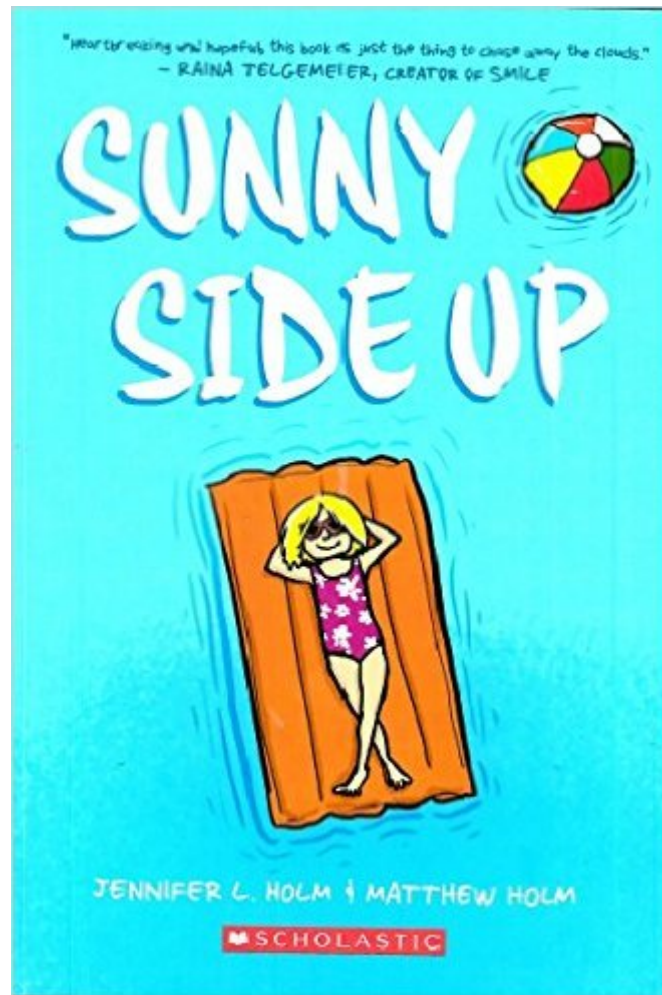


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# Sunny Side Up



## Synopsis

Sunny Lewin has been packed off to Florida to live with her grandfather for the summer. At first she thought Florida might be fun -- it is the home of Disney World, after all. But the place where Gramps lives is no amusement park. It's full of . . . old people. Really old people. Luckily, Sunny isn't the only kid around. She meets Buzz, a boy who is completely obsessed with comic books, and soon they're having adventures of their own: facing off against golfball-eating alligators, runaway cats, and mysteriously disappearing neighbors. But the question remains -- why is Sunny down in Florida in the first place? The answer lies in a family secret that won't be secret to Sunny much longer. . .

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: GRAPHIX (August 25, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0545741661

ISBN-13: 978-0545741668

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (88 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #8,007 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #124 in Books > Children's Books > Comics & Graphic Novels #321 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship #475 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

My 8 year old really liked this book, but if I had known of the content prior to her reading it I would not have let her. Some of the things in this book I find inappropriate for the innocent, young minded, highly impressionable child. I scanned through the book after she read it and questioned her about some parts. Some she claimed to have forgotten were there even after just reading the book that day. Or she went silent on some topics. She read the book in a day which is great that something could hold her attention all the way through, but I feel if I want to quickly pump information in her head it should not be about drinking, drugs and abuse. When she sits down to read for fun, I want it

to be fun carefree reading. Something that takes her to a happy place. I have included pictures of pages I found inappropriate for her. I think the age rating should be at least 10+

I liked this graphic novel. It's about a kid who has to spend her summer vacation with her grandfather in Florida, when she really wanted to do other things. Her grandfather lives in a retirement community. I got this because I heard that it had a few references to the comic book Swamp Thing, and it has about four or five pages where the characters have Swamp Thing comic books. It's really fun, and I laughed a lot at the funny parts. The artwork is great, too. And Sunny and the only other kid her age in the retirement home read a lot of comics. It wasn't until after I finished this and was preparing for this review that I realized that this was supposed to be a kids' book. Sure, I knew that the protagonist was a kid, but because it's a retro throwback to the 70's, I thought it was targeted at adults. I was about 3/4th through it before I realized that it was trying to deal with some pretty dark themes, and I guess provide them in a palatable way for kids. I don't want to spoil the ending, but I didn't like how Sunny's resolution just perpetuated the cycle that she was trying to break out of. But, something like what happened in this book is probably pretty realistic, because most families never fully break out of their bad cycles. But, overall, it's awesome. I highly recommend it.

Sunny Side Up is the newest work by the sibling team who created the unstoppable Babymouse. Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm unspool a semi-autobiographical story about family that packs a sucker-punch, in that you won't see it coming but it will leave you with a new perspective on how we hurt others. It's the 70s, and Sunny's been sent to spend the summer with Gramps. Seems ok, although she has trouble adapting to the slow pace of life in his retirement community. As the story progresses, though, the reader learns more about why Sunny's really there, and how the weight of what she's been asked to hide wears on her. The art is friendly, deceptively simple in a way that makes it approachable. I like the way Holm easily moves between establishing elements of the setting and details of daily life. The reader quickly understands that time and place while noting the universal elements of spending time with grandparents. The bright colors represent sunshine and summer, and individual moments are funny. Sunny isn't the only kid around; Buzz, the groundskeeper's son, introduces her to comic books, a part of this almost-memoir that many readers will identify with. The ridiculous wonder of the concepts, the easy heroism, the colorful appearances, the sound of the spinner rack, the imaginative escape all grab her attention. Meanwhile, flashbacks build the mystery.

Sunny's original plans for the summer were a shore house visit with the family and a friend. As the flashbacks continue, they close the gap with the present day, revealing a family struggle. It's painful, with deep roots and effects, and it's easier to avoid facing the truth. It's the kind of secret no one wants to talk about, not even the book, it feels like. By putting off coming to terms with what happened, and why, our experience parallels Sunny's. She has my sympathy, in that she has nothing to do with the problem, but it's going to shape her life anyway. And she's going to be distracted by it at random times, no matter what she wants or what she's doing. Others judge her by what they think of her family members, unfairly. By the time Sunny snaps and lets it out, I was internally cheering for her. Sunny Side Up combines a light memoir of a long-ago summer with a powerful meditation on family secrets and how the lies we tell ourselves can affect those we care about. An author's note makes the message clear, with good suggestions for the kid audience to pay attention to. (The publisher provided a review copy. Review originally posted at ComicsWorthReading.com.)

Great graphic novel for my 13 year old who has Dyslexia. She loves graphic novels and it is so hard to find age appropriate one. Several out now want to drag our tweens and early teens into young adulthood before they are ready, and/or are being marketed as appropriate for this age, despite not being. This book deals with issues siblings can face these days (brother has drug problem which is putting a strain on the whole family, elderly grandparent). Nicely shows the relationship between a child and her grandparent who lives in retirement community (my own daughter visits her grandfather weekly). It is not over a 13 year old's head though, as some critically acclaimed graphic novels are (namely This One Summer).

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