

Oliver's Castle

Diane Thompson

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Oliver's Castle is a collection of four short stories for young elementary school students from kindergarten to first grade. In the first story, Oliver the cat learns the truth between a real castle and a castle of a home. The second, Simon the frog makes an unlikely, true friend. In the third story, Bogey the dog discovers the joy in staying with parents and the protection of a home. The final story tells about Ardy the aardvark's lesson in holiday spirit.

While reading this short fiction anthology, I didn't find any aspect of it that I disliked. All the stories were a nice, satisfying length for beginning readers to enjoy and practice their reading. Perhaps if there were a couple more stories included in the book, the overall package would provide more capturing. After reading all four stories, I felt as if I could read more of these cute tales before filling my reading desire. Otherwise, I found everything about this book to be wonderful.

The four stories included in *Oliver's Castle* taught lessons everyone should carry out throughout their entire lives. The lessons can also apply to readers of all ages, whether it's a young child beginning to read or a parent or teacher aiding in their reading. From Oliver, the reader learns that a wonderful home is filled with love. Simon teaches to make friends even with people you wouldn't first expect to. Bogey's experience outside his safe home teaches children and parents to treasure their families. Lastly, Ardy teaches about the true Christmas spirit that should be applied throughout the whole year: sharing and loving everyone. These four lessons always come up throughout my life and reading *Oliver's Castle* reminded me of my childhood days when my parents were teaching me them. I felt this book was a great read and would buy it for kindergarteners to read.