book for people who like sad and exciting books and ones that have mysteries, Jerry Spinelli is one of those writers. I think people who like books with emotions, and surprising twists and good deeds for the story should read this book. I really liked this book it was very fun, every part was great there was many moods to the story. I think that this book will be in many family house for the next generation of people and you might be one of them.

### Review by Caitlyn

Maniac became an orphan at age 3. His parents fell off a trolley and drowned. He lived with his aunt Dot and uncle Dan, the couple that never talked. He got so tired of the way his aunt and uncle were fighting, he ran away. He tried to find a home, he ran to the East end. He meets Amanda there, and she let him borrow a book. Mars Bars ripped the book and Amanda came on her bike and saw the ripped book. She yelled at Mars Bars because he told her that Mars Bars ripped the book and told Maniac to come home with her. He met Hester and Lester when he got to the house. He loved them.

He left the Beals because he wanted to keep them safe, even though he wanted to stay. People wrote Ishbelly go home on the Beals home so he knew he was the problem. Then he found Grayson. They became a family with Grayson and they celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas. Grayson dies 5 days after Christmas. Maniac lost his home and he runs

Maniac finds Russell and Piper. He convinces them to go back with them and get pizza, then he realizes they are McNab brothers. When McNab is convinced that he is not trying to kidnap his brothers, he brings him home. It was not a good place to live. Then when he was challenged to go to the East end, he did. Maniac is running again. Then Mars Bars finds Maniac sleeping in the buffalo pen. Maniac does not want to go home with him. What do you think happens next? Does he find a home, or does he stay in the pen?

I liked the book because it had a lot of action. I liked when Maniac found a home and a few weeks later he left. It was very interesting that he gave up family. I also liked it when he was running away and he found Russell and Piper. I liked that because it was the rising action of the book. The part with the most drama. The action is why I liked it a LOT. I think people who like action / drama should read the book because it has a lot of it. It is also a really good lesson to people. It is a great book and I think you will like it.

I think the age level is 9 and up because there are hard words. It is a boy and girl book. It is a good lesson to all.

### **Review by Cameron**

In the beginning his parents died in the P & W trolley crossing a bridge when it fell into a raging river. So he got sent to live with his aunt Dot and uncle Dan, but they would not speak to each other and had separate living quarters. After many years he ran away to the east end of another town called Two Mills where blacks and white were separated. There he became, Jeffrey Lionel "Maniac" Magee. Maniac was white and he walked onto the east side where the blacks were, and that's where he met Amanda, Amanda Beale. Amanda was going to school with a suitcase. Maniac assumed she was running away too, so he went up to her and asked where she was going. The answer was not what he expected at all, she said school. Maniac asked what was in the suitcase, she said books. Maniac asked why? Cause my little brother and sister will go crayoning every paper in the house even if it already has text on it. So I haul my books back and forth every day so they don't crayon it. Later on in the story Amanda invites him to her house, Maniac goes to her house and has a lovely time. Mr. Beale finds him and Mr. Beale drives him "home" Maniac waits a couple blocks and then tells him that this is his house but it was still on the west end. The west is where the blacks are, so he just brought Maniac back to the Beales and he slept there. He ended up living at the Beales for a while until one day he left because he felt like he was causing trouble for the Beales because he was living there. He went to live in the buffalo pen at the park zoo. One day as he was flying up the fence he fell, and got knocked out. A little bit later he was found knocked out on the ground by zookeeper named Grayson, and he took him to the baseball equipment room and brought him some food. They decided to move into the baseball room together. About a year passed and 5 days after their best Christmas ever Grayson died. He moved in with a family named the McNabb's and tried to bring some sense to them but the task was too large for him so he ran from them too, back to the pen. Do you think he will ever find a home? Will he ever have a family?

I recommend this book to anyone who likes excitement and you should read it if you like tragedy and suspense. One of the main parts is when he moves in with the Beales. But when he thought he was causing trouble for them he left. Another main part was, Cobble's knot this particular part was very exciting. Everybody was seeing if he could actually untie the knot. One of Maniac's traits is daring, he is very daring because he was the first one to ever go on both sides of Two Mills. I liked this book because the ups and downs of the story is like a stormy ocean.

### Review by Charlie

When Jeffrey was 3 his parents died when their trolley fell into the river after a while Jeffrey goes to live with his aunt and uncle. After 8 years of an unhappy house he finally broke out. Then he ran away trying to find a home he ends at the baseball fields and getting the nickname Maniac. Later Maniac meets Amanda Beale who loves books, she has a full suitcase of books including the encyclopedia All. Later in the book Maniac starts living with the Beale's their's, Ms. Beale is the mom Hester and Lester are Amanda's brother and sister and Mr, Beales is her dad . Then Maniac leaves because he believes that he was giving them trouble because he was white and they were black.

Maniac starts living with the buffaloes at the zoo. But one day he tries to jump the fence and fantes when he falls. Then a zookeeper named Earl Grayson finds Maniac then takes him to the equipment room to get him worm. Grayson was Maniac second person who took Maniac in. Sadly 5 days after Christmas Grayson dies, After Grayson funeral Maniac runs away again. Then meets Russell and Piper which turns out to be John McNabs younger brothers. He starts to live with the McNabs which was cayos after a while they started to build a pillbox and other crazy things. Soon Maniac left there house but Piper invited Maniac to his birthday party and Maniac brought Mars Bar which was black to Pipers party which were white kids and it did not go well.

The 2 main events were Jeffreys parents dying and and Grayson dying five days after christmas. I think Maniacs traits are courageous, smart ,fast, strong,nice,caring. When Maniac hit the frog home run I felt happy for Maniac. When grayson died I felt really bad for Maniac. I liked that Maniac didn't care what people thought about him even though he was white, I also liked that people let Maniac live with them like the Beales that were black let a white kid live with them.

I recommend this book because it interesting what people were like in the 1990s and what people thought people were like. Who should read it I think 4th, 5th or 6th graders should be reading this, but really anyone that can read a chapter book can read this.

### Review by Charlotte

Jeffrey Magee becomes an orphan at age 3 because of his parents' death. The poor thing only wants a loving home but instead he goes to live with his Aunt Dot and his Uncle Dan. They absolutely hate each other. It is almost like they have two houses. After 8 years of living like this Jeffrey Magee has a rebellion. While he is a lonely runaway only wanting a loving home, he meets the Beales. They are a black family from the East end, he lives with them for some time. He eventually leaves their warm and loving home because he thinks that he is causing them trouble because he is the only white boy in town. He is alone for a long time until he meets Earl Grayson. Earl is an old man who works in a park he lives in the Y.M.C.A. He spent his youth as a minor league baseball player. While Maniac teaches him how to read he teaches him about baseball. Sadly, Grayson dies and Maniac is alone once more. He meets two other runaways Piper, and Russell who are going to Mexico. Maniac knows that somebody is probably missing them. So he takes them back home only to find that John McNab is their older brother. Maniac is horrified when he sees their house and he decides to try to put it back in order. That job was just too big for Maniac so he left. He goes to live in the buffalo pen. Will he ever find a home? Well I guess you will have to read the book to find out what happens next.

I think that Maniac has so many emotions locked inside because when he is in trouble or in a sad situation he doesn't have any emotion. I think this because he has poor attachment skills. I think this is because, when he meets the Beales he has fun there for a while but when he thinks his being there is causing them problems he leaves. Now what child leaves their home like that. I think he has attachment problems because it says when he was younger his parents died and he had to live with his uncle and aunt. I think that he learned at a very young age that not all adults are good. So this makes it hard for him to be attached to anyone. I also think that the author borrowed some of his characters in the book from some of his other characters. For example Hester and Lester two chaotic children that cause messes, pull pranks and make the house crazy as possible then they have their older sister. Some other characters who seem a lot like them is Piper and Russell they are two chaotic children who cause mess, pull pranks and make the house as messy and crazy as possible the only difference there dad doesn't care about the house or them and they have an older brother. Another similarity is Mars Bars and John McNab they are both older boys who do mean things to Maniac. Mars Bars wrote Fishbelly come home on his house. John McNab was trying to hit him with

the bat. But at the end they both become uneasy friends with Maniac. I think that kids ages 10 to 11 might like this book in other words 5th grade through 6th.

### Review by Dane

Jeffrey Magee's parents died after a trolley crash and he is left orphaned... He is sent to live with his dysfunctional Aunt and Uncle. But after 8 years of two toasters, refrigerators, and two parental figures that will not get along. Jeffrey Magee runs away, for good. Jeffrey runs and runs and runs until he gets to the fictional town of Two Mills. He visits the west and east side of the town (West, white, East, Black). In the east he met a young girl named Amanda Beale, She hands over a book after all of Jeffrey's pleading then hijinx ensues. But after awhile Amanda comes to her senses and lets the homeless boy live at her home. But the disapproval of the community forces the boy to leave the loving Beale home.

After Jeffrey Magee whom just got the nickname of Maniac leaves the Beale house he secretly trespasses in the bison pen in the local zoo. After some time of sleeping in the pen an elderly zookeeper named Grayson stumbles upon Maniac and his "cuddly" friends. So Grayson provides Maniac with a shelter, food, showers and a father figure. As they spend more time together their bond increases. But then less than a week after both of their best Christmas's Grayson dies. So once again, Maniac is left orphaned.

Once again Maniac Magee is left wandering through the east and west parts of Two Mills, all by himself, with no food, shelter or a family. But when he meets two tiny children, Russell and Piper who want to go to Mexico, they let Maniac stay with them. But even though Maniac got a home he didn't get a good one. Russell and Piper's family was a dysfunctional bunch. As he stays with the McNabs he becomes friends with Mars Bars, someone who wasn't fond of Maniac. But as this friendship expands the McNabs' arsenal grows. They were building a pillbox. Maniac brings Mars Bars to the McNabs for a birthday party and the Pickwells for dinner, just so everyone would treat each other like human beings. After this Mars Bars and Amanda Beale invites Maniac to stay with them. Will Maniac humbly accept one of the invites, or will he never realize that he needs a home?

I liked how the author dealt with tough themes throughout the book such as homelessness, segregation and death. Maniac runs away from his aunt and uncle after they won't get along. A boy being homeless wouldn't be happy, but by Jerry Spinelli's word choice makes the situation actually funny. Maniac Magee is a very cheerful and funny book but when comic relief comes in it makes those scenes awkward. In this book there are four comic reliefs. Hester and Lester and Russell and

Piper. These characters don't have the significance of other characters, and these characters existing don't exactly drive the plot. I think the comic relief in this book is just unnecessary. This book has several different Moods throughout. It can be happy, hopeful, sad, and depressing. You can tell that Jerry Spinelli didn't write this book on a sad day. Most of this book is cheerful and exciting but in other parts like when Grayson dies and when Maniac chooses to leave the Beale house it can be gloomy and depressing. I recommend this book ! It's a heartwarming tale and it deserves all the awards it won. The author created a masterpiece and ... Just read the book. If you have been having a bad day read this book, it will make you feel better! The characters are loveable and relatable throughout. This world seems to come alive as you read, As the author uses sensory details you believe you are right there. This book is a nonstop read and you won't want to put the book down. Not one part of the book is dull or boring. So if you want an interesting read , READ the book. Maniac Magee, I recommend this book to 5th to 6th graders . This book has a pretty loose plot but it's easy for 5th graders to understand. But I wouldn't recommend it to any grade younger. This story has real world problems and any grade younger wouldn't understand these issues. Maniac Magee is a cheerful, confident , hopeful character, BUT... I think that he is packing his emotions inside. Throughout the book Maniac is always so happy, but how can you be that happy when you are homeless and don't have a family. I think he is doing this because he doesn't want to show the people around him that he is a person, he wants to keep his guard. Also when Grayson dies he ( Maniac ) doesn't show a lot of emotion . My theory is that he doesn't show a lot of emotions because he knows not to attach to people because he knows from his parents that they might just pass away. Another thing is I think that he gets why the black people don't like him, but he doesn't want to admit this because he had a home with the Beales.

## Review by Elizabeth

Jeffrey Lionel Magee lost his parents in a trolley accident when he was 3 years old. He was sent to live with his aunt Dot and uncle Dan, who lived in the same house but did not talk or share anything including Jeffery. Jeffery got sick of it so he ran away. He found a loving family in the east end (that was where all the black people lived) in the Beale household. He loved them so much that when he thought he was causing trouble he ran away from them. Not much later Jeffery got the nickname Maniac because of his crazy times trying to find a home. Later a man named Grayson took Maniac in they were like a family. The two of them would work at the park that Grayson usually worked to earn money. Grayson told stories about his baseball time. Then Maniac explained to him how black people and white people are the same. Sadly 5 days after their best Christmas ever Grayson died. At Grayson's funeral the pallbearers were trash collectors, not one person came to Grayson's funeral but Maniac. Next, Maniac went to live with the crazy McNabs who thought the black people were going to attack them. Maniac tried to put some order in to the crazy people. He gave up when he realized it was impossible. He even tried to bring a rambunctious black kid into their house Mars bar, who he had some trouble with before. After that he went to the buffalo pin to live there. Did Maniac ever find a home, or did he never have his dream come true? You will have to read the book to find out.

This book really sucked me in I enjoyed it so much. I loved the funny and enjoyable characters, some of them were not so smart so that's what made them hilarious. My favorite part of the book was when Maniac took a nap when he was untying Cobble's knot. I liked it because I could picture him lying there it was so funny. I really think that it is cool that all the characters have different personalities like how Maniac is really caring about everyone and everything, Mars Bar is impulsive and thinks he's bad, and Amanda can get mad really easily but it comes out of her heart. I also enjoyed the tone the author used it made you really feel the joy, loneliness, sadness, and most of all Maniac's longing for a home. An example of the author's tone is when Maniac was yelling "Grayson!" when Grayson died. Another example is when Piper was screaming "Maniac! Come back! We was just kidding! You don't have to!" The mood of this book is all over the place it can go from happy to very depressing in the snap of your fingers. I really liked how the author described everything perfectly, I liked it because when the author does this it really helps you get in the story. I also really liked how the author used punctuation to get feeling across, I liked when the author did this because it makes the book more entertaining.

I recommend this book for fifth graders and older. I think this because there are some parts can be harder to deal with if you were younger like the the death in the story, some of the things might not be understood by a younger audience like segregation and homelessness. This book has the ups and downs of a roller coaster, that's what made the book so interesting it made you feel like you were hanging of a cliff. This book teaches you a lot about human inequality, and makes you realize that there are problems bigger than your own.

## Review by Ella

Jeffrey Magee also known as Maniac Magee was three when his parents died on the P & W trolley into the city. He went to go live with his aunt and uncle who had two of everything because they hated each other. Once he got tired of this kind of life he ran away from them.

The first person he ran into after running away was Amanda Beale who was kind enough to give him a book. He next met Brian Denehy who through him a ball and Maniac caught it with a book in one hand. Next, He met John McNab who pitched Maniac a frog ball and Maniac hit a homerun, John was upset because he always struck people out and he wanted to get Maniac out too. John found Maniac and started throwing rocks at him so Maniac ran to East end where he met Mars Bars.

Mars Bars ripped out a page of the book Maniac was holding but Amanda put an end to this nonsense, and invited Maniac to come over to her house. Maniac ended up staying at Amanda Beale's house overnight and had taken a bath with younger siblings Hester and Lester. Maniac loved living with the Beales, he got new sneakers and loved running in them early in the morning.

Maniac got famous for being the only white kid in east end, it spread all over town. Then one day when Maniac found Mrs. Beale scrubbing and what she was scrubbing said "ISHBELLY GO HOME" because she had scrubbed of the f. Amanda was trying to convince Maniac that it wasn't a big deal that someone had wrote fishbelly go home on the house but Maniac said he wanted to stay somewhere else. Amanda told him about Cobbles knot and how if he got it untied everybody would like him and he agreed. The knot was as hard as a rock, at first there was barely any people there watching him then there was lots who expected that this would only take a little while but they were wrong so they all left except for a few. It had taken Maniac a while but he got that knot untied! Kids cried for autographs and homemade confetti was thrown, then Maniac realized it was encyclopedia A! The only thing left of it was the blue cover, so Maniac ran.

Maniac decided to go stay with buffalo at the Elmwood zoo, but he fell over the fence one day when he was climbing over it and that's when he met Grayson. Grayson helped Maniac up and gave him some soup, and Maniac told Grayson where he had lived and why he was at the zoo. Grayson told Maniac a bunch of stories of when he was a minor league baseball player. Then five days after their

best christmas ever Grayson died and Maniac moved from the baseball equipment room and then began to run again.

Maniac was running and found some cabins. His second night in the cabins he heard a noise and it turned out to be John McNab's little brothers, Piper and Russell. He ended up staying a few nights at the McNab's house probably the most crazy and hectic house on West and East end. While he was there he tried to put order to the household but it didn't work very well. He even brought Mars Bar to Piper McNab's birthday party, but Mars Bar was terrified.

After that, every day Mars bars and Maniac ran next to each other in silence. Then one day Piper ran up to them and told them that Russell was on the trolley trestle, stuck. Maniac was too scared to save Russell, so Mars Bars had to save him. Following days Mars Bars told Maniac all about what happened, then Amanda Beale showed up and started yelling at him which made Maniac rejoice and feel happy once again that Amanda Beal was back.

I think that this book was very exciting and you never know what was going to happen next. It was all about finding the myths and the facts which I really enjoyed. I also recommend that this book should be read by 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders. I believe that 3<sup>rd</sup> graders would have a hard time comprehending this and 7<sup>th</sup> graders wouldn't have much interest in it.

I think Maniac Magee is a very understanding and hopeful person. He was understanding to Amanda Beale when encyclopedia A was torn up, and hopeful that black and white people would change their minds about each other. He even tried to bring Mars bar a black kid to a white kid Piper McNab's birthday party. I really enjoyed this book and I hope you read it.

## Review by Kaitlyn

Jeffrey Magee was at home and his parents were on a trolley and the driver was drunk and the trolley crashed and everybody on the trolley died including Jefferys parents. So he was an orphan and then sent to live with his aunt and uncle. They argued a lot and hated each other, before you know it there was two of everything Jeffrey Magee got very tired of it so he ran away. He was given the name Maniac Magee. Struggling to find a home he met Amanda and she had a suitcase of books and gave one to Maniac she let him stay with her and her family. Maniac Magee slept in Amanda's room and he didn't sleep on the bed he slept on the floor. Amanda's mom figured out that he slept on the floor, one night she put on the bed, but to just to find him on the floor once again. Amanda's mom yelled at Maniac Magee for smack talking she slapped him across the face. Amanda's mom yelled "I'm so sorry" and hugged him and kissed him. Amanda wanted Maniac Magee to untie cobble's knot because he was good at untying for example kids went to him to untie yoyo's shoelaces and so on. Maniac Magee decided to untie the knot. It took him awhile, but he finally did it. Now he gets free pizza for life, except... he's allergic to pizza. He ran away because he didn't want the Beales to get hurt because of him anymore. On the wall of the Beales house it said "go home fishbelly" but the f of fishbelly was scrubbed off because Amanda's mom already scrubbed it off. So he ran away to keep them safe. Maniac Magee moved in with Grayson they loved each other. In addition to they became really happy and close together. Five days after their best christmas ever Grayson died. Alone again Maniac moved in with McNabs, but left because it was too much for him to handle. He slept alone in the buffalo cage. But then Amanda came invited him back home and he expected the inved. And they lived happily ever after together.

I like this book because it was different than other charrapter books I don't like many chapter books but this one was really good. One thing I like is how Amanda said Maniac Magee can come stay with her I liked it because she did not care what her mom had to say about it but she decided to do it anyway. I thought it was super sweet to just even think of that not just do but to think about it. One part I cried about was when grayson died it was so sad and also they just became to have a close relationship, I was like why does it have to be like this but my friend was all like it make the story more interesting but I did not agree with her until we got more into it. It was cool, different when we figured out he was allergic to pizza he got red spots on him when he ate pizza it was pretty sad because he was 12 and had never had pizza ever..... The first time I had pizza was when I was 3 years old. So when I figured that out I was pretty sad. I recommend this book!

## Review by Kennedy

Jeffrey Magee's parents died when he was 3 years old when the P & W high speed trolley took it's famous crash because the motor man was drunk. It took the high trestle over the Schuylkill river at sixty miles an hour, and the whole thing took a swan dive into the river. Just like that Jeffrey nickname Maniac at three years old was an orphan. A couple years later little Jeffrey was sent to live with his nearest relatives aunt Dot and uncle Dan. They live in Hollidaysburg, in the western part of Pennsylvania. They hated each other but they couldn't get a divorce because they were Catholics. Maniac wanted to start his own adventure, he was tired of aunt Dot and uncle Dan fighting, so he ran away. On his little adventure he played baseball with John McNabb. He also met Amanda in the east end. Amanda asked "do you want to come home with me?" and Maniac said yes. Maniac met Amanda's family Amanda's mom and dad, Hester and Lester, little sister and brother. After a long night of reading books, Maniac Magee slept in Amanda's room. Now he considered it home. After a while of living with the Beales, Maniac felt as if he was creating a problem in their house. One day it was so hot that everybody had a block party. Maniac was outside jumping and splashing and this old crook came out of nowhere and said "Fishbelly, go home." Maniac said but this is my home." Maniac thought he was deaf, so he said it louder. So the old man repeated himself. The next morning, Maniac woke up earlier than he ever had before, even the dog didn't want to run with him that early. Then, when he was in the middle of his run, Amanda came up behind him. He was about to leave the town. Then Hester and Lester joined along, asking him to read more books. He looked at the house, noticing something suspicious, and on the brick, Mrs. Beale was using her special scrub to remove the words "Fishbelly, go home." Maniac had left the Beale home because of that and went to sleep in the buffalo pen. He met Grayson, the zookeeper. After a little bit, Maniac had learned how to pitch, because Grayson used to be a famous baseball player. Maniac taught Grayson how to read because Grayson never learned. Five days after their most wonderful Christmas together that they had ever had, Grayson died. After a little bit, he became uneasy friends with Mars Bar. The one that was rude to him before. So one day, after he went to spend the night with John McNab and his family. It was so crazy at the McNab he left. Then he went back to sleep in the buffalo pen. And Mars Bar was such a nice friend he grabbed Amanda came out in the middle night and grabbed Maniac and took him home to her house. If you want to know the ending read the book. (If you want to know what happens next, read the book!)

I really got lost in the book it was so good! When Maniac went to live with the Beales he felt afraid as if he is creating a problem so he leaves the Beales and goes to live with Grayson, and Grayson is so happy. The reason Maniac is afraid is because he is being yelled at to go home and he doesn't want the Beale family to get involved. The reason Grayson is so happy is because he has company and is not alone all the time like he used to be.

I recommend this book because it makes you feel happy and sad at the same time but mostly happy. Also to people who like emotional stories. I think you should read this book if you're in fourth to sixth grade. The book is very very sweet I loved it so much, I think you will to. Or at least i hope you will enjoy the book. READ IT!

### **Review by Madden**

Jeffrey Magee was an orphan at age three. His Mom and Dad died in a trolley crash. He went to his aunt and uncle's house, they had too different living spaces they would not share anything. They wished that they had two Jerry's. Then Jerry ran away, he ran all over town for a year then he ended in west end. In the west end he got his nickname. Jerry new nickname is Maniac Magee. Maniac Magee moved in with the Beale family and lived with them for a while. Maniac loved it there the Beales treated him like he was a part of their family. After a few weeks Maniac left the Beale house because he thought that he was causing to many problems at the house because he was white and they were black. A example is when someone wrote on the Beales house Ishbelly go home. Then he met Grayson, and lived with him for a while, but 5 days after their best christmas Grayson died. After Grayson died Maniac was so sad. Then Maniac found Mars Bar they became uneasy friends. They understand each other but they were not the best friends in the world. Then at last Maniac moved in with the Beales again, because Grayson died, and he needed a home. Do you think Maniac will have a home?

I liked when, Maniac untied the Cobbles Corners knot, because it was a great part in the story. The mood of the story is happy and sad. At some parts in the story there was happy parts, but there were some parts that were sad, but the book was mostly happy. The tone of the story is to always love your family and to never run away from your family that you love.

I recommend this book because it has some sad parts and some happy parts. You should read this book if you like, cliff hanging stories. This book has lot of cool twists and turns, that is why I think you should read Maniac Magee.

### Review by Mateo

At age 3 Maniac's parents were killed when the P&W trolley dove into the river. He went to live with his Aunt and Uncle but they were not a family, his Aunt and Uncle wanted to get a divorce but they could not because they were very religious. When Maniac was 8 he ran away and arrived at Two Mills and he met Amanda Beale in the East End. A week later he was living with the Beale's. He became famous for being the only white kid in a black neighborhood, not going to school, and being super good at sports.

One day at a block party an old man kept on insulting Maniac because he was white, but the Beale's were quick to defend Maniac. Unfortunately the damage was done, and when Maniac got home from running the next day he saw this on the side of the house: ISHBELLY GO HOME. Maniac ran away for a day believing he was bringing bad fortune to the Beale's, but he came back that night. After Maniac undid cobble's knot a day later somebody shredded one of Amanda's books so Maniac actually did run away. Maniac started to sleep at a Zoo where he met a Zookeeper named Grayson who he became great friends with, and eventually lived with even celebrating Thanksgiving with him.

Five days after Maniac's and Grayson's best Christmas ever Grayson was dead. After planning to kill himself with starvation he mets two 8 year old boys who are running away. He decides to help there family out returning the boys who turn out to be Russell and Piper Mcnab. Their father is a white supremacist who is conspiring that the black people of Two Mills will revolt and attack the white people. After several months he changed their minds about black people, he also becomes friend with black Mars Bar. This is where I will leave you to think up the end yourself or read the book and find out the end.

I liked how Maniac starts out the Beales, then stays with Grayson, then helps the Mcnabs, and ends up with the Beales again in the end. I did not like how George Mcnab is so cruel to Maniac after all he has done for him. Most of the story was exciting and happy, though some parts are depressing. I think the tone of this story is showing how Maniac is not afraid to do good, and not afraid of a lot of things but has a heart to stay in a family even though he does not show it on the outside.

I would recommend this book, because it is a story of finding your family even if you are different. I recommend this to 4-6th graders who like stories about difference and being a family even if you are

not biological. If you aren't 4-6th grader, just to pick this book up even if it is a easy read to you. I really loved this book and I think you will to.

### Review by Millie

Jeffrey Lionel Magee or Maniac Magee was a average kid until his parents died when they fell off of a trolley. Then he went to move in with his Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan. Uncle Dan and Aunt Dot did not get along well. There was two of everything in that house. Two toasters, and two refrigerators. Not one thing was shared. One day he just ran away and ran and ran the soles of her shoes where falling of until he got to Two Mills. The first person that he met was Amanda Beale and he didn't mean to. Amanda was carrying and suit case so he said hi to her as he did to everyone on the street. Amanda didn't think that it was right that a white kid was in a black town. But she was friendly and sweet and nice. Maniac met another person who was Mars Bars. He was the toughest person in Two Mills. He had an ugly death stare no one can stand up to him except Maniac Magee. No one could say " stop " or " cut it out " but Maniac did. He even took a bite of his candy bar. No one would EVER do that. Maniac went to go live with Amanda. Anamda has a pretty small family Hester and Lester her twin brothers and her mom and dad. Maniac was famous there he could untie anything from shoe laces and yo-yo strings to the untieable Cobble's Knot. Anadma knew that he was a wiz at untying knots so she brought him to Cobble's Knot. It took him days to untie the Cobble's Knot but he did it and then he ran away from the Beals he thought that he would always cause them danger. So he ran away to find Earl Grayson who worked as a zookeeper and he lived at the YMCA Maniac lived with him for a while until Grayson died he died in his sleep. Maniac didn't know what to do with his life. So he ran to Two Mills again where he lived with John McNab and his family. He quickly left that place and now he didn't have a home. But Mars Bars came up to him and started being nice to him. He did end up with a home but who?

I think you should read this book if you are into realistic fiction. Also a lot of things happen at once. I think 4-6 graders should read this book. It only really matters on what level you are on in reading. But if you think that you will want to or can read this book you should. Maniac Magee does have some big words.

I think that Maniac Magee was an enjoyable and different book. I've never read a book like Maniac Magee it is a really fun book to read with all of the weird words and accents. The book is different because it uses such weird words like ishbelly. And all of the crazy and different thing that happen to Maniac. Most stories are not like this this story that is why I call it different.

### Review by Nicholas

Maniac's parents died in a trolley crash when he was three. He lived with his aunt and uncle because he became an orphan. They did not get along and had 2 of everything 2 living rooms it seemed like 2 houses. He ran away because he did not like his aunt and uncle. He ran to the East End and that is when he was called Maniac. Maniac met Amanda Beale when he was going through the East End. She had a lot in books in a suitcase and Maniac asked about the books. Then Maniac met Piper and Russell and they were worried about him. Piper was worried about Maniac because he was new person. Maniac went to live at the Beale house. Eventually he leaves the Beales because he thinks he is causing trouble because he was white. Maniac was walking to the East End and he met Mars Bars he was black and mean. Then he gave him a bit of his candy. He never knew if he was going to be nice or mean. Mars Bars and some other people started to ganging up on him. They were mean to him. Then Maniac met Greyson at the buffalo pen, and Greyson took him to the bandshell. Greyson gave him soup to make him feel better and they lived together and even celebrated holidays together. Maniac felt like he had a home. A few months later Greyson died. The only person who went to the funeral was Maniac.

Next he lived with the McNab's. He did not like it at the McNab's house. The kids in the McNab house had a lot of food they stole because they were running to Mexico. Maniac took them for some pizza and was taking them home. Mars Bar came running at Maniac because he had the kids. So they all went home Maniac lived there for a while. Then they kicked him out of the house and he lost that home. Maniac began running again and ended up in the Buffalo pen. He talked to Amanda at the pen and guess what happen next...

I like the book because all the characters in the book and how Maniac was nice in it, And he would not stop running, And when he was going to a lot of house to find a home.

I would recommend this book to kids 4th grade and up. Because it is a good book and why I recommend this book it can be challenging. And it can be hard with the words in the book. it might be to long for them they might forget what they are reading so that is why I recommend it to 4th grade and up.

## Review by Owen

Jeffrey Lionel Magee lives with his parents. Then one day his parents die on a trestle Jeffrey at the age three became an orphan. Maniac went to live with his aunt and uncle and they don't like each other. They had two of everything. some days he would have dinner with his uncle and some days he would have dinner with his aunt. After eight years of living with his aunt and uncle he decides to run away because he is tired of how they treat each other. Maniac ran into Amanda Beale with a lot of books Amanda gave him one and ran to school. Maniac moved in with the Beales. Maniac did all of the chores that were needed and it was like Mrs. Beale had to do nothing. Then Maniac ran away from the Beale's because he thought he was causing to much trouble. Maniac travels to the East end where all of the black people are and gets looked at weird because he is a white. He ran into Mars Bar the bully and he got bullied. There was a contest at Cobbles Corner that you had to unite a knot and you would win a years worth of pizza. Maniac wonders around the East end and then runs into Mars Bar. He gets beat up. Maniac went to the party down the block and met an old man and since Maniac is white and there in the East end the old man told Maniac to go back to his own kind. Maniac was going on a run and he looked back and he saw ishbelly go home on the side of the Beale's house. Then Maniac ran away because he thought he was causing to much trouble. So Maniac ran to the buffalo pen. Maniac goes to the Buffalo pen and sleeps the night there. In the night Maniac was discovered by Grayson the zookeeper. Maniac gets taken care of by Grayson. Maniac lives With Grayson for a while and learn's to know that Grayson is a retired baseball player that played in the Minors. After a couple for months Grayson died. The funeral was not what you think a funeral usually is the funeral men were garbage men and the garbage men were very rude. Maniac went to go live with the McNabs and the house was a disaster. The dad and the kids { including the two little kids Russell and Piper} drank beer, cussed, and smoked. At the end Amanda finally found Maniac and brought him home.

One of the main event of the story is when Maniac goes to the Beale's house and lives there. He did almost all of the chores in the Beale's house. Another main event is when Manac goes to Grayson's house and Maniac gets taken care of and they taught each other something. Some character traits for Maniac are that he is caring, humble, amazingly skilled. Something that is sad in the story is when Maniac's parents died on a trestle. Some things that you can learn from in the story is that Maniac is responsible so that can make you more likely for you to be responsible. It can also show you that how bad the laws were back then they separate people by their skin color.

I recommend this book because it can teach you a lesson and it can teach you to do the right thing. I think people who want to be successful in life could read this because they are the people who try hard and don't give up.

### Review by Paul

There was this kid named Jeffrey Magee and one day his parents were on a trolley and fell in a river and died. So Jeffrey Magee got orphaned. Then Jeffrey Magee got sent to his aunt Dot and uncle Dan's house in Hollidaysburg. Aunt Dot and Uncle Dan didn't like each other so they had two of everything. Then one day Jeffrey had a concert and in the concert Jeffrey started screaming and that was the starting of the running away to try to find a new home. First he finds Amanda in the east end. Then Jeffrey meets Mars bar and Mars bar tries to bully him but Jeffrey ran away. Then Jeffrey went to a baseball game and tried to hit John McNab's fastball and hit a home run and bunted a frog. Then Jeffrey Magee was called Maniac Magee. Next Maniac met Amanda again and went to her house and realized that he may have found a new family. In the Beales family they had a girl and a boy called Hester and Lester. Then Maniac leaves because he feels he is creating trouble for the Beales because he is white and they're black. He goes to Cobble's Knot and unties it. Amanda was trying to get Maniac Magee to come back to her house but Maniac doesn't listen. Then Maniac Magee meets Grayson at the zoo and learns all about Grayson. On Christmas Maniac teaches Grayson how to read. Four days after Christmas Grayson dies. Then Maniac goes and lives with the McNabs but it was too crazy there. So Maniac went back to running and slept one night in the zoo. Mars bar was there too so they became friends. Amanda joined their group and they all lived happily ever after.

I like the support that Maniac has for the Beale family because he took baths with Hester and Lester to show Amanda that bath are still fun. I like that Maniac is a good athlete because he hit many home run and bunted a frog.

Grayson died, Maniac hits McNabs fastball, Maniac unties Cobbles Knot and find a family with the Beales. Maniac is lonely, worried and playful. He is lonely because he had no home to live in. Maniac is worried because if Grayson dies he will be alone again like he was when his parents died. Maniac is playful because he played in the bath with Hester and Lester. When Grayson died it made me think that Maniac mite have to find a different home. This made me sad that Maniac is alone again. When Maniac ran away from his aunt and uncle's house I said to myself that this is going to be bad.

I recommend this book two people that like lots of excitement and action so if you like excitement and action Maniac Magee is a go.

## Review by Raiden

Maniac's mom and dad died when there was an accident on a trolley when he was 3. Then Maniac went to live at his aunt and uncle. Soon Maniac ran away because they would not get along. Maniac ran into a girl in the east end with a suitcase full of books named Amanda Beale. In desperate need of a home Maniac moved in with the Amanda, Hester, Lester and become very close friends and had fun together. Maniac loves the Beales so much. Soon though Maniac ran away from the Beales because he thought that he was trouble to the Beales because he was white and they were black. Next he met a zookeeper named Grayson who spent his "glory days" as a minor league baseball player. Grayson and Maniac spend a perfect Christmas together with happiness and love. Five days later Grayson died. Then Maniac was all alone. Then he found two runaways who happen to be the McNabs brothers. So Maniac went with them home. Their house was a mess, Maniac tries to take order. But he fails. He ends up in the zoo then Mars Bars and Maniac become friends. Next Maniac had slept in a buffalo pen. Until Amanda came pulled him up by the ears and said "Your coming home."

I really got lost in the book and enjoyed it a lot (I wish they made a sequel of Maniac Magee). In the beginning Maniac was alone didn't have a lot of friends, but after awhile he becomes friends with the Beales who soon let Maniac move in with them. Maniac has many traits for example at times he can be sad, lonely, mad, happy and faithful. Now I will tell you 2 highlights of the story that I really enjoyed. 1. Maniac making new friends and sticking up for himself and others! 2. When Maniac and Grayson bond through baseball! Now I will tell you some mood and tones of the story that really warmed me. 1. When Maniac meets Amanda. Why that warmed me was because that was the beginning of their friendship. 2. When Maniac, Hester and Lester bond together. Why that was a mood and tone that I liked is because Amanda used to have fun together but one day Amanda said "I am too old to be taking bubble baths with my siblings." so Maniac stepped in for her place. So finally we are nearing the end of my book review so I will make a few recommendations to who should read this book. My recommendations are too people who are okay with lots of emotions. I think that this book is a warm and caring book and I hope you love it too!

### Review by Rett

Maniac Magee was an orphan when he was only 3 years old. His parents died on the trolley when it fell into a river. He was forced to live with his aunt and uncle. They hated each other and didn't want to talk to him or each other. One day Maniac ran away far far away until he ran to a place called the Two Mills. Maniac ran into a girl Amanda Beale she was walking into her school carrying a suitcase with a ton of books. Maniac asked her if he can have one so she gives him one and he reads it for a long time. He then gets bullied from Mars Bar. Maniac was fighting with him and Mars Bar ripped the book and blamed it on Maniac. Amanda got mad at Maniac for ripping the book but he told her he didn't rip it. Then Amanda invited Maniac to live with them so he lived there for such a short short time. Then he ran away because he was worried about the Beale's getting worried because he was white and they were black and that was a problem then. So he ran into Grayson at the zoo in the buffalo pen. Grayson took him to a baseball dugout and then started to get to know each other so then he lived with him till Christmas. Five days later Grayson died of old age. Dumpster people came and put his coffin in dirt. Maniac ran away to a house where Mars Bar was and lived with him for a little bit but it just didn't work out. Then he went back to the zoo and Amanda found him.

I really got lost in the book because it was so decripted what happened in the book and how the characters took place. enjoyed it. i like that the characters are fascinating because it was describing the characters acts and characters traits.

My recommendations are I recommend this book to 4th, 5th, 6th graders because it's persuasive and it has good writing in it and good evidence in it and i really enjoyed reading it cause it was cool, sad, awesome, and happy.

### Review by Sam

In the beginning of the book, Maniac Magee, Jeffrey's parents died on the P&W high speed trolley. Jeffrey was sent to live with his relatives, who don't share or talk but refuse to get a divorce. So after 8 years of that, right after his school musical, he ran away. Never to return to school again. He ran from Hollidaysburg to Bridgeport. He did not stop running at the west end he ran completely into the east end. In the middle of the story Jeffrey meets Amanda Beale and gains trust in her after she lets him borrow her book. Jeffrey also hits John McNab's fastball; the best pitcher ever which made people notice him. Jeffrey moves into the Beale house and Amanda gives up her room to Maniac. Jeffrey also gets into a routine, Jeffrey takes Bowwow for a run every morning, he does the dishes in the afternoon, and takes a bath with the little ones in the evening. They also find out that Jeffrey was allergic to pizza because one day he got out of the tub with pepperoni size spots all over him. In the end he runs away from the Beales house because the other blacks were teasing them, he found out because the others were bugging him so he went back for a drink of water and Maniac ends up running to the place where he felt like he belonged, the zoo. At the zoo he met Grayson, the zoo ranger and caretaker at the ballpark. Maniac stayed with Grayson for some time. Sadly Grayson dies 5 days after the most merry Christmas of his life. So he goes on the run and finds himself at the McNabs. After living there for a while he goes on the run again. In the end Amanda came to take him home.

The book was interesting because the author added strengths and weaknesses and feelings like anger, sadness, and joy. I liked the book because it makes you feel emotionally happy and sad also because the author included detail to make the story entertaining and specific.

### Review by Selena

Maniac Magee becomes an orphan. His parents died on the P and W trolley. Then he goes and lives with his aunt and uncle, his aunt and uncle have two of everything because they do not want to share their stuff. Maniac Magee runs away from his aunt and uncle because it's too stressful with them always arguing he runs away. Maniac runs into Amanda she let him borrow a book he returned the book. Then he lives with Amanda Beale's family in the East end for awhile, and Maniac unties Cobbles Corners knot that was all moldy and in a giant ball and when Maniac untied the knot it was a long string. Then a man writes fishbelly on the Beales house because the man wanted him to go live with his own kind the white people. Maniac doesn't want to cause them any trouble so he runs away from their house. Maniac doesn't understand why people are separated by the color of their skin. After that Maniac runs away from the Beales house and he goes to the West end. Then Maniac lives with Earl Grayson at the bandshell. Grayson gives Maniac 50 cents to spend, Maniac spends it on books from the library and reads the books. Grayson teaches Maniac how to play baseball. In return Maniac teaches Grayson how to read books. Maniac has a great Christmas with Grayson a couple days later Grayson dies. Nobody comes to his funeral the people that take the garbage were baring his coffin. Then Maniac finds Russell and Piper then he lives with them, the McNab's. He lives with the McNabs for awhile. Russell and Piper were going to school and they were also making the pill box. Maniac decides to run again. Then Mars bar finds Maniac at the zoo in the buffalo pen. Then Amanda comes. Do you think Maniac will ever find a home?

What I liked about the book is when Maniac untied Cobbles corners knot that nobody could untie.

There are many main events in the book, I think that when Maniac ran away from the beales house is a main event, I also think that the second main event is when Maniac untied Cobbles corners knot that nobody could untie the knot. Maniac Magee's character traits are that he is adventurous and caring. Maniac is adventurous because he is always going to different places and meeting new people. Maniac is caring because every home Maniac lives in he is always caring for who he is living with. When Maniac ran away from the Beales that made me sad, also when Maniac was untying Cobble's Corners knot that was making me anxious. What I liked about the book is that every page it made me want to read more of the book, I also like that always cares for the people or family that he is living with.

I recommend this book because it always leaves you on the edge of your seat and the book has a lot of adventures. You should read this book if you like cliffhangers, adventures, and action you should read Maniac Magee. The whole story of Maniac is very exciting ,leaves you on the edge of your seat and it's also sad in some parts and happy in other parts.

### Review by Sydney

At the beginning of the story Maniac's name is Jeffery and his parents died on a trolley accident. So Jeffery had to live with his aunt and uncle. His aunt and uncle never talked each other and they had two living rooms two kitchens and basically two of everything. Maniac got tired of his aunt and uncle arguing so he ran away. He ran into the East end where black people live and that is where he found Amanda Beale. Amanda carried the a big suitcase to school. Jeffrey ran up to her and asked her if she was running away? She looked at him and yelled NO! That made Jeffrey feel bad and then he said what is in the suitcase then? My books she said, and then he asked if he could read one he begged and begged until she said yes. After school Amanda asked if he wanted to live with her and he said sure. The other people were mean to him and he stayed there until he felt like he was trouble for the Beale family. So he started to run again. Jeffrey was now known as Maniac. He went back to the west end and met Grayson the zoo keeper. Grayson gave Maniac a home and told him stories every night. Maniac taught Grayson how to read. A few days after his best Christmas ever Grayson died. At the funeral the garbage people put Grayson in a hole while smoking. Maniac couldn't stand it so he ran. After a while he heard some boy talking they were little and Maniac asked them where they lived. Maniac convinced two boys named Russell and Piper McNab not run away from their home because Maniac did not want them to end up like him with no home and no family. He left the McNabs because Russell and Piper told him to get out of their house. Maniac went back to the buffalo pen and he fell asleep. Then he woke up and it was Amanda Beale. Amanda was not happy. She asked him if he would come stay with her forever.

I like this book because Maniac Magee is very kind and He meets nice people. He is kind because he helps the Beales clean their house and he looks after the kids. I don't like the book because Maniac is allergic to pizza. This makes me sad because I LOVE pizza. I didn't like that he runs away a lot. For example he runs away from his aunt and uncle, the Beale family, Grayson and the McNabs. In some parts of the book It is sad but mostly the book is pretty happy. I think that the tone of the story is to not run away from home and family.

There are lots of main parts to the book, I think that when Maniac ran away from Amanda and the Beales is one of the main parts of the story because Maniac doesn't run away because He wants to, He runs away because he feels like he is causing the Beales trouble.

I would recommend the book because Maniac is very brave and is very nice. Maniac Magee has cliff hangers and in the book there are some characters that are nice and some are mean.

### Review by Van

Manic's parents died by a train crash and he became an orphan. Then he lived with his aunt and uncle. The aunt and uncle could never get along with each other. After 7 years he ran away and went to the east end of Two Mills. Then he met a girl named Amanda. Maniac was living with her and her family the Beale's. Maniac bathed the little brothers all the time and did all kinds of other things with the family. He didn't want to stay because he thought he was making problems for Amanda's family. Maniac ran away and lived in the zoo at the buffalo pen. Then he fell over the fence and an old man named Grayson picked him up and put him in the backseat of his car. He took him to the band shell which is where he lived. Then Grayson died and Maniac ran away again because he didn't want to live in the same area where he did with Grayson. Maniac lived in the buffalo pen for a long time. When he was hungry he ate day old apples, hamburger buns and carrots. He lived with another family but that did not work out. Amanda came to the zoo where Maniac was living. Amanda talked with Maniac about coming home with her to live there for the rest of his life. Will he ever find a home?

I recommend this book to 5th graders because there's some hard words but it is also a good book and it puts you in suspense. One of the interesting parts is when Maniac untied Cobble's knot. When he untied it he got free pizza for a year. That was funny because Maniac is allergic to pizza. I think that Maniac feels scared in the book. Also, I think that the mood of the book is happy when Maniac is with family and at the end. I really like the book and I think you will to.

### Review by Zane

Jeffrey's parents passed away in a train crash and he became an orphan. Jeffrey lived at his aunt and uncle's house. They separated everything and had two of everything so they didn't have to share. Jeffrey could not live with his aunt and uncle anymore so he ran away trying to find a new home because his aunt and uncle could **NOT GET ALONG!** Then he went to the East end of the city. This is where he began to be called Maniac because of all his running away. First, he goes to the East end and meets Amanda and sees her books to go to school. Then he goes and lives with Amanda's family, the Beale's, and loves it there. He feels like a part of the family. He went outside and saw Ishbelly was written on the Beale's house because Maniac was a white skin. He leaves the Beale's because he feels like he is creating trouble for the Beale's because he is white and the people in the neighborhood said ishbelly go home. He goes to Cobble's Knot to unite it. Amanda wanted Maniac to come back but he did not come back. He did not want to untie the knot because he did not mind black people. Maniac does not believe people should be separated just because the color of his skin. Next he lives at the zoo with Grayson and learns about him. Then they spent the holidays together. Sadly, Grayson dies right after the holidays. And then Maniac lives with the McNabs, but it was too crazy there so he runs away again. Amanda begged Maniac to come back so he did.

I recommend this book to kids in 4th grade and older, because there are some parts that are funny. I like when Maniac feels like a part of the Beals family. There is a lot of running away so I would not recommend this book to kids younger than 4th grade. I do not like when Grayson dies. If I read it to a 6 year old and I said Grayson died, that would make the kid cry. If your in 4th grade you should read the book.