



[Home](#) > Vampire Peter

Vampire Peter

Books Reviewed:

[Vampire Peter](#) [1]

Issue:

[245](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Carey Fluker Hunt](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

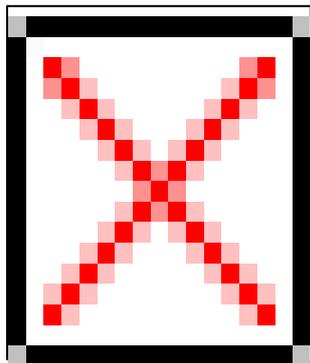
off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5



When Vampetru Basarab Dracul joins the class, the teacher insists on calling him Peter - but that doesn't distract the other children from his differences. Peter's cape and fangs are obvious, and his behaviour similarly odd ? he hangs upside down from the high bars (?showing off?, says the teacher), causes trouble in the playground (?No biting!?) and tells everyone that his family owns a castle. ?Peter!? sighs the teacher, head in hand as she cues the other children to dismiss his fantasies. So when the class gerbil goes missing, Peter is naturally blamed.

But did he really do it? A single page-turn is all it takes to change our viewpoint. The narrator of this story is the quiet girl who's been observing Peter all along. She let the gerbil out and won't admit it, but knows that Peter shouldn't take the blame. He was protecting her from bullies in the playground and only messed around to make her laugh. Revisiting previous events confirms her knowledge that she must own up, but the escaped gerbil has been spotted on the roof and Peter's superpowers are required. Will anyone listen to her confession?

Happily, all's well that ends well, and Peter spirits his friends away for a Halloween extravaganza of the kind that everyone will want to share!

This ever-so-slightly spooky picturebook about friendship is easy to enjoy and has bags of child-appeal, but there's lots here to challenge, extend and satisfy on deeper levels, too. At its heart, this is a story about differences, expectations and perspectives. Moral dilemmas of the kind that children frequently encounter sit centre-stage, but there's a light touch to the messaging and plenty of humour - an interchange in Romanian between Peter and his coachman gets a footnote

translation ('Shall I destroy her, your Majesty?' 'No, Orlok. She's my friend?') - and Peter's vampire origins are clear for all to see.

Hannah Peck's autumnal palette gives her expressive illustrations a timeless feel, and although there's the occasional mildly gruesome detail (a frog in jelly plus eyeballs for lunch) the macabre is avoided in favour of a more theatrical approach, ensuring this book's appeal well beyond pumpkin season.

Vampire Peter will find an appreciative audience in Year One, but will also appeal to younger children familiar with a school setting who enjoy a (gentle) scare.

Source URL (retrieved on Apr '21): <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/245/childrens-books/reviews/vampire-peter>

Links:

[1] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/vampire-peter>

[2] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/245>

[3] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/carey-fluker-hunt>