



March of the Mini Beasts

Ada Hopper , Sam Ricks (Illustrations)

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Danger! Action! Trouble! Adventure! Introducing The DATA Set, a brand-new chapter book series for young readers.

What would happen if your next-door neighbor were a mad scientist?

Gabe, Laura, and Cesar live on a quiet cul-de-sac. They are the whiz kids of Newtonburg Elementary and each specializes in their own subject. In fact, everyone in town lovingly refers to them as the Data Set. However, their quiet days of learning take a sudden turn for the exciting when they meet Dr. Gustav Bunsen—a mad scientist who throws the kids into a wild spiral of adventures.

When Dr. Bunsen's latest invention, a growth ray, hits several tiny animal toys, the mini beasts don't just grow, they come to life! The DATA Set love their new tiny pets...until they continue to grow. Now there's an actual elephant in the room—not to mention a chimp, a giraffe, and a dinosaur. When the beasts wander off, it's up to the DATA Set to track them down. But will they catch the mini beasts before they grow big enough to start trouble in town?

With easy-to-read language and illustrations on almost every page, The DATA Set chapter books are perfect for beginning readers!

March of the Mini Beasts Details


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Author : Ada Hopper , Sam Ricks (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review March of the Mini Beasts for online ebook

Emma Burkhart says

This is a super fun series for kids who are starting to have the attention span for chapter books. The stories are funny and full of adventure, and there are pictures on almost every page. There's a goofy mad scientist that will remind you of Doc from Back to the Future. As a bonus, the main characters (the DATA Set themselves) are all Latino, and the girl is the engineer/inventor of the group. Nice work, Ada Hopper!

Sara Houser says

I am super excited to read the second book in this set. The DATA set are three super smart kids who enjoy adventure. Super cute and super quick reads.

Munro's Kids says

I mean for a primary book, I really liked it. It trucked along at a good pace, it was a mostly silly rather than science-y, but the characters were fun and the writing not too painfully dumb (as with many primary books). It was genuinely amusing and entertaining (for a primary book).

-Kirsten

Sandy says

A quick read that will appeal to kids who are in early elementary school and like adventure with a dash of science. The book is slightly wordier than an easy reader making it ideal for grades 2-3 but I can see a 1st grader or even a kindergartner enjoying this book for the story. (Also? I really liked that the three main characters were all Latinx characters. Yay representation!)

Danielle Booe says

DATA Set stands for Danger! Action! Trouble! Adventure! and it just happens to be the mottow of the three protagonists in this book, Gabe, Cesar, and Laura. Along with the rather bumbling Dr. Bunsen they must figure out what to do when one of Dr. Bunsen's inventions zaps Gabe's animal action figures into real life animals that keep growing! With a dash of ingenuity and all of the science skills the group can muster they might just keep everything under wraps.

Tibby (she/her) says

I came across this one at the local Barnes and Noble. We are in desperate need of science fiction in our chapter book collection and I wasn't disappointed with it in terms of story. It was a fun and funny book. As an adult I had to put aside how eager Dr. Bunsen was to work with a group of kids (is that creepy? or is he that much of an absent-minded scientist?) and the science was shaky at best. Still, kids will enjoy the story.

In it, the DATA set, a group of friends, are trying to sell chocolate bars to raise money for their club. They approach the run down house at the end of the block and meet Dr. Bunsen who happens to love chocolate. He invites them in and is delighted when the kids take an interest in his inventions. The kids and Doctor pair up and decide to test out his growth ray on their toy animals. And it works! This seems cool until the animals escape their enclosures and wreak some havoc. The kids come up with a solution for the more traditional animals, but what about the dinosaur? The book ends on a cliff hanger, setting the sequel up.

The cast is diverse and in particular you see it with Cesar who speaks some Spanish at home. The book falls into that same gray area that I was talking about with The Gold Medal Mess yesterday. It's pretty shallow diversity even with the Spanish, but I've yet to see a simple chapter book like this really engage with diversity while not making the story entirely about it. I think Zetta Elliot does it best in her second City Kids book, but that is more historical fiction than science fiction (despite the time travel) and the history focuses on race. I have yet to see a lot more books like that one.

The thing is the book is fine and I think kids will like it. There is some diversity represented in the pictures. It's not a perfect solution, but a compromise I think I have to make right now. A compromise between having no diversity and wanting more. In some ways I feel like I have to buy these books to show publishers that I want diversity so they will publish better titles in the future. Nothing in this felt problematic just shallow (if someone else catches something, please let me know), so it's diversity I'm comfortable having on the shelf. Recommended if you need more science fiction on your shelves.

Kat Ice says

amazingly cute book!! loved how easily it turns into the next book! the pictures were cute and loved the plot! great for kids!

Cristina Mrozek says

This is another Sunshine State Young Reader's Award book this year. It was a quick read, but I did not find it as enticing as other books selected this year. The writing ok, but not great. The illustrations are wonderful. I would recommend this short chapter book for emerging readers.

Jamie says

Nice beginning chapter book series with diverse characters who are in a science club.
SSYRA Jr.

Killian says

Since that was the latest technology it had to have been really cool but it made the animals come to life AND made them big.

Miss Sarah says

A simple starter chapter book about a group of three friends who love science and mini beasts that are accidently created in a neighbor's laboratory. fun and simple this book is fast paced and great for early readers.

Karen Kline says

Three school friends are raising money for a field trip and selling candy door-to-door when they meet Dr. Bunsen. Dr. Bunsen is a scientist of the quirky kind and offers to buy ten boxes of chocolates and the trio figure they are on their way to the "sweet, sweet new neutron generator on display in Teslerville" with the science club. While he is obtaining some "currency" they notice that his house is filled with unusual scientific devices and before they know it he's asking them if they'd like to try his newest invention. When it doesn't work, Bunsen is so distraught that the kids leave without the cash. Bunsen turns up at their treehouse later with a new prototype of his "growth ray" and the kids offer to let him try it on some of their toys. The growth ray doesn't work exactly as planned and the kids end up with some mini-beasts that eventually start to grow. Hijinks ensue as the doctor and kids have to think up a plan to care for the animals before anyone notices that they have a herd of real live exotic animals plus a dinosaur.

Once all the animals except the dino are safely ensconced in a local zoo, the doctor tells the kids that he has been developing a time machine and this will be a perfect chance to try it out. The second book in the series is neatly set up as the kids --oopsie -- end up traveling back in time with the dinosaur and don't know their way back. With cheerful, supporting illustrations on every spread and short chapters that move the plot along, this is a transitional reader series that will be welcomed by the target audience.

Besides the obvious stranger-danger issues that go unmentioned, this is an easy chapter book that covers a lot of ground -- a few light STEM topics, diversity (all the kids are Hispanic and a bit of Spanish is sprinkled in), and friendship. This series is just right for young readers that aren't quite ready for the Magic Tree House series.

Kevin Summers says

Sample quote: "A tall, thin man with a mop of shaggy brown hair and gigantic magnifying goggles rolled back from his lab table. This was Dr. Gustav Bunsen."

Dawn says

Sci-fi adventure story about three 2nd graders who love science. They meet a “mad” scientist while selling chocolate. He tests out his new growth ray on some of their toy animals, and chaos erupts.

I was fine with the sci-fi elements, but zoos know how many animals they have and wouldn't just accept a new animal into their zoo.

Lots of pictures and larger text. Ends in a cliffhanger...

Michelle says

As rated by my 7 year old.
