



[Home](#) > I Really Want to Win

I Really Want to Win

Books Reviewed:

[I Really Want to Win](#) [1]

Issue:

[238](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Gwynneth Bailey](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Being small and feisty and energetic with an ardent wish to win is just not enough for the little girl in this story. Sports Day arrives, and she is absolutely sure the win is hers, first in the flat race, then the tug of war. Each time supreme efforts fail to win that coveted first prize. And each race seems to be won by the same rival competitor. Downhearted but not completely defeated, she decides sport is not for her and looks for another area in which she could beat all others. A Spelling Bee? defeated by ventriloquist; a ballet competition? Each first prize is still gained by the same person who beat her in the flat race and tug of war. Time to rethink? But when her chief adversary comes not first but way down the list in a painting competition, at last they become friends, and she is advised by the former winner, *?You cannot always be ahead. Enjoy the things you love, instead. You do not HAVE to win.?*

The resolution of the tale is well handled, and the once coveted first prize comes when most unexpected. The two main characters are accompanied throughout by their pet dogs, who share the narrative only in the illustrations. The Champion has a refined grey poodle, who delights in her mistress? every success, whilst our girlie has a determined hound who tries so hard, but just can?t achieve a win for her? but is on hand to pass her tissues as she howls her frustration. Every page is full of details, adding greatly to this rhyming story. The illustrator really lets us know the pain felt by the non-winner, especially on the huge double spread when she shouts *?I REALLY want to WIN!?* in enormous text. Her dog can hardly bear it, his paws covering his eyes so he can?t see her pain. Children will enjoy the humour in the book, identifying with one of the characters or the other voiceless competitors?. or perhaps, one of the dogs?

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Links:

[1] <http://ww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/i-really-want-to-win>

[2] <http://ww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/238>

[3] <http://ww.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/gwynneth-bailey>