

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

2006 MASSACHUSETTS LEVEL ONE – HONORS

Dear Mr. Gaiman,

I liked your book, *Anansi Boys*, because it taught me some lessons about life that I hadn't understood before, especially about my relationships. First, you helped me do that by portraying what a family could actually be like with all its complicated emotions. Second, I want to be a movie director when I grow up. I like how you depicted a different race and culture other than yours, and you took a story from different place and wrote it down so that people everywhere could understand it. As an African-American boy, I want to depict people from different cultures and races when I become a movie director. However, if a small child were to read this book, they might get confused of who is who, because there are a lot of different stories going on at the same time.

Characters in your book are complex. For example, instead of people being either all good or all bad, *Anansi Boys* has characters that are good sometimes and bad other times. In your book just as in real life, you can't determine a person's personality by just one of their actions.

The father/son relationship between Anansi and Charlie helped my father and me get along more. At first, I argued with my father about worthless things just to get him annoyed. For example, I argued that he didn't make sense when he was telling me an important lesson but really, I wasn't paying attention. He also did things that embarrassed me. For example, he made me wear a suit to a cookout. Now, we still do the same things, but we know it is for a reason. This is like the main character's father, Anansi, embarrassing the son Charlie by tricking him into wearing a president's costume on President's Day. However, Charlie couldn't stay angry with his father forever because of that incident. In the conclusion of these events, Charlie and I found out that our fathers didn't mean any harm, and they really were trying to do a nice thing. However, that is not the only family relationship that you have taught me.

The relationship between Charlie and his brother is like my sister's relationship with me. Both pairs of siblings fight for one hour, and in the next hour we do all sorts of fun things together. However, since my sister and I read your book, we only fight about once a month. We understood that sibling relationships can be complicated, and now we stick up for each other more.

Although there has been only been lessons that I have learned about my family, I learned some lessons about animals too. How you displayed the animals as humans made me respect animals a lot more. For example, whenever my sister's guinea pigs look bored, I let them out of their cage. Moreover, when they are out of food and water, I give them hay and then refill their water container. Another example is that whenever I see an earthworm on a surface where something could hurt it, I move it to a place that is safe.

I am happy you wrote this book, because I know if you hadn't, I would not get along with the rest of the world as much, and people would argue with me a lot more. Also, when I direct a movie, I want to do the same things that you did to me in your book; I want people to recognize their families in the movie characters' actions!

Sincerely,

Adu Matory

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