



Title: Secrets Of The Toad

Author: Trisha Page

Genre: Fiction/Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror

Audience: YA/Middle Grade

Word Count: 18410

Assessment:

Plot: Trisha Page's novel tackles all of the discomforts of adolescence—bullying, cliques, and insecurities. *Secrets of the Toad's* word count, dialogue, and themes favor middle grade fiction. The author's tale offers a playful approach to crucial values for early development.

Prose/Style: For a middle-grade audience, the vocabulary perfectly caters to young minds. Page's book appeals to young readers because the character's thoughts are revealed through an inner voice and not written into the story. A third-person intimate perspective allows elementary thoughts to be filtered through a mature narrator, yet Page allows Emma to express her emotions with innocent intensity.

Originality: With a new approach to Jiminy Cricket—amphibian turned mentor—Tobias the Toad provides wise proverbs, which are both fanciful and useful. Teaching lessons through haikus, Page demonstrates how three lines of guidance can impact a child's life.

Character Development/Execution: Readers can sympathize with the self-effacing Emma. She is placed in a world where she is expected to navigate with little control. Page plunges into the mind of a child, where small feats feel monstrous and friendship determines self-esteem.

Score:

- Plot/Idea: 8
- Originality: 8
- Prose: 9
- Character/Execution: 9
- Overall: 8.50

Report Submitted: July 22, 2021