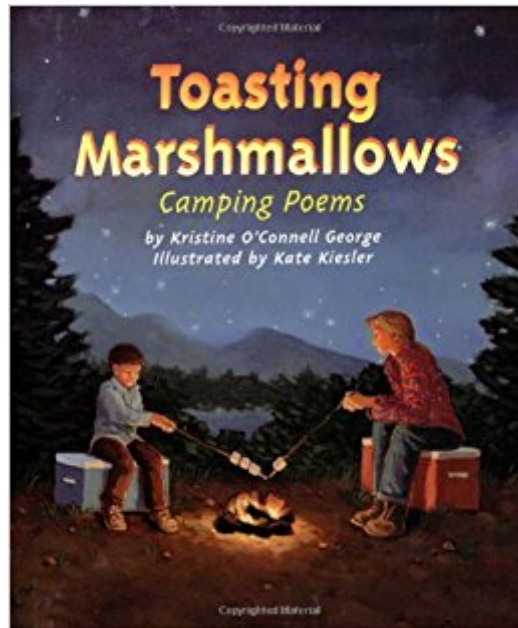




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Toasting Marshmallows: Camping Poems



Synopsis

Everything that happens when you go camping can be an adventure, from getting dressed inside your sleeping bag on a chilly morning to meeting a moose to sharing secrets in a tent at night. Kristine O'Connell George turns the memorable moments of a family outing into spirited, evocative verse, and Kate Kiesler's vivid paintings provide a cast of characters and the perfect setting. The captivating poems and pictures in *Toasting Marshmallows* will leave readers with wonderful memories of a camping trip—even if they've never been on one!

Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

Kindergarten-Grade 4-George has penned 30 sublimely simple poems that capture the sights, sounds, smells, and sensations of a family's camping trip, from pitching the tent to pulling up stakes and returning home. All of the selections convey a child-focused sense of wonder as the campers explore the lakefront and surrounding terrain, enjoy the marvels of the natural world, relish meals round the campfire, and toast marshmallows ("This is art-/a time of serious reflection/as my pillowed confection/slowly reaches golden perfection"). The poems are varied and inventive, replete with marvelous images and universal truths. There's even a selection devoted to the "Mosquito Song." Each one is accompanied by a well-executed and evocative acrylic painting. Some of Kiesler's artwork sweeps across double pages to provide a dramatic vista-a meandering hiking trail, a field of wild mustard, a star-studded night sky-while other pictures reveal small, but equally telling details. In

"Flannel," the child is shown holding her pine-, smoke-, and moss-scented camping shirt to her face, paired with the words, "I keep it hidden/in my bottom drawer-/where no one will find it/and wash away/my memories." A terrific idyll for summertime sharing, even for confirmed couch potatoes. Luann Toth, School Library Journal Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

George deftly describes the satisfying sequence of familiar events in a summer camping experience in this collection of 30 related poems perfectly paired once again with Kiesler's inviting oil paintings (The Great Frog Race and Other Poems, 1998 etc.) The daily rhythms of a camping trip are presented from the "Tent" to exploring an "Abandoned Cabin" to observing "A Doe." Shared common experiences include "Sleeping Bag": "It's so cold outside. I'm getting dressed inside/my sleeping bag. I wriggle, scootch, scrunch, and jiggle. Flop/Front flips, back flips— I'm a caterpillar/in a cozy cloth cocoon/that zips." Short pieces like "Mosquito Song" demonstrate pointed wordplay with a witty use of alliteration and onomatopoeia. "It's

Meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee! / Mosquueeeeeeeeeto! / Is that you, Dinner? / Greeeeeeeeeetings." Kiesler expresses the changing vistas of the countryside from the uneasy, dark palette of the double-page spread for "Storm" to the bright, sunshiny view of a field for "Wild Mustard." The changing layout of each page gives a sense of surprise to the most ordinary of events, the words of the concrete poem, "Eavesdropping," "Tipping/a slender/silver ear" placed in the shape of a crescent moon, the stanzas of "Flashlight" positioned in the beams of light to name just a few. Altogether an engaging trip. Kirkus Reviews Like their previous collaboration, The Great Frog Race and Old Elm Speaks, this volume by George and Kiesler is as delicious as a toasted marshmallow treat. George's poems are well crafted, varied and easily accessible. The topics range from a tent-shaped poem about the careful raising of the family's canvas lodging to post-trip unpacking, in which a child tucks away a flannel shirt perfumed in scents of pine, wood fire and forest moss in her "bottom drawer— / where no one will find it/and wash away [her] memories." Though Kiesler's human figures are sometimes wooden, she suffuses her acrylic landscapes with light filtered through leaves. A few of the illustrations seem too idyllic and scrubbed (in "Abandoned Cabin," its "crumbling fireplace" looks newly constructed; in another, the brother's "grubby hands" seem freshly washed). Yet George's poems shine, the images clear and startling. A "panther cloud crosses the sky

Amazing poetry that embraces the great outdoors. More appropriate for 8 years and up. This book really expresses many aspects of camping in thought provoking ways. It's a winner!

Excellent birthday gift for kids that camp. The imagery of the poems is lovely and illustrations very well done. We keep this in our camper and my 5 yo boy loves it. Perfect introduction to poetry.

Loved the poems and the book is beautifully illustrated. This will be fun to pass around and let everyone read aloud around the campfire. We have three 6 year olds in our group and they should have no problem reading most of the poems.

Do you have someone in your family who burns their marshmallows black and another who patiently waits for it to turn golden brown? There is a poem for that! If you love poetry and nature, you will love this book! Get your children hooked on poetry with this book!

These are great poems that bring back so many memories of our camping days..

Lovely variety of poems. I keep it in the camper to share with kids.

This will be a family favorite around the campfire. Uses more mature poetic verse than most kids poetry, but still readable and accessible for all ages. Lovely illustrations. I couldn't be happier with this purchase.

Wonderful poems to read aloud around a campfire, or when you wish you were around a campfire.

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