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Book Review: Zilly, a Modern Day Fable by Kelly Parks Snider

Review by Jessi Lusardi

Zilly tells the story of a young 'flyer', who wants to fit in with other flyers who have been criticizing her. She sees a billboard for flying lessons, and decides to sign up. Unfortunately, the lessons have lots of rules, such as "No Flips or Zips," and the lessons even ban her best friend; "No Goats." Zilly has to make a decision; is it more important to fit in, or to be herself? She decides, "If beautiful means being like all of you, then that is what I will do!" Zilly tries hard to fit in, she even rejects her best friend, Mingle the goat. But in the end, she can't hold back on her "flips and zips," and helps her friends at the flying school to be themselves as well.

I first picked up Zilly at the [Hardy Girls](#) Resource Center Library because it looks fun, is colorful, and has great illustrations that attracted my almost three-year-old, Lily. We discovered that the message, prose, and discussion about media literacy are more suited to hold the interest of an older child, perhaps someone 5 or older. Nonetheless, Lily loved the goat, Mingle. She was curious why Mingle was excluded by Zilly, and why they weren't friends anymore. This question prompted a good discussion with Lily about what a friend is, and how she can be a good friend. I can always tell when Lily likes a book, because she will pick up the book on her own, flip through the pages, look at the illustrations, and tell herself the story. Lily did this several times with the book.

If you read Zilly (and I hope you do!) the website that goes along with the book, zillybook.com, has a wonderful guidebook for parents and teachers on how to discuss the messages in Zilly. Most of the discussion questions center around bringing awareness of what 'media' is and the effect that it has on our own perceptions, ideas, as well as actions. There are also fun art activities, coloring pages, and links to further reading as well as the projectgirl.org website, which the author founded and directs. These resources are meant to be a way for kids to take action and respond to the negative media images that they may see around them every day.

Happy reading!



Jessi Lusardi is a community activist, writer, and mom to 3 year-old Lily. She loves to read, explore new places, and spend time with her 88 year-old grandmother.



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Hardy Girls Healthy Women is a research-based non-profit working alongside girls to create a world where all girls and women experience equality, independence, and safety



- hghw: I have to say that it's been a *really* good day. We got two beautiful letters of thanks for our work, SPARK...
<http://t.co/RK07JsHP>
- hghw: WAY TO GO!! <http://t.co/qPJgae6O>
- hghw: From SPARK Summit: We did it! Our meeting with LEGO was a huge success. We're so glad they sat down with us to...
<http://t.co/osJUep2E>
- hghw: Sending lots of super-awesome, kick-butt wishes to our SPARK Summit team for their meeting with LEGO today!! xo ladies - go get 'em!
- hghw: Sign this #girlpower petition to Seventeen Magazine: "...I'm asking Seventeen Magazine to commit to printing one... <http://t.co/gjGtjje>
- hghw: hahah, love this little girl!
<http://t.co/9Fp2yy52>