

2nd PLACE LEVEL I

Dear Mr. Spinelli,

I am in the fourth grade and just read your book *Maniac Magee*. I enjoyed the book very much because I was able to make many connections to my life.

It was hard for me to believe people could be so prejudiced back then. I have never seen black and white people be so mean to each other. Then I started to think about how some kids at my school show their prejudice in a different way.

I go to special classes for reading and math. They are very hard for me. Some of the kids treat me very differently because of this. They make me feel like I am different from them, but I am not. I just learn differently. Also the real popular kids treat us like we are not as good as they are. The popular kids act like Piper and Russell in the story. They treated the black kids like they were not as good as they were just because they were white. It doesn't matter if we are black or white, real popular, or go to special classes, we are all the same on the inside. Amanda reminds me of my friend Kelsey. Amanda is always kind to everyone. The day her "A" encyclopedia was

Over, please

turned into confetti she didn't even get mad. One day in class a girl named Julie took and ripped Kelsey's *High School Musical* book. Kelsey asked Julie why she ripped it, but didn't get mad. Then she fixed it.

Two of my strengths are patience and compassion. I have to have a lot of patience learning how to read better. Maniac Magee had a lot of patience when he taught Grayson how to read. He also showed compassion because he didn't poke fun at him, but was always respectful. I show compassion to the other kids that get extra help by not laughing if they make a mistake.

Please keep writing your books. *Maniac Magee* helped me feel good about myself.

Sincerely,

Kayla Brown

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