



Clara Lee and the Apple Pie Dream

Jenny Han , Julia Kuo

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Meet Clara Lee.

Likes: her best friends, her grandpa, her little sister (when she's not being annoying, which is almost always), candy necklaces, and the Apple Blossom Festival.

Dislikes: her little sister (when she's being annoying, which is almost always), her mom's yucky fish soup, and bad dreams (even though Grandpa says they mean good luck).

After a bad dream, Clara Lee has a whole day of good luck. But when her luck changes, she upsets her friends and family. Will Clara Lee have good luck again in time to try out for the Little Miss Apple Pie pageant?

Clara Lee is a delightful character from acclaimed author Jenny Han. This charming, humorous chapter book is perfect for fans of Clementine and Judy Moody!

Clara Lee and the Apple Pie Dream Details

Date : Published January 4th 2011 by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9780316070386

Author : Jenny Han , Julia Kuo

Format : Hardcover 160 pages

Genre : Realistic Fiction, Cultural, Childrens, Middle Grade, Contemporary, Juvenile, Fiction

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From Reader Review Clara Lee and the Apple Pie Dream for online ebook

Mundie Moms & Mundie Kids says

Clara Lee is a fun, cute, book with wonderful illustrations and a fantastic message about being proud of who you are. Clara Lee lives with her parents, younger sister and Grandpa. She has a great imagination, a best friend and dreams of being the Apple Pie Princess. Like many kids her age, Clara learns how to enjoy the good days she has, and how to hold your head high during the bad days, when kids make fun of you, when you fight with a friend and get in trouble at home. Luckily for Clara she has wonderful parents and a Grandpa who help her make better choices and most importantly who give her the encouragement she needs to fulfill her dreams.

The most important message in Clara Lee and the Apple Pie Dream is when Clara finally gets the confidence to enter the Apple Pie Dream. A mean girl tells her she's not American as Apple Pie, and that really affects her. From her family she learns that though her family heritage is Korean, she is as American as Apple Pie, she's both American and Korean, and she should be proud of that. I loved the way in which diversity played a part in this story, as many kids will be able to relate to Clara Lee. I liked learning a little bit more about the Korean culture through Clara Lee. This is a wonderful story that kids in 2nd-4th grade will enjoy. It's also one fans of Judy Moody, Junie B Jones, and Clementine may like.

Wendi Lee says

This was so good! Clara Lee lives in Bramley, where one of the biggest events is the Apple Blossom Festival. She wants to try out for Little Miss Apple Pie, but she's nervous about the competition - giving a speech about what makes Bramley special in front of the entire elementary school.

Her classmate questions whether Clara Lee is American as apple pie enough. How long has Clara's family lived in Bramley? Can she be 100% American if she's also 100% Korean?

I loved how this novel embraces diversity, with boisterous Clara Lee and the special bond she has with her family, especially her grandfather.

Mandy says

****I read an ARC of this book where much of the art was not finalized****

This book was short and sweet, about a Korean- American girl named Clara Lee who has dreams of being on the Apple Blossom Festival. She has a dream that her grandfather interprets to mean good luck, which leads her to keeping track of all the good things that happen to her. As the list grows, she gets the courage to sign up for the speech contest that determines who will ride on the float. But as her luck seems to turn, will she be able to talk in front of the whole school on her own? Nice lesson about every day being sprinkled with good and bad luck, and nice integration of the Korean culture. The art that was included looked promising, gentle sketches that flowed with the story but didn't detract from it.

Doret says

8 yr old Clara Lee wants to be Little Miss Apple Pie for the Apple Blossom Festival. Clara Lee is scared about going for Little Miss Apple pie until her Grandpa interpret her dream, to mean good luck.

The next day everything goes right for Clara Lee. But too soon, good luck is gone. Clara Lee, gets in trouble at the dinner table and into a fight with a very good friend. Another girl who wants to be Little Miss Apple Pie tells Clara Lee she's not American enough to win.

This story was great I am going to begin bold and say this is a 2011 Newbery contender. (I know that's serious but trust me its that good)

Han's does a wonderful job with all aspects of this story. It's very well rounded. I loved Clara Lee's voice. We get to see all sides of Clara Lee. I loved Clara Lee's relationship with her Grandpa. It's very sweet.

One of the many things I loved about this story, its never about identity. Clara Lee embraces her Korean and American heritage. Also the author smoothly incorporates Clara Lee's fear of not being considered American enough (something many can relate to) without making a big deal about it. Kuo's illustrations are wonderful, fitting the text perfectly and adding to the magic of the story.

There's was just such an easiness to this story that I really enjoyed. Clara Lee is one of my favorite protagonist of the year. 8 up

Beverly says

Read again for a Cozy Mysteries Group monthly challenge (Feb. 2018)

Ardea Smith says

Title / Author / Publication Date: Clara Lee and the Apple Pie Dream/Jenny Han/2011

Genre: Fiction

Format: Hardcover

Plot summary: Clara Lee knows exactly what she likes: her best friends, her grandpa, kimchi, candy necklaces, and her dream of becoming the next Little Miss Apple Pie.

Clara Lee knows exactly what she doesn't like: when her little sister is being annoying, her mom's fish soup, bad dreams (but Grandpa says they mean good luck), and speaking in front of lots of people (but she'll have to do it for the pageant).

After a bad dream, will Clara Lee's luck change for the better? Can she overcome her fear of speaking in

public and win Little Miss Apple Pie? (GoodReads)

Considerations or precautions for readers advisory: Content deals with some issues of being mixed-race (Korean American).

Review citation: Hickey, K. (2011). Clara Lee and the Apple Pie Dream (Book Review). School Library Journal, 57(2), 81.

Section source used to find the material: Children's Core Collection, Most Highly Recommended

Recommended age: 7 and up

Yukiraking says

This was adorable. It wasn't deep. It wasn't much other than fluffy kid stuff, but then it never tried to be anything else. What it was, however, was exactly the kind of book I would have wanted to read as a kid. I didn't have it back then, when it would have been a favourite for me, but I still enjoyed it now, even though I'm well above the intended demographic. It was so sweet. And Clara Lee's grandfather was probably my favourite part. He was sweet and adorable, and Clara's heartbreak at disappointing him really struck a chord with me.

As my first foray into Jenny Han's writing, I can't say she's amazing just yet, but I have decided that she's caught my interest. I'm going to read one of her trilogies next, in order to fully decide on my opinion on her, but I did thoroughly enjoy Clara Lee's story.

Edward Sullivan says

Fun, appealing story for young independent readers. Would make a good classroom read aloud, too, for 2nd or 3rd grade.

Erica Elwell says

I really liked this early chapter book! It's got great diversity with a Korean American family. Clara Lee has a great relationship with her grandfather and her parents. She also has a pretty realistic relationship with her sister...she is annoyed by her but does love her.

Clara Lee makes a few mistakes but she listens to her grandpa and parents and tries to make amends.

The best part of this book is the theme about being 100% American and 100% Korean or whatever ethnicity.

Recommend: 6 and up depending on reading level; one small comment about dream interpretation and some things regarding Korean history...not bad but worth having a conversation with the reader

Katherine says

Genre: Children's fiction, realistic fiction

Format: Print

Plot: Clara Lee, a Korean-American third-grader, desperately wants to be Little Miss Apple Pie. After a good dream, she finds herself brimming with confidence and luck.

Readers advisory:

Review citation: SLJ 2010

Source: Children's Core Collection

Recommended age: 6-8

Sarah BT says

I'm a big fan of Jenny Han, especially her first novel, the fantastic tween novel *Shug*. So when I saw she was heading back to MG territory, I was thrilled!

Clara Lee is a younger tween read, but perfect for young tweens looking for an easy chapter book to read. Clara Lee's voice is fun and she surrounds herself with a memorable cast of characters. Her relationship with her Grandpa is sweet and I loved when Clara Lee would try to spell the words Grandpa was trying to read- too cute. She has an annoying little sister Emmeline, who must be the star of everything and tries to steal the spotlight. The sister dynamic will resonate with anyone who grew up with a sister (older or younger)-Jenny Han has it spot on! And Clara Lee's frustration with her parents will be something readers can easily relate to.

Clara Lee isn't perfect-and that's what I like about her. Sure, she's full of optimism and has a lot of spunk to her, but she also gets upset with her parents after they punish her, as well as getting into a disagreement with a friend at school. Life is never easy or fair, but Clara Lee learns to deal with it the best she can.

The book has a nice message without ever getting too preachy and messagey. In fact, it's so well written into the story that I think tweens won't feel like they're getting a book with a "lesson" but instead will just enjoy a fun story. I wish the book had been a bit longer. I really liked Clara Lee and wanted to spend just a bit more time with her. There are also some side characters I wish we could have gotten just a bit more of. I really hope this turns into a series because I'd love more adventures with Clara Lee!

Book Pairings: Clara Lee would pair perfectly with other spunky tween heroines like Clementine, Judy Moody, Ivy & Bean, and Piper Reed. Although the book is much shorter, I think readers who enjoy the Allie Finkle series would also enjoy Clara Lee.

Liz Padula says

Typed by a 3rd grader for her summer reading project.

Clara Lee and the apple pie dream is about a girl named Clara Lee who is about 9 years old and lives in a small town. She goes to school there and has lots of friends. In the book, there is a contest to be the "little princess". Many people want to be the little princess because the winner gets to be on a the apple pie festival float in a parade. You have to try out and make a speech in front of the whole school the school votes to choose the winner. The winner gets to ride on the float at the apple pie festival. I hope you enjoy the book!!!

Bethany says

Apparently, I just love Jenny Han. Everything she writes, I love.

It's always hard to explain what it is that makes intermediate novels good, because, well, here's the plot:

Clara Lee is in the third grade. She's Korean-American, and her grandfather interprets dreams. She has one day of incredible good luck after her , and she decides to sign up to be Little Miss Apple Pie, and she really really wants to be Little Miss Apple Pie in the apple festival, but she'll have to give a speech in front of the entire school. And her luck has started to turn bad.

So, not super exciting, right? The stakes, not so high. But this book is incredibly charming. Clara Lee's family--her "Korean dream genius" grandfather, her sister's preference for eating kimchi for every meal--is warm and quirky and loving. Her town is small and sweet and has a personality of it's own. And Clara Lee herself, all of her fears and hopes and her unique phraseology, is a fantastic protagonist. And that's what makes a good book for this age range. Main characters with lots of personality and secondary characters who are realistic and have sparks of their own. In a realistic contemporary novel, stakes in third grade are never super-high, but if the character is good, and if the stakes matter enough to them, they can feel pretty darn important.

Anyway, I love Clara Lee and her grandpa, and I want to live in Bramley with them.

Dolly says

It took us a long time to read this book. We had a slow start and put it down for awhile. But once we got really into the story, we finished it quickly. We liked the various characters and we loved the mixture of Korean culture and the Apple Blossom Festival. The black and white illustrations are very expressive and complement the story nicely. We really enjoyed reading this story and would like to read more about Clara Lee and her family and friends.

Rachel Reads Ravenously says

4 stars!

I thought this chapter book was so cute and I wish Jenny Han would write more! The thing I loved most about this book was the glimpse into normal Korean culture from Clara Lee's perspective, nothing was made

to be very different or exotic, it was her everyday normal life.

If you are looking for a chapter book for the child in your life, I highly recommend this one! It was a delight!

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