



The Academy

Ridley Pearson

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Steven "Steel" Trapp has been placed in an East Coast boarding school for gifted kids by his FBI agent father. He soon discovers that there's a clubby element of the faculty and upper classmen that is very secretive and protective. To his surprise, his friend Kaileigh arrives at the school, and it isn't long before the two realize that this is not your normal boarding school. It seems a select few students are recruited, while still minors, to serve as special "translators" for the US Government. People-including diplomats and dignitaries-will say things around kids that they wouldn't otherwise dare speak outside of embassies. The willing student "agent" takes a semester abroad and ends up spying for his country.

But there are dark forces at play at the school. Foreign agents may have penetrated the school's secrecy and have sleepers in place: kids spying on future kid spies. There is conspiracy and competition among the elite faculty that threaten security. As Steel and Kaileigh are recruited for their first test run-trying to break a ring of pickpockets in a Boston hotel-things go impossibly wrong. Betrayal and conspiracy cloud what should have been a straightforward assignment. And all too soon, their very lives are in danger.

The Academy Details

Date : Published January 18th 2010 by Disney-Hyperion (first published January 1st 2010)

ISBN : 9781423115328

Author : Ridley Pearson

Format : Hardcover 416 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Mystery, Adventure, Fiction, Spy Thriller, Espionage, Realistic Fiction, Action, Thriller, Suspense, Science Fiction

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From Reader Review The Academy for online ebook

Zachary says

Awesome book about a kid going to a new school. This is a book much about mystery. Steven "Steel" Trapp has been placed in an East Coast boarding school for gifted kids by his FBI agent father. To his surprise, his friend Kaileigh arrives at the school. This new school that he is attending is secret. It does not have an address or zip code it is totally anonymous. In this school some of the activities that happens are unusual. There are dark forces at play. Foreign agents may have penetrated the school's secrecy and have sleepers in place. kids spying on future kid spies. This kid also have a special gift, he have a spectacular memory he can retain information easily and for a long time. As Steel and Kaileigh are recruited for their first run, trying to break a ring of pickpockets in a Boston hotel, things go incredibly wrong. Soon the two find that their very lives are in danger.

Lincoln says

I loved the overall pacing of this book. It kept me going at all times because I am definitely a fast paced person and it kept me engaged with an already interesting plot and storyline. All of the characters were very diverse and different from one another and yet at the same time they ended up being similar in a way. As I worked my way towards the climaxing of the story it became more and more interesting with many new twists and light shone on the previous blots of mystery. I could also identify with the main character because of the activity Gaga ball that he was involved with. I've played that for years and thought it was kind of just a thing in my small group and was cool to see it in my reading. I enjoyed also how the author focused on the perspective of the Steel and never forgot to include the aspect of his perfect and astounding memory when telling of the story. The only part I found somewhat confusing was the ending, not that it was bad but probably just needed reread or explained better possibly. I would definitely read more material by this author.

Jan says

Like the first one, I read it to preview the story for my son. Great book, but it starts to get into a romantic relationship between the main characters, and while they only kiss, and only twice (both times as a cover for spying), I'm just not sure about my eight year old reading the book. He loves the idea of a kid spy, but I just don't think he's ready for the "relationship" concept that the main character of Steel begins to think about when he realizes he likes Kaileigh as more than a friend.

MOVED - CHECK BIO says

I. Love. Friggin'. Steel. Trapp. :D

Steel and Kaileigh return in this mysterious and awesome adventure! Steel's father has placed him in a school that is very secluded, and almost from the start of the semester, Steel knows that something about this school is different than others.

I enjoyed reading this book. Since Steel and Kaileigh are at a new school, new characters were introduced. And new bad guys. >:D Wicked. Awesome. The book was fun to read, enjoyable(Obviously), and is a favorite(Of course).

Buuuut.....I have the sneaking suspicion that Ridley Pearson will write a 3rd book. He's currently writing Kingdom Keepers, a famous series that will have 7 books. I'm think that he writes the Steel Trapp series when he's bored, is isn't currently writing anything.

I got that idea because of the ending. The end of the book feels a bit incomplete. Steel and Kaileigh have some moments, but they don't become a couple. Plus, Steel is Steel! He's bound to have more adventures.

My point is that I loved this book and I hope there's going to be another one. 5 stars! Whoo hoo! Go Steven 'Steel' Trapp!

I recommend to Ridley Pearson fans! Ages 12-19 should give this a shot! :D If you enjoy mysteries, adventure, and or thriller/suspense book, PICK THIS UP AND BUY IT.

Becky says

Ages 10 and up. Steven "Steel" Trapp discovers that there's more to his exclusive boarding school, Wynncliff Academy, than meets the eye. He notices that a lot of the students have unusual skills, like his own photographic memory. He also sees students going into the bathroom--and never coming out. He and his friend Kaleigh discover underground tunnels and mysterious clandestine meetings. Meanwhile, Brian Taddler, a cunning street kid housed in a deteriorating boat house by a modern-day Fagin, is assigned a difficult task, the success of which insures him a better life with a real future. Events conspire to put Steel and Taddler at cross purposes, and each boy must use his unique skills to achieve what they eventually discover is the same goal. The second book of a series, it easily was a stand-alone read, only occasionally eluding to the events from the first book. A good spy adventure.

Rachel says

The Academy is about a boy named Steel who has a photographic memory and he has jus been sent to a bording school by his FBI father. There he meets Kaleigh, a friend from his old life and together they attend to the classes of the school. But Steel starts having suspicions that the bording school is not as it seems. He accidentally stumbles across a teacher teaching a group of kids how to use a blowdart in the gym and the odd number of squeeks made by kids going in and out of the washroom at night tells him that some kids are going in but not out of the washroom.

I picked this book up because I had nothing to read and I was bored so I randomly picked up this book and started reading it.

I finished this book because I wanted to find out who was the traitor in the school and because it was pretty funny.

I would recommend this book to Chris because this book is kind of like the Alex Rider series and I know that he likes those books.

Anna says

Beautifully captivating. Loved every moment.

Richard says

I had no idea one of my favorite authors wrote so many YA books. I got this one by mistake and almost did not read it, but am glad I did.

Steven "Steel" Trapp gets himself into some amazing situations through his new prep school, Wynncliff Academy. He also is discovering women in his life, and likes both the excitement of his secret agent activities and the new aspects of his friendship with Kaileigh. More news concerns his total memory of everything he ever sees or hears. Oh, yes, their parents have some secrets, too.

There is also a parallel story involving some street kids that has an unusual ending, too.

This is a very twisted tale that will especially appeal to young teens, maybe some not yet into teen years. There is nothing objectionable in the book, except some of the tension might get a little tense for tender minds. This is truly a tale told to keep you in suspense.

Laurel says

The Academy is a suspenseful book about a teenage boy named Steven "Steel" Trapp. He got his nickname because he can remember everything, which is part of why he is accepted into Wynncliff Academy. Wynncliff academy is an elitist school for gifted children. Steel's father is an FBI agent, which is also part of why he got accepted. Soon Steel and his friend Kaileigh realize that the school is not just a school for gifted children. There is something else going on underneath the bright excitement of everyday learning, something Steel intends to find out for himself.

He soon figures out that the government is training children to be dangerous and deadly spies for the United States, right at his very school. This select group of children competes with each other, and undergo dangerous missions. Just when Steel finally thinks the school holds no more secrets for him, suspicious events occur and he doesn't know who to trust anymore. Are there traitors in the school? Are Steel and his friends in danger?

I really like this book, mostly because I like books that make me think like The Academy did. I liked how Ridley Pearson has a very clear way of writing, he doesn't beat around the bush, but gets straight to the point with his writing. Also, the ending of this book was not predictable at all, there were many plot twists that kept you on your toes and made you want to keep reading.

One thing I didn't like was that we never really found out about what happens after the end of the book. In my opinion there were a few too many loose ends left undone, but maybe he is intending to write a third book to clear everything up.

I recommend this book to teens and young adults that enjoy an action packed book.

Joenna says

Steven "Steel" Trapp has been placed in an East Coast boarding school for gifted kids by his FBI agent father. To his surprise, his friend Kaileigh arrives at the school, and it isn't long before the two realize that this is not your normal prep school. There are dark forces at play. Foreign agents may have penetrated the school's secrecy and have sleepers in place: kids spying on future kid spies. Competition and intrigue among the elite faculty threaten security. As Steel and Kaileigh are recruited for their first run trying to break a ring of pickpockets in a Boston hotel things go impossibly wrong. Betrayal and conspiracy cloud what should have been a straightforward assignment. And all too soon, the two find that their very lives are in danger.

Not as exciting as the first one, and it took way too long for something exciting to happen and the plot explained.

Sarah Monsma says

Steven "Steel" Trapp has it — a mind like a steel trap, that is. His mind has gotten him into a fancy private boarding school, but it's also getting him into trouble. On move-in day at school his prodigious memory is helping him navigate the campus when Steel happens onto a shady lesson. Steel just thinks it's cool — a school where you get taught to use blow guns? Bring it on! But he finds out pretty quickly that this was a secret lesson when the students and instructor attempt to chase him down. When Steel discovers that his good friend Kaileigh is also a new student, they set out to solve the mystery of the school that isn't what it seems. Before they know it they're embroiled in international espionage.

I went looking for a kid spy novel at the library and I found it in Steel Trapp: The Academy! It's actually the second book in a two book series, but unlike some series I've started in the middle, I had no difficulty catching up with the story. This story has enough suspense going to keep even reluctant readers reading and enough twists and turns to keep readers guessing. It's a very fun read and exactly what I was looking for. This book would be a great addition to classroom and school library shelves.

I'm a Boston native and found that the author changed the geography of the city in a few significant ways. That was puzzling as I tried to link my own knowledge with the story and some things were just physically impossible. Also, the author had the kids pull the cord to signal a stop request on the bus. I had to chuckle. I loved the detail, but it's been at least 15 years since I've ridden on a bus here that had pull cords for stop requests. Despite these curious changes, it was fun to read a book that featured Boston. I'll be looking for Steel Trapp: The Challenge so that I can read about Steel and Kaileigh's first adventure.

Mark Buxton says

My name is Steel. I have an "amazing" ability to remember everything. Everybody seems to know about it, but it's real hard to be normal! Kayleigh and I have noticed some weird things going on at Wynnclyff Academy, and I discovered secret tunnels that connect most of the buildings on campus. Four boys have been using them after curfew to meet with one of the teachers. I overheard them talking about an operation and not wanting to get caught. What are they up to? I feel like I'm getting sucked into it, but I'm not sure who I can trust. Kayleigh thinks we should forget about it, but we may not have a choice. I can't forget anything, remember, plus I'm really curious. What do they say? Curiosity killed the cat?

This is a series similar to the Alex Rider and Young James Bond books. Steel's perfect memory is a central part of the plot. He obviously uses to excel in school, but he's learning to use it for surveillance and playing an academy game called Ga-Ga. I don't know if it's a real game somewhere in the world, but it sounds like a cool variation of dodgeball played in an octagonal pit. Many characters interact with Steel, so it's easy to wonder which ones are good and bad. This uncertainty adds to an intriguing plot. The truth behind the secret meetings isn't revealed until much later in the book, so things seem to happen pretty fast as the plot nears the climax. The resolution of the plot sounds like Kayleigh and Steel will have future adventures around the world. However, this book was published in 2010, and I haven't been able to find a sequel since then. Shame, I was enjoying the series.

Melanie Wissel says

Great suspenseful high action YA book. Students with special talents are invited to a private boarding school where strange happenings are noticed by the observant...select students are then recruited to join a secret organization. Though this is the second book in the series, you do not need to have read the 1st book. Think underground passageways, impersonations, suspicious faculty, disappearing boys and a cool new sport.

Jessica C says

The Academy is another recent offering of the classic “kids go to spy school” story. While this is a tried, true, and flogged to death formula, there is much to like about *The Academy*. Back for a second installment, protagonist Steel Trapp is still the likable, inquisitive trouble magnet that he was in Book One: *The Challenge*. This time, his photographic memory lands him an invite to attend Wynnclyff Academy—an exclusive boarding school for teens with extraordinary gifts.

There is an inherent challenge in selling a story about gifted kids—the characters have to live up to their prodigious potential, or else the plot falls flat. (Think *The Mysterious Benedict Society* by Trenton Lee Stewart, where supposedly talented kids solve mysteries largely due to luck and good timing.) The publishing market is already saturated with talented youth. We have seen flying wizards, telepathic werewolves, fortune-telling vampires, and dimension-shifting warlocks. What is Steel Trapp's photographic memory, when compared to all these other super powers?

Still, Pearson manages to put a creative spin on this lesser of “super gifts”. Blessing a hero with a photographic memory can be both a gift and curse. Pearson could have given us someone who is “locked in” by his memory power. Steel Trapp could have been a character that clings to the data his brain absorbs, but is unable to use the information in a practical or creative manner. Instead, Pearson has created an ordinary boy who has a true gift, a far more intriguing combination. (*Harry Potter* is a classic example that comes to mind.)

Steel Trapp is an intelligent and flexible user of his photographic memory. He is able to memorize the body language and behavioral patterns of opponents in a tournament. Better still, he can use this information to predict the actions and reactions of people in dangerous situations. It is this creative application that turns Steel Trapp's moderately interesting gift into an extraordinary spy power. The boy can turn the tide of a losing game, stall the offensive attack of enemies, steal and accurately replicate large banks of confidential data. He is the ultimate weapon for government intelligence.

All this should make for an exciting read. The book is packed with quick-thinking teens, witty repartee, and

enough plot twists to make *CSI* look like a grandma's bedtime story. There is just one problem: The book's jacket blurb gives it all away.

The Academy is 408 pages long. Steel Trapp spends more than half the book trying to figure out why his school isn't all it appears to be. 259 pages in, the hero still doesn't have a clue about the mysterious goings-ons. Meanwhile, the blurb has already told us that Steel Trapp's new school recruits "gifted teens" with the goal of selecting and training a chosen few to serve as special agents for the United States government.

We are also told that Steel Trapp and his friend Kaileigh will be picked as special agents. The pair doesn't get to find out till page 275. Meanwhile, we already know that they will be sent on a mission, only to be betrayed by a conspiracy within the school. It turns out that there are dark factions amongst the faculty—some students have been recruited to spy on the special agents.

Initially, the mention of betrayal and conspiracy had me eagerly reading ahead to find out what would happen. I quickly became frustrated. I had to wade through 293 pages of information before Trap and Kaileigh receive details of the mission that is already summarized in the blurb—to take down a ring of pickpockets in a Boston hotel. This only leaves a hundred pages or so to round up the betrayal and conspiracy bits of the story—a plot twist that I was already anticipating, and therefore not able to appreciate when it finally happened.

I am all for reading a book to enjoy how the characters develop and progress. However, I just simply could not do this with *The Academy*. This book is primarily plot-driven. If a reader already knows what to expect, there remains little to look forward to. While I did read the whole story to see if the book would deliver anything further, I ultimately came up disappointed. This is really too bad, as *The Academy* is a well-written and suspenseful read. Pearson is a sound writer, but he might do better if his marketing team didn't give away his endings.

Amy says

I listened to this on audio and I did not care for the voices the reader used.
