



Shouldn't You Be in School?

Lemony Snicket , Seth (Illustrations)

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Is Lemony Snicket a detective or a smoke detector?

Do you smell smoke? Young apprentice Lemony Snicket is investigating a case of arson but soon finds himself enveloped in the ever-increasing mystery that haunts the town of Stain'd-by-the-Sea. Who is setting the fires? What secrets are hidden in the Department of Education? Why are so many schoolchildren in danger? Is it all the work of the notorious villain Hangfire? How could you even ask that? What kind of education have you had?

Maybe *you* should be in school?

Shouldn't You Be in School? Details

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Author : Lemony Snicket , Seth (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Shouldn't You Be in School? for online ebook

Amy B says

I can only think back on this book with fondness. :) If the first one felt just a smidge forced, and the second one was chock full of laughs and winks, this one was the one that really got to my heart. The plot really picked up; Hangfire became more of a presence and his evil plans began to fully take effect on the town and all its residents. An awesome group of young heroes and heroines has formed, led by the admirable Lemony Snicket who grows more and more lovable with each book. His narration was brilliant and his inner struggles were palpable. I can't wait to see how this series finishes up....I hope we'll have at least a bit of closure. ;)

Teresa says

More parodying of the hard-boiled detective genre, more book "tips" (always my favorite part) and more thoughtfulness, too; chosen to be read by me at a time similar to the below (from pp. 154-5):

The story of the book filled the car with exciting adventures of the sort that are fun to read about, so we didn't have to think about the exciting adventures of the sort that are no fun to live through.

Adding to the fun for me is that the "story" related in the car by the 13-year-old Snicket is a childhood favorite.

Krisette Spangler says

I'm such a huge fan of Lemony Snicket. This new series is a lot of fun, and it's filled with the same wit that has made him famous. I also like reading about all of the delicious meals Jake cooks up in Hungry's Cafe. Here are a few of my favorite lines from the book:

" Behind a few shrubs was a large, abandoned wagon, longer than an automobile and wider, too. It looked like something a farmer might use, or people who traveled with all the books they owned, just in case they needed one of them."

"You should only snap your fingers if you do it well. It's the same with surgery, or driving a forklift."

"If you've never tasted buttermilk and you're curious what it tastes like, good for you and don't be."

Luna says

I love his stories and I can't wait for this book to come out!

Maygin at Not Quite a Literary Critique says

RTC

Allegra S says

I have read all of Lemony Snicket's books and I think this one must be the best one.

Finally we start to get answers in a series which only asks questions. And no longer did I feel like the kids were totally powerless; something that endlessly frustrates me about both this series and the Series of Unfortunate Events. You are constantly rooting for the underdog, and sometimes the underdog needs a win! Don't be fooled, the mysteries aren't totally resolved in this book, but you begin to feel some hope!

Also the writing really hits its stride in terms of wittiness and plays on words. The dry style of humour really cracked me up, so much so that I often went back and re-read several passages. I really felt like I connected with the main character as well. With both the dry humour he had and the way he took matters into his own hands and began to anticipate the moves of the other characters - I felt like we were both rolling our eyes together at the ridiculous suggestions and predicaments of the other characters.

Other bonuses: great friendships and teamwork amongst the characters introduced in the previous books.

Can't wait to read #4!

C.G. Drews says

I'm pretty sure Lemony Snicket can do no wrong. **This is another work of brilliance, sarcasm, and delicious breakfasts.** Although I'm beginning to think Snicket has a thing against coffee. (Cue *horror* from me, actually.)

Oh and ATTENTION: WE FINALLY KNOW WHAT VFD STANDS FOR. It's sure and certain this time! Mr. Snicket actually *says* it. (Pfft, I'm not telling *you*, that's why you read the book. Duh. Although by this point...I mean I've read all 13 A Series of Unfortunate Event books, then I read the 3 extra books, and I've read 2 of the All The Wrong Question books...it makes me not really trust anyone. So he could still be pulling my leg. But, dangit, I want to believe this!! I DO. But...I'm still unsure.

The writing is as hilarious and witty as usual. There's a very particular strain of humour in these books which never fails to crack me up. And, compared to A Series of Unfortunate Events, where I felt super sorry for Violet, Klaus and Sunny, I always feel that Lemony Snicket can handle himself. His got a very quick mind and isn't afraid to dryly sass. Although the stupid adults never get it.

"And I'd rather not have that kid around here either," her husband said.

"I'd rather not have you call me a kid," I said.

"I'd rather not have my apprentice talk like that to the police," Theodora said.

"I'd rather not listen to my husband boss people around," Mimi Mitchum said.

"Sorry," I said, is it my turn? I have a long list of things I'd rather not do."

Go Lemony.

Since this is the 3rd book in the series, we start getting some questions answered. Of course all the *wrong* questions are still being asked. And Snicket gets quite a beating in this book by the nefarious and ugly bully. Several characters aren't who they seem (surprise surprise) and OH YES. Count Olaf is mentioned! It's like, one sentence, but it still made me giggle. (And Josephine also makes a cameo.) I always squeak with brilliant joy when a piece of the Series of Unfortunate Events puzzle fits into place here. (Although I'm still waiting for Beatrice to arrive.)

Reading by Lemony Snicket's point-of-view is still my favourite. I love him a lot, and his genius and bravery and sarcasm and cluelessness about girls (well, Moxie in particular) is fabulous.

Favourite quotes:

"You don't spend your life hanging around books without learning a thing or two."

*

The world is swirling with so many mysteries and secrets that nobody will ever track down all of them. But with a book you can stay up very late, reading until all the secrets are clear to you. The questions of the world are hidden forever, but the answers in a book are hiding in plain sight.

*

"I don't like you, Snicket," Stew said. "I've never liked you. You're a full portion of my least favourite thing."

"What would that be?" I said. "Justice? Kindness? Literacy?"

*

Josephine caught my eye and gave me a signal we'd used for years to indicate that one of us had to leave. The signal was mouthing the words "I have to leave" and pointing at the door.

Melissa says

A Series of Unfortunate Events has pride of place on my shelves. I loved that series more than anything except *Harry Potter* in my teens, and even then it was a close tie. There was nothing like the excitement of picking up the newest book and pouring obsessively through it for clues, discussing them online for hours, and disappearing into Lemony Snicket's strange but wonderful world. So when *All the Wrong Questions* - a prequel series of four books - was announced, I was delighted. And then *Who Could That Be at This Hour?* was released, and... I was a little less so. Same again with *When Did You See Her Last?*.

I was still very fond of those books - I mean, Lemony Snicket! As a child! Solving mysteries! How could I not love them? But they weren't ASOUE and I didn't really feel like part of the intended audience. The thing is, these books are still largely aimed at children, even though the original ASOUE audience are all grown up now, and the disconnect made me a bit sad. But with *Shouldn't You Be in School?* the magic finally clicked for me again. Back was the breathless page turning, the complete absorption in this world, the grinning like an idiot and wanting to hug the book to me - and above all the staying up until 1am, propping my eyes open with matchsticks because I just. had. to. finish. It's been a long time since I've done that with *any* book, and I love this one all the more for it.

A few reviews mention that *Shouldn't You Be in School?* feels largely like set-up for the next and final installment, and in many ways that's true, but it really really works for me. It feels like we're gearing towards something big and important and all these strange little plot elements that were just a bit odd on their own are finally coming together into something cohesive and wonderful. I can't wait for the next book, and I can't wait to dive back into re-reading ASOUE - an endeavour that fell by the wayside seven books in a couple of years ago, that I just have to resume now. Simply put, I just loved it.

Sara says

There you are, Mr. Snicket, my love. I've been kind of generally underwhelmed (though not unimpressed...I still like them) by the new Lemony Snicket series. The first one had the novelty of the new world and the new tone, and the second one was just kind of meh...but this one. Oh...this one. This is why I love Lemony Snicket.

I think maybe it helped that I listened to the audio book. Klaus (from the *A Series of Unfortunate Events* movie) narrates it, and he's good. I think maybe I didn't understand what the tone of these books was in my brain until I heard him read them out loud. I kinda wish I had listened to the other two. The dark, hard-boiled detective fiction tone really comes across in his narration, and this book just CLICKED with me.

I love that it felt like we were going back to the Lemony Snicket roots with the school plot-line, and I like that we actually got some ANSWERS in this one. I'm really looking forward to the conclusion of the series now.

Suad Shamma says

I absolutely loved this part of the series! I read this on the go from the moment I received my copy, didn't matter if I was getting my hair done, my nails done, waiting at the doctor's office, or at work - this book was with me at all times until I had read it from cover to cover.

Lemony Snicket and Daniel Handler both do not disappoint, as usual. So many things start to make sense in this book, and a lot of questions are answered, albeit not the right ones. I loved this book because it had a more darker feel to it. Snicket seemed more serious (yes, that is possible), the tonality of the story had a more somber, grave feel to it. The town seemed even more grim than usual, and even Snicket had reached a point where he thought if it was worth fighting for anymore. It was very interesting for me to see an earnest, sober side to Theodora, who up until then was an unimportant figure for me. She breezed in and out of scenes and I could not take her seriously, she simply managed to add humor to an otherwise humorless book. Until now that is.

It shows the gravity of the situation to have Theodora tell Snicket to let things be and go home. The evil of Hangfire is reaching new depths with each new installment to the series, that you can't figure out who's who anymore? Who's good? Who's joined the dark side? Ellington is on top of that list...I can't figure her out. I can't put my finger on it, but there's something off about her. I liked the scene with her and Snicket, and a glimpse into what could've been a possible romance budding.

But I also really like Moxie, and enjoy her interactions with Snicket, and his seemingly unintentional

disregard to her feelings.

We also get to learn more about the secret organization that Snicket is a part of, and a lot more about his sister. To those who have read A Series of Unfortunate Events, we also get to hear about a few characters that you might recognize from his previous series.

I can't wait to learn more about Beatrice though...if she even comes up.

One last book before the whole mystery is wrapped up. Cannot wait!

Drew says

The only drawback of this novel is that it is very much a middle installment. While the adventure itself is self-contained (mystery of the fires / eventual resolution), there is the never-more-apparent sense that big things are coming and the next & final installment of the quartet will bring them to pass. But Snicket doesn't give up on allowing quiet moments here and there, thinking about the greater (and stranger) mysteries of the world he's created. The images of Stain'd-by-the-Sea have never been clearer and while there's certainly a fair amount of affect to the characters, they're all living and breathing people. There is a quality of craft here that belies the series' spot on store shelves; adults will be just as entertained as their children.

More at RB: <http://wp.me/pGVzJ-11b>

Rebecca says

You can read this review and more on my blog

In a nutshell: A wonderful addition to the All the Wrong Questions series and quite possibly my favourite so far!

I am a huge Lemony Snicket fan and A Series of Unfortunate Events was my favourite series growing up. As much enjoyment as I get out of reading the books again now, it is an absolute pleasure to have a new series by Lemony Snicket to read too. Age should not be a boundary with books and it's not something that prevents me from loving this series any less than I would have done 10 years ago. I'm no longer a teenager now so more than ever, I've been reminiscing and reading this series reminds me of my love for ASOUE.

Shouldn't You Be in School? features another mystery in Stain'd-by-the-Sea, with Snicket investigating a case of arson and the mysterious happenings in the Department of Education. There are still lots of questions that the reader wants answers to, but we are moving quite quickly now to the end of the series.

As always, there were lots of wonderful quotes in this one. (It wouldn't be a Lemony Snicket book without quotability!) "You don't spend your life hanging around books without learning a thing or two" is one of my favourites, not to mention the things that made me laugh out loud. I love the humour in these books. They're quick reads that are so much fun and I can see myself returning to them again and again.

The mystery is another interesting one that is well crafted and engaging. Combined with the wit and

awesome characters, *Shouldn't You Be in School?* is as delightful a read as the previous books. Though I can't particularly pinpoint why, I enjoyed this one a lot in particular and I'd consider it to be my favourite in the series so far. If you're a Snicket fan and you've not yet picked this series up, you really should.

Source: Publisher

I received this book from Hardie Grant Egmont in exchange for an honest review

Victoria says

Although Snicket books are witty, funny and sarcastic, with each book in this series I feel so sorry for him. Lemony Snicket has to dive into more and more treachery to save Stain'd-by-the-Sea instead of trying to rescue his sister Kit from prison. Finally, S. Theodora Markson realises that she isn't a good chaperone nor a good volunteer, which was unexpected because adults almost never admit they are wrong in a Snicket book.

This was a great penultimate book in the series - just enough suspense and build-up, a few questions answered, but more questions asked. Is Ellington Feint a villain after all? Will Snicket save his sister? What does the S. stand for in Theodora Markson's name? Is Hangfire somehow connected to Count Olaf? Or these *all the wrong questions*?

Dan says

This is the third and penultimate book in the *All the Wrong Questions* series, the prequel series to *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. Gradually the crimes in the books have got more serious from theft to kidnap and here to arson. The mysterious villain Hangfire is still up to no good and the young Lemony Snicket is on the case. But things aren't going well in the drab town of Stain'd-by-the-Sea and it looks like Snicket might fail this time.

This is "Lemony Snicket" at his very best. There's a great noir feeling and now that there is a full cast of characters the author can use them all to his advantage, creating a story full of twists and turns. In reality, the original arson has little to do with the plot, although quite what Hangfire's overall plan is beyond me. For me this had a stronger plot than the previous two books and manages to work well as an individual story and a part of the series.

As ever, I am completely enamored by Lemony Snicket's writing style, a phrase which here means I love the fun definitions, the witty remarks and the genuine wisdom hidden among it. I kind of want Snicket to re-write lots of famous works (including many classics mentioned in this book) so I can enjoy other great stories in his style. I prefer the way he writes to any other author ever.

This is tied into *A Series of Unfortunate Events* more than the other books. As well as a few subtle references there's a bit more about the mysterious V.F.D. organisation and we are finally told once and for all what those initials stand for- and it is so Lemony Snicket it hurts.

All in all, a really enjoyable read from a really enjoyable author. I am looking forward to the final book of the series and hope Lemony Snicket has lots of plans for future works.

Bruna Miranda says

Tinha esquecido como a escrita de Lemony Snicket é deliciosa. A série Só Perguntas Erradas foi meu primeiro contato com o autor e logo no primeiro livro fiquei encantada como ele brinca com as palavras, apresenta informações de forma sutil e muda o rumo da história em duas linhas.

Nesse terceiro volume da série o leitor finalmente sabe mais sobre Snicket, o narrador e personagem misterioso, há uma mistura de personagens dos outros volumes e trama contra Hangfire fica mais elaborada. Assim como nos outros, a arte de Seth ao longo do livro dá um toque especial.

Esse foi o meu volume favorito por 3 motivos: livros são extremamente importantes, o jogo Beethoven e um plot twist <3

Sheida says

It's fun and it's filled with Snicket's unique style of writing. My problem with this series is just that I constantly forget the plot of the previous book when I start and lack the drive to continue on to the next one when I finish.

Carol says

My brain... jezz, my brain, it's going to explode. What a book! So many things going on, so many treacherous things. Stew is far worse than I thought would be possible, Hangfire is far more scarier than I thought, and Ellington has done nothing to gain my trust yet. I knew she was trouble, and she might be capable of doing the right things... but she is also very capable of doing the wrong ones, so she is dangerous. The whole mystery was very stressful, Theodora is more sensible than I thought she would, but still not useful. The thing hidden in town is horrible but I kinda had guessed that was part of the plan all along, and now I'm convinced those children will become food in the future. Food for a large and horrifying beast that I'm sure is lurking around.

Now I need the other one. But I also need a break to digest all the information. Damn you, Snicket! You're good.

Josiphine/Tessa says

[Also, you should have seen my face when he mentions that Josephine stopped to visit him. JOSEPHINE? DO YOU THINK IT'S *THE* JOSEPHINE? I do not think that he would recycle a name like that; he i

Lea Sprenger says

You shouldn't pay too much attention to this review because I'm definitely biased.

I just love Lemony Snicket's style. His weirdness, and wordplays, and all the universe that he's built around the Series of Unfortunate Events. What can I say? I just really loved his work when I was little, and I'm not going to stop loving it now. Besides, Seth's illustrations are gorgeous. It really captures the atmosphere of the books.

The only thing that bothers me a little is all the unanswered questions that've been piling up since the first book, and the fact that I'll have to wait TWO MORE WEEKS until the fourth book arrives at my house.

Ellen Trautner says

Hilarious as always, some great plot twists, book recommendations and summaries snuck in, an admonition to warn adults against smoking, and great breakfast recipes! Lemony Snicket is genius.

But the reason this gets 5 stars is because of the VFD. Lemony Snicket actually states what it stands for and gives a great speech about why it exists, why it will never be victorious but invincible nonetheless. The description between good and bad members of the VFD is also funny.

Aunt Josephine, from The Wide Window, shows up, and Olaf is mentioned (seemingly is a legitimate count, too) and we learn a little bit about Bertram, the father of the Baudelaire children. Super exciting!
