



The Lucky Sovereign

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

The publishers draw the attention of the potential purchaser to the suitability of this book 'for National Curriculum English - Reading, Key Stages 1 and 2. Scottish Guidelines English language - Reading, Levels B/C; Environmental Studies, People in Society'. There is a slightly uneasy sense about this text that they gave precisely this brief to the author-illustrator. The narrative does not quite 'work', though a story of a father and son (no mention of mother or siblings) setting sail for Jamestown and the New World should be exciting enough. The shipboard skullduggery isn't wholly plausible. Sam's father is robbed of all his savings and accused of being a penniless immigrant (and so liable to slavery) by a seaman already proven to be a thief. Some bright sparks in those KS1 and KS2 classes would ask, 'But why would they believe a thief rather than Sam's father?', and they'd be right to do so. And why use names such as Squire Trelawney and Flint with their echoes of Stevenson - and the ship is called the Treasurer and there's an episode reminiscent of Jim Hawkins' eavesdropping in the apple barrel? The arrival at Jamestown allows the introduction in the closing pages of a historical character, John Rolfe and his 'beautiful wife, the princess Pocahontas' (who are duly followed up in a concluding historical note). Physically, this is a handsome book and the artwork provides much to interest the historically or nautically minded reader, not least because of the intriguing perspectives from which we view the action. It's just that sense that the book may be serving too many masters.

Running Order:

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