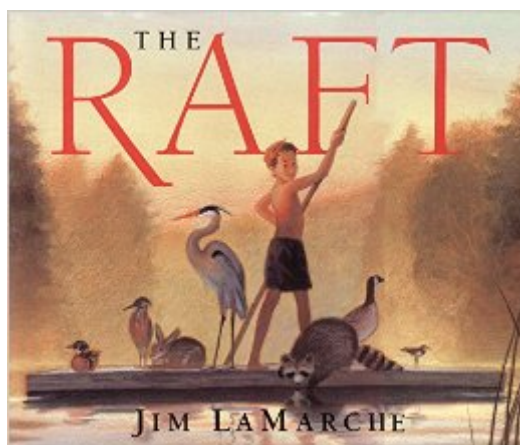


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# The Raft



## Synopsis

Inspired by various experiences from his childhood, Jim LaMarche, beloved illustrator of *A Story for Bear and The Elves and the Shoemaker*, brings this touching story about one boy's unexpected summer as a river rat to life with his bold, picturesque paintings. Nicky isn't one bit happy about spending the summer with his grandma in the Wisconsin woods; he'd much rather be back in the city. He's not too thrilled about all the chores either—especially fishing. Before long, though, a raft appears in the nearby river, and it changes everything. As Nicky explores, the raft works a subtle magic on the obstinate young boy, opening up the wonders all around him: the animals of river and woods, his grandmother's humor and wisdom, and his own special talent as an artist. This is a serene story about a summer in the woods, appreciating things—and people—in a whole new light, and discovering one's own talents. School Library Journal proclaimed, "this dazzling picture book is an artistic triumph." A note from the author describes the similarities between LaMarche's and Nicky's life. Supports the Common Core State Standards

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD540L (What's this?)

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins; Reprint edition (May 28, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0064438562

ISBN-13: 978-0064438568

Product Dimensions: 11 x 0.1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (49 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #18,859 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Â Books > Sports & Outdoors > Outdoor Recreation > Rafting #9 in Â Books > Children's Books > Sports & Outdoors > Water Sports #31 in Â Books > Sports & Outdoors > Water Sports

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 3

## Customer Reviews

As a young girl, I loved summers in upstate NY with my grandmother. This book - from the first illustration to the end - hurled me backward in time. I loved it. I used it as part of a group of

river-related books in my Reading program for 3,4 and 5th graders. I loved reading it aloud to the students time and time again and they loved listening to it. Some of them chose to read it again by themselves. We put together a wonder mural of river life after reading this and all the other river-related books. It was a wonderful read for us all. My students were amazed at how the little boy could have any fun without a TV. The theme of enjoying nature was evident from the get-go and the illustrations gently reinforced the message.

The Raft is a book that captures the heart of the reader with its great illustrations and vivid details of nature. It is a story of a boy who travels to his grandmother's house for the summer but really does not want to go. Her house is by a river where Nicky discovers a raft and a love of nature. He soon realizes the raft attracts animals, encountering many he hadn't seen in real life. Animals that would normally be frightened by a human seem calmed by the raft. During the summer he falls in love with drawing nature like his grandmother, who is also an artist. It is a story about a series of events that probably wouldn't happen, but the reader might wish they could. The colorful illustrations by the author are some of the most delightful I have seen. He makes objects look exactly the way the reader might envision them. The author had a cabin by a river near Lake Superior, and in his childhood memories he did not actually find a raft like this, but he did dream of it. This book would appeal to children between the ages 6 and 8, or younger as a read-aloud. It is a great story for older children, teens, and adults as well. If you like books about nature and animals this is your book.

My 5 year old son loved this book. We enjoyed reading it together. It allowed him to feel like he was on an adventure. He related to the boy in the book. Even though it takes place in Wisconsin, it applies to anywhere a boy can use his imagination. We both looked forward to seeing what was going to happen next. This book has become his favorite.

In every book order, there is at least one picture book that the staff agrees is "special" - a book where a well-written, often touching story line is joined by a set of remarkable illustrations. Such is the case with Jim LaMarche's The Raft. Between a sound story and beautiful pastel drawings, it is not just librarians who find this story "special." Recently read at StoryHour, the young audience appeared to thoroughly enjoy this tale, pointing out favorite illustrations and identifying the numerous birds and animals. All agreed that it would be wonderful to have a raft that attracted creatures so closely that one is hanging out with geese and chickadees, and feeding otters by hand. The Raft is a quiet tale of love, ecology, and in a sense, magic. It invites the reader to pour over the

detailed illustrations and float away in his/her own imagination. Perfect for a peaceful getaway, The Raft is definitely one way to go.

This is a short story, 32 large pages including text and illustrations. It is suitable for reading to a young child or group of children, or for slightly older children to read by themselves. The author/illustrator has done an outstanding job integrating text and large full-color illustrations to hold a child's interest. It is a story of summertime childhood adventures that children can easily relate to.

The first time I read through this book, I found it a bit unbelievable--animals coming right up to the boy on his raft! But my second "viewing" showed the amazing paintings, the engaging storyline, and the full characters. Being a native to Wisconsin, I am a bit biased, but I think anyone anywhere will enjoy this book. I would share this story with lower elementary students so the pictures and subject matter can be fully appreciated.

Such beautiful illustrations, and a sweet story that makes me yearn for a summer growing up beside a river. My 4 year old daughter may not be a fan yet, but I'm sure she'll love it as she grows older!

Cute story. Quite simple. Takes the "life is a river" theme and reduces it for children's appreciation. Kids "get it" Artwork is delightful. Good read aloud for early elementary or pre-school.

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