



Tales of Bunjitsu Bunny

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Introducing Isabel, aka Bunjitsu Bunny! She is the BEST bunjitsu artist in her school, and she can throw farther, kick higher, and hit harder than anyone else! But she never hurts another creature . . . unless she has to.

This series of brief stories about Isabel's adventures are a beguiling combination of child-friendly scenarios and Eastern wisdom perfect for the youngest readers.

Tales of Bunjitsu Bunny Details

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Author : John Himmelman

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From Reader Review Tales of Bunjitsu Bunny for online ebook

Brittney says

This is an adorable early chapter book. it's great for 2nd grade or about 7 years. Even though it's about a bunny who does karate type stuff it talks about when it is appropriate. My son was so entertained.

Rebecca says

Awesome collection of short, early-reader-level fables about a little girl bunny who is great at her martial arts discipline, bunjitsu. There is plenty of action - she can punch and kick - but the stories also show her avoiding fights, helping her friends, and respecting her teacher, as per the Bunjitsu Code. Love the calligraphic illustrations, especially the red line to show motion.

Scottsdale Public Library says

What a great book to bridge that gap between easy reader books and chapter books for newer readers! Isabel, aka Bunjitsu Bunny, is the central figure in a collection of short stories strung together in chapters to make one longer book. Some of the stories are loosely based on familiar fables like the Tortoise and the Hare, but are told with a slight twist. Good messages and a good dose of humor permeate each story and make them new and surprising, as well as lending them a slightly philosophical bent. My son and I alternate chapters which are just long enough for my almost 1st grader to get his twenty minutes of reading practice each night without making him feel frustrated. Good for boys and girls alike and highly recommended for K-3 readers. Get ready for giggles and conversation. - Alexis S.

Melissa Mcavoy says

What an odd book. I think it is trying to combine a kick ass heroine and zen philosophy. I will be fascinated to know what kids think. I was slightly underwhelmed, but I'm not an eastern philosophy person.

Liz says

Both my children (3.5 girl and 5.5 boy) absolutely LOVED this book. We could have read the whole thing in one sitting, no lie. That's how captivated they were. In fact, the day before we had to return it to the library they begged me to re-read most of it.

As the title implies, it is "Tales of" so on this second reading we were able to just skip through and pick their favorite chapters without missing any plot line. The chapters do work together nicely, but each stand alone as their own excellent read aloud.

I would highly recommend this to any beginning chapter book reader. The writing is simple yet exciting. The moral is excellent. There are enough pictures to keep the book moving and not let new readers become burdened by language.

As far as beginning reader and young read aloud books go, this is easily a top five for us.

Brenda Lower says

Fantastic as a early reader- short chapters that are easy to read, but all interconnected. Great read!

Amy says

There were so many things I loved about this book! First and foremost is the fact that Bunjitsu Bunny is actually a gal named Isabel - and she doesn't have any of the typical female markers like eyelashes or bows or pouty lips. She's just a kick-ass bunny, and the fact that she's a girl is incidental. The stories also encourage thinking outside the box to problem-solve, and emphasize that engaging in physical struggle should only be used as a last resort. Finally, I loved the drawings - they were very calligraphic and gestural, simultaneously giving the illustrations an Asian flair and a sense of movement. Oftentimes Himmelman includes a swirly red line to indicate the trajectory of a movement, which was a neat touch. I'd say I'll recommend this one to budding readers, but I don't think it'll stay on the shelf long enough for me to hand it to anyone!

Melissa says

This was a super cute story about a kick-butt girl bunny who has learned to harness the power of zen.

The Styling Librarian says

Tales of Bunjitsu Bunny by John Himmelman – Fantasy – 3rd grade and up – There a deep layer within this book which teaches life lessons. Also, children will find this book appealing, especially reluctant readers.

Laela says

"J?" means gentle, soft, or flexible. "Jutsu" can mean "art" or "technique" and represents manipulating the opponent's force against himself rather than confronting it with one's own force.

The clever little book packs a punch when it comes to eastern philosophies. Each chapter is a small morality play that concludes with some peaceful way to resolve the issues. Each story can stand alone and need not be read in order. At the end of the book there is a list of Bunjitsu Code that we can all live by. I am particularly fond of "Try things that are hard for me to do."

The illustrations are simple. The use of just red and black through out the book make the illustrations pop. This would be a great book for a reluctant reader and someone just starting on chapter books.

Stephanie says

A fast read with a main character who thinks outside the box to solve problems.

Barb Middleton says

Isabel is the best bunjitsu bunny in her school. She may appear like a cute little thing, but don't be fooled. She'll high kick and outsmart anyone. Tales of Bunjitsu Bunny is an early reader with a unique mix of 12 fable-like tales and martial arts. I have never come across anything quite like it. The bunny's skills come from an ancient Japanese martial art called, jujitsu, that teaches self-defense while building individual awareness and self-confidence. It does not rely on strength or weapons, but hand-to-hand combat and technique. Each chapter has a moral that the reader has to figure out along with Isabel who is either practicing jujitsu techniques or in a contest or combatant setting. The humorous illustrations show a bunch of pirates sinking in a boat as Isabel outwits them to her brother accidentally pole-vaulting himself several miles away. The cartoonish characters and situations make for great fun.

The first chapter has Isabel thinking creatively when faced with a problem. The reader gets dumped into the middle of the story with not much setup. Short like a fable and designed to impart wisdom, it looks at issues children deal with or is funny. At the start, the pack of martial art student-bunnies are trying to use their strength and varied jujitsu moves to break down a door. The last move is a good laugh as they try the "running bunjitsu head butt!" at which point Isabel opens the door and lets them in. She ditched the group in the middle of their efforts and climbed through a window into the locked room. Not only does this show the lesson to not rely on strength, which is a teaching of jujitsu, but it shows creative problem-solving.

The next chapter has pirates underestimating Isabel's bunny power as they try to bully her into giving them her boat. She overthrows them all using several different jujitsu moves and watches them sink in her boat. The twist on the Tortoise and the Hare fable has the moral that winning comes from envisioning yourself victorious and having positive self-talk. Other lessons are on how to avoid a fight, practice hard to improve skills, and face your worries. In an ironic twist, Isabel plays hide-and-seek with her friends but is so good at "disappearing," they can't find her. Bored she lets herself be easily found the next time they play. When her friend confronts her, she replies, "It's more fun to be found by friends than lost by friends." Young readers love books on friendship and will be able to relate to this message. I oftentimes find fables somewhat terse and too short, but that isn't the case here. While I did think the first two chapters were abrupt (as I usually feel with fables), John Himmelman does a terrific job with craft and I slipped into the action-packed storyline and illustrations quickly.

Another short chapter has a metaphor of an angry wave that can be applied to something upsetting in life. Bunjitsu bunny discovers that anger is best dealt with by not fighting it but letting it run its course. At first she fights the wave, but later rides it and learns to have fun. She is learning to control her emotions and build confidence in herself. Again, young readers are trying to control their emotions, as well as, make friends and gain confidence as they grow older. These messages are cleverly hidden as the reader enjoys the surface story. This book could also be used with older students that struggle to find depth in novels. One could

simplify the concept with the short chapters.

Perhaps bunjitsu bunny is really more like judo which was invented by a man that learned jujitsu and then created his own moves. Here, the bunny creates her own fables mixing in martial arts. At the end when a boulder crushes her flower garden, she responds by turning it into a rock garden. Flexibility and adapting to changes is another jujitsu skill that any person can apply to different situations in life. Kids should love the simple black, white, and red illustrations, fun storyline, messages with some depth. Because it is for younger it might require an adult explanation. A good read aloud with your child or class.

Rachelle says

"Tales of Bunjitsu Bunny" is told in the style of old martial arts stories, child version. But, this book can be enjoyed by adults and children alike, martial artists and non martial artists. Isabel meets many challenges with her mind and body, being kind and skilled in competition, and wise when it comes to making friends and not enemies. These stories teach life lessons of humility, strength, wisdom, and friendship. I also enjoyed the artwork, and the accurate depiction of martial techniques. Isabel Bunny is talented!

Teresa Scherping Moulton says

Isabel can hit, kick, and throw better than anyone in her bunjitsu class, so her friends called her Bunjitsu Bunny. But Isabel knows that bunjitsu is really about solving problems WITHOUT hitting, kicking, or throwing. Isabel works hard and practices every day, and she doesn't forget to use her brain either. These qualities help her defeat a group of pirates, get around a locked door, rescue a lost ball, overcome an angry wave, and more. One thing is for sure - no matter what life throws at Bunjitsu Bunny, she will NEVER give up.

This book consists of a series of simple stories, each with some kind of lesson behind it. The lessons seem to come from the philosophy of martial arts and Eastern thinking, but they are also practical lessons that kids will understand. I really like that Bunjitsu Bunny is a girl and that she doesn't put up with nonsense from anyone. Young readers will cheer for her as she solves each problem.

I would recommend this book to grades 2-3, especially anyone who likes martial arts or girls as action heroes. I think this would also make an interesting readaloud in a classroom setting because there is a lot you could discuss in terms of the lessons learned. Readalikes for this book might include The Princess in Black by Shannon Hale, The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron, or maybe even Zen Shorts by Jon J. Muth.

Nicola says

This is a cute book which has shown up on my recommendations feed and then I happened to see it on the library shelf. It's kind of like a series of very simple short stories that read a bit like fables and a bit like adventures about a bunny named Isabel. They're all quite different and range from how to overcome obstacles by thinking outside the box to winning a fight by simply choosing not to engage with a boastful bully. She's female, bright, wise, skilled, able to fight, and like Yoda seeks wiser paths rather than fighting first and thinking later.

