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TITLE INFORMATION

PENELOPE WINDPIPES

Heather S. Lonczak

Illus. by Claudia Vasconcelos

IngramSpark (40 pp.)

\$16.00 hardcover, \$9.00 paperback, \$3.99 e-book

ISBN: 978-1-73446-872-4

February 14, 2020

BOOK REVIEW

A screaming tot learns that staying calm helps her win more friends in this picture book.

Penelope has the nickname Windpipes because her voice—when she’s screaming—is so loud the neighbors can hear her “10 blocks away!” Children run from her, and her grandfather turns down his hearing aid while visiting. When Penelope loses her voice in a case of laryngitis, she notices sounds that her screaming had covered up: “Penelope liked these sounds and wondered how long they’d been there.” Following the example of a new friend who remains calm in the face of teasing, Penelope learns to control her temper, giving her a chance to enjoy things she’d missed. Psychologist Lonczak’s previous books, such as *Gus Becomes a Big Brother* (2019), also have focused messages, but there’s no subtlety in this text-dense tale. Penelope’s tantrums are bad for everyone, and being tranquil instead of boisterous allows others to see how kind she is. The dichotomy leaves no room for behavior in the middle: Even when playing, Penelope accepts that “superheroes *never* scream and cry.” There’s also an unfortunate correlation between Penelope’s love of princesses and her poor behavior while her “tomboy” friend demonstrates good habits. In addition, Penelope’s brother is never scolded for egging her on. Still, parents with unruly children may find helpful tips here. And Vasconcelos’ kid-friendly cartoon illustrations use plenty of pastels to create detailed backgrounds and depict a diverse neighborhood.

Parents with tantrum-prone youngsters may find a useful tool in this lesson-heavy tale.

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