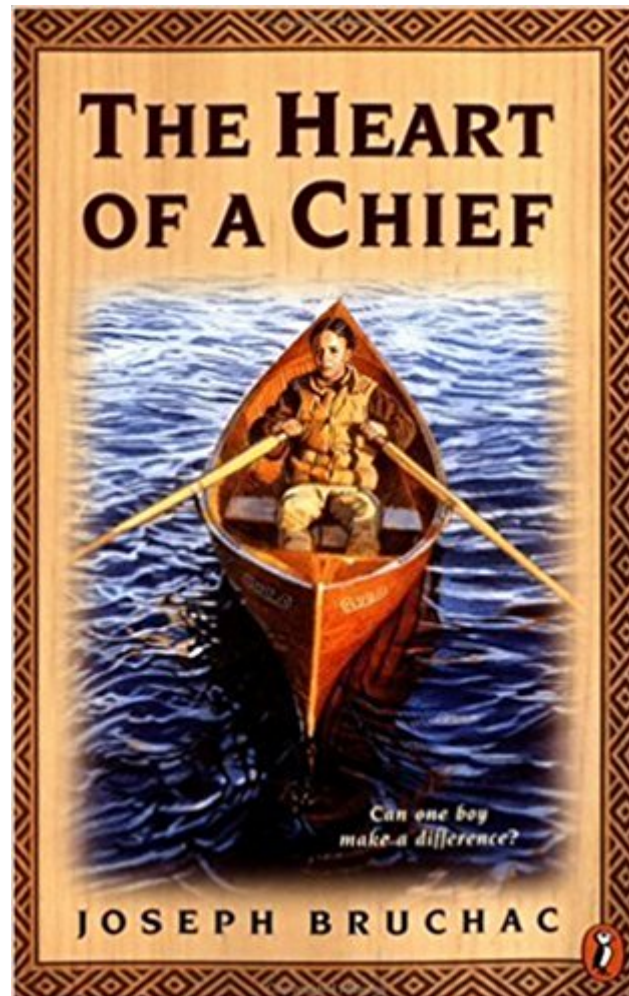




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The Heart Of A Chief



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Synopsis

Chris Nicola's life is complicated. He lives on the Penacook Indian Reservation and goes to school in town. At school, things are going great--he's been selected to lead a group project on using Indian names for sporting teams. But it's another story at home. The Penacook are divided over whether or not to build a casino on a beautiful island Chris things of as his own. Is there anything one sixth-grade boy can do? "Chris's compelling voyage of self-discovery is grounded in everyday events...allowing readers to see into the heart of this burgeoning chief." -Publishers Weekly "Readers who see injustice in their own lives will admire how much Chris accomplishes with a simple message of respect." -Booklist

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

"Bruchac explores what it means to be Native American in a modern society through the perceptive first-person narrative of 11-year-old Chris Nicola," said PW. Ages 8-12. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Grade 5-8-A contemporary story about an 11-year-old Penacook boy's emergence as a leader.

Chris Nicola and his little sister are cared for with affection and wisdom by elderly Auntie and Doda. Their mother is deceased and their father is away battling alcoholism. The stories and traditions of Chris's people give the boy the courage and conviction to deal with life. Upset by the proposed establishment of a casino on a pristine island on the New Hampshire reservation, he and three friends destroy a surveyor's stakes. With unwavering passion, he defends his actions to reservation law officers. Wary but determined, Chris starts sixth grade at Rangerville Junior High and mingles with the white world. He is chosen as leader for a group report on using Indian names for sports teams. His call for unanimity through discussion mirrors tribal practices and generates a presentation that exposes the insensitivity of the school and attracts community attention. Chris is an appealing, resilient, optimistic character. His sincerity wins friends among adults and peers, even the reputed school bully. An effective balance of dialogue and first-person narrative propel the story forward. This upbeat narrative does not disguise the harsh realities of reservation life or the social and emotional struggles of Native Americans. Rather, the qualities of leadership emerge in Chris as he taps into his rich cultural past, recognizes his own potential, and stands up for his values. Gerry Larson, Durham Magnet Center, Durham, NC Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The hardest thing to find in a public school library are books about the current lives of Native Americans. This book presents not only a current view but a well-researched and layered treatment of the complexities of modern life on the reservation. As interesting as our (Native Americans) history is, we are still alive. We did not die out when we stopped living in tipis. Bruchac presents a sensitive and beautiful look into the life of a 6th grade boy from the reservation dealing with family, internal tribal and community issues. This book should be required reading in any classroom that is looking for a realistic balance the "Indian as History" curriculum that pervades American Education. This version even has connection notes to other great pieces of literature for this age group. The Heart of a Chief

I read this book for an Elementary Ed Teaching Literacy course, and I really enjoyed it. It seems very real, but also encouraging and hopeful. I like how it dispels some common stereotypes about Native Americans, but there are also many situations and emotions the main character experiences that can be related to any person of any ethnicity, which I think would help children see Native Americans as very much like themselves, but also appreciate their different ways of life. I found some of the issues presented very relevant to real situations in New England (the school mascot

names, the casino controversies, even some of the tribal names which correspond to places or rivers in New England that students may recognize). This book teaches that even children can make a difference and people will listen if you stand up for what is right. It also exemplifies that there is always hope, possibilities, and alternative solutions to problems. It doesn't pretend there are no problems, it's real, and also encouraging. I especially liked the stories that the wise old Doda told to teach life lessons. My favorite is in chapter 6. :) But I don't want to give it away. I highly recommend the book!

Hi my name is MeeRee and I read *The Heart of the Chief*. The book is about a young Indian trying to handle everyday problems. The story takes place during around this time today. When I read this book I learned ten things about the modern day Native Americans. I learned they live on reservations and go to regular schools, they drive in cars, and really enjoy following their cultures. What I found interesting is that a lot of them don't speak their native tongue. Native American kids today also enjoy doing what regular kids like to do. Most Indians now live in houses on reservations instead of teepees or wigwams. They eat our food and most of them shop at stores instead of poaching for food like deer or turkeys. They also wear regular clothes. They don't wear deerskins or hide anymore. Native Americans are very different today! There is a sentence that inspired me. "And I know that whatever happens to me from now on, whether it is good or bad, I will always remember this: that the heart of a true chief beats with the hearts of the people." That sentence was my favorite in the whole book! It shows that to be a true leader you have to think about your people before yourself. Chris was the main character in this book. His family have a lot of similarities and differences to people today. Chris lives in a modern day house and goes to regular schools, just like me. Chris lives on a reservation for Native Indians and he and his friends are still called nicknames, which they got after something they did incredible or something they are. People today are still a lot like Chris and his family. The part I enjoyed the most was when Chris and his friends did their report on Indian names being used as sports logos or team names. I thought that the report they did really started to make a difference. I would definitely recommend this book to a friend especially if they wanted to learn more about Native Americans. Out of 5 stars I would give a 5! It was well written and had a good moral. I think the book was really inspiring. It shows not to give up. A little believing can make a big difference!

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