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Peter McCarty

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Bobby and his friends wait all day for school to end and for their chance to play outdoors in the fall weather. Flying leaves, swirling colors, and crisp air make the perfect setting for a game of football with Sparky the dog.

The kids are surprised by how quickly it gets dark, and even more surprised when it begins to snow. But there's no need to worry—the chilly nights ahead will mean watching football on the couch with family, tucked under a cozy blanket.

Fall Ball Details

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From Reader Review Fall Ball for online ebook

Susan Heskin says

I read "Fall Ball" to two 2nd-grade classes and they loved it!! Of course, it was in Wisconsin the day after a big Packer/Viking game on TV, but what the kids really loved were the silly pictures of the kids, the funny dog, the tackling and crashing into the leaves, and just the idea of playing neighborhood games with friends. I agree with the other reviewers that there is no compelling story, and it really isn't a book about football. It is much more of an atmosphere book, and that age range seemed to get it. Younger kids might not...I'm not sure.

gina says

Woods adored this book and so did I. It's not my favorite style of illustrating but the story is sweet and simple and makes a good fall themed bedtime story.

Nancy says

I didn't care for the illustrations. All the kids had hair that stuck up, and they had pig noses. I liked the things the kids saw on their way home on the school bus.

Jennifer Heise says

Cute book about fall activities, specifically kid football in the leaves, that can be enjoyed even if you don't care for American football. The rounded, egg-like characters are clearly having a great time.

Amy Layton says

Fall Ball is perfect for football fans, perfect to be read out loud when the season begins to change. Filled with minimalist illustrations and autumnal colors, McCarty makes good use of open space and using leaves to indicate page turns. After a pack of friends return home after a long day of school, they decide to go outside and play football until it gets dark. Unfortunately for them, it's already dark out by 4:30! This book would be fantastic for reading out loud to a group of children. Great for grades 1-4.

Review cross-listed here!

Laura says

Fall Ball by Peter McCarty is a story filled with fall colors, leaves, and fun. The pages capture the whirl and

twirl of the leaves dancing in the crisp air of autumn. And the anticipation! That can't wait to get home from school and play feeling. I could feel how much those kids wanted to jump into a game of football, running and more. I wanted to dive into that big pile of leaves myself and roll around! :) ?

BUT I was a bit disappointed with the end. The words and pictures moved with such energy around the page. So to see the characters plop down in front of the television at the end stole some of that liveliness for me. Plus I'm not sure why the snow was thrown in. It added season confusion instead of magic in my opinion.

shrugs

Still a fun read that will have everyone running outside to play!

Meg Stolte says

Fall Ball is a fun story about a group of children coming home on the bus, who decide to play football together. The story is set in late fall, as the kids rake up the leaves and jump through them during football, and then it begins to snow as they're called inside for dinner. At the end of the story, they have dinner and watch more football on TV.

This would be a fun story to read for grades K-2, particularly with children from families that enjoy watching football, or perhaps those with older siblings who play football. It touches on themes of friendship and family, and it could be incorporated into a lesson about retelling stories, since it has a clear sequence of events. It could also be used to discuss details in a story, encouraging students to recall what the setting was like, what sport the kids played, and who stole the football before they had to go inside.

Abigail says

Riding home from school one autumn day, a group of children eagerly anticipates the game of football that they will play together. Organized by Bobby, the game gets going, only to be subverted by Sparky the dog, who steals the ball and leads the children on a chase ending in a massive pile of leaves. All too soon it is time to go in, and the children head home as the snow begins to fall...

A simple text is paired with lovely artwork in Fall Ball, author/illustrator Peter McCarty's picture-book tribute to the pleasure of football in the autumn season. The story isn't particularly gripping here, although it certainly captures that sense one has in childhood, of fun times passing too quickly. The real charm, at least for me, was in McCarty's pen and ink and watercolor artwork, which is really quite beautiful. Recommended to anyone looking for children's stories about playing football with one's friends and/or about the beauty of the autumn season.

KC says

Nice to see a bunch of friends get together to play football without being supervised by parents or coaches. No cell phone or other digital devices are in this book!

Becky Keir Grace says

This is a cute book about playing football in autumn. It's my go to book when I hold a fall sport theme story time. The illustrations and beautiful in their simplicity, and it makes me want to curl up with a cup of hot cocoa and watch a little football.

Shannon says

I hate football. But I know a new baby who needs this book, so it definitely fills a need for more charming football books in the publishing industry.

Marie says

This is a simply written children's book aimed at what matter's most to children: free time to play on their own. The illustrations are absolutely stunning. The children are riding home from school on the bus and plan to play football when they get there. Jimmy is one exception who decides to rake leaves instead. The children play ball, however Sparky, the dog, is quickest to retrieve the ball. he crashes into Jimmy's pile of leaves, as do all of the children. It's so early, yet getting dark and cold, and all the children must go home. A beautiful book about fall and things to love: football, cozy pajamas, warm blankets, good things to eat... Highly recommended!!

Ms Threlkeld says

I liked the illustrations, but the text was bland and the plot didn't keep me engaged.

Katy says

McCarty's art style really freaks me out. I just can't get into it.

Sandy Brehl says

A fun, seasonal story.
