



McKenna

Mary Casanova

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Ten-year-old McKenna has always been a good student-and great at gymnastics. So when her grades suddenly begin to fall, her teacher suggests a little extra help from a tutor. McKenna is horrified until she meets her tutor, Josie, a super-confident girl who also happens to be in a wheelchair. Josie encourages McKenna to focus on her strengths and work toward her goals one day at a time. But just as McKenna begins to shine in school, she's sidelined with a gymnastics injury--and her confidence unravels. Now she's worried about her grades and earning a spot on the competitive gymnastics team. Can she find a way to believe in herself again?

McKenna Details

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Author : Mary Casanova

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From Reader Review McKenna for online ebook

Kristine Hansen says

McKenna is an aspiring gymnast who is getting somewhat derailed from her dreams because of....schoolwork!

This is a good story tackling a problem that just about every kid goes through at some point - a struggle with a subject at school. How it's handled is interesting and fun to read instead of being one of those "problem books" that is without heart. This is a book I'd give to a struggling reader to enjoy.

Brooke says

I enjoyed reading this chapter book about two characters with exceptionalities. McKenna is a gymnast who must keep her grades up if she wants to continue gymnastics and she faces the challenge of having a learning disability. She struggles in school and soon finds help with a tutor. The tutor has a mobility disability and uses a wheel chair. This is a great story about overcoming personal obstacles with support and kindness to one another. McKenna is a role model for preteen girls who are coming into the age of being worried about being popular or fitting in. Everyone has struggles and she learns how to overcome hers. I would recommend this book for 4-6 grade.

Alyssa Hanks says

The book McKenna by Mary Casanova is about a young gymnast who is in the fourth grade. McKenna loves gymnastics, she is working towards making the competitive team. Her whole life is about gymnastics at this point, causing her to fall behind in school. Her teacher Mr. Wu notices this, and decides she needs a tutor. At first McKenna did not like the idea of having a tutor and kept it a secret from all her friends and teammates. When people she knew walked into the library which is where she studied McKenna would hide. She lied to her team and said the reason she was leaving class early was because she was getting extra training at gymnastics. But later on McKenna begins to love having a tutor when she noticed her work and reading becoming a lot easier. Her tutor Josie also begins to become her friend. McKenna had a showcase at gymnastics to preform all her routines for everyone two months before the tryouts for team. McKenna was doing her beam routine and dismounted the wrong way causing her to break her ankle. She can't do gymnastics until she is healed. Will McKenna be able to heal in time to tryout? Will she continue to keep up her great performance in school? Find out by reading McKenna by Mary Casanova.

Tarissa says

McKenna is another great story from the American Girl series!

Since McKenna is a gymnast, many terms about gymnastics are used, which I found interesting. It helped add fine details to the story. Also, I enjoyed reading about Josie, a girl who uses a wheelchair to get around--the part she contributes to the story is quite inspiring. The full-page illustrations are neat, clean, & crisp! I thought the style of the pictures flowed well with the style of writing. Throughout the story, many books titles are mentioned, which I think may encourage readers to look into some of the other books mentioned. Overall, I think this is a good, solid story for young girls to be reading. Enjoy!

Kaitlynn says

The book McKenna written by Mary Casanova resembles a young girl who wants to achieve in gymnastics, but has poor grades so her parents do not allow her to go up and she gets an injury on this journey. Its writing is effective and moving because it shows you that it is important to be safe and happy with what you have. This book is part of a series and I may continue to read the series, but I am not 100% sure. If you like gymnastics you would like this book and also if you like meeting new people that become your friends. It is an amazingly written and demonstrated book with a few pictures to help you visualize it.

Xyra says

I really like the American Girl books. If I were the right age bracket I'd probably give 5 stars; but where I am I've seen a few similar situations that don't resolve quite as nicely.

McKenna deals with a lot in these pages: not getting what she wants, overcoming embarrassment, dealing with her own and other's jealousies, prejudice, poor sportsmanship, deception, and physical injury. She doesn't do it alone; she has many coaches.

Even I learned a bit from this story. Josie and McKenna reminded me that poetry does not have to be hard. :) I loved that the author had McKenna's friend Josie tell her it is okay to read any level book at any time in life. Some may roll their eyes at my reviews on "kids books," but I enjoy reading all levels and sometimes, in the harder times of life, it's just nice to escape or find solace in a younger person's story. That age of innocence.

I'm looking forward to the second installment of McKenna's story.

Megan M. says

this is an inspiring book!!! possibly the best book i've read so far!!!! it's about a girl named mckenna. she loves gymnastics and she's shooting for the competitive team and is also falling behind in school. her parents tell her to get a tutor. She gets a tutor her name is julie. they do lots of things together they went together on vacation and get gifts for each other but, mckenna is afraid to tell her friends she has a tutor. her friends find

out and she loses focus on the day of her competition and she hurts herself. Will she ever be the same again? Will she keep doing gymnastics? Read the book to find out.

Catie Ewing says

An quick read, but still enjoyable. [[In the book, McKenna falls behind at school and she needs a tutor for reading. Her gymnastics are going great and then disaster strikes!]] Shh... I won't spoil anything more!

Sarah says

A great story about choices a child makes as they grow up. Well done!

Lucy says

It was good but I didn't like it that much. You should see the movie! It's really good.

Alexandria Hicks says

This book is just terrible. I don't know how else to describe it. And, yeah, I get it, I'm definitely not the target audience for an American Girl book, but 8 year olds deserve better than this! The book is essentially about an aspiring gymnast named McKenna, who is Level 4 in the gym. When she enters 4th grade she starts to fall behind in reading comprehension, and then she gets a tutor and is forced to cut back on gymnastics. Then some more stuff happens, like she goes camping with her 12 year old tutor even though she's, what, 9? And THEN she gets hurt at gymnastics and can't do it at all for several weeks. There's no climax in this story. In fact, the book is not divided into the steps of a good story at all, all the sudden, something (sort of?) suspenseful happens and then everything dies down for a while, and the book is more chill, and then all the sudden, there's another action-packed "climactic" moment. It makes for a terrible story. I think the book puts way too much exaggeration on small things, which makes it sort of annoying. For example, McKenna has missed a couple of assignments at the very beginning of her 4th grade year, and is still working on improving her reading, as 9-year-olds should be, but already her teacher has intervened with her personal life and has set her up with a tutor. Another example is gymnastics. Training three days a week is not that much, and Level 4 isn't that high. There's no reason three days of a 90-minute practice at the gym per week should keep you from doing your homework. Just no reason whatsoever. How much homework do fourth graders even get? What's more, every character in this book, like all American Girl books, are bland, boring, and two-dimensional. They don't have exciting or unique personalities. McKenna just has a mind focused on her petty gymnastics, unexplained discrimination towards people in wheelchairs, a bratty attitude, and some obvious anxiety issues. One star.

Christine Marie? says

I am quite a few years older than McKenna, yet I could relate immensely to her story. When I was her age, and younger, I did gymnastics, too. I loved her telling of her days there, and thought there was just enough of that in book. I could also relate to her stories with homework, staying up late to finish an assignment, using classical music to focus, trying hard to make school work, persevering, etc. I also liked her breathing gray sky credo a lot. I used it at school and at home. I tell myself to stay focused like McKenna! I loved her character so much, she's one of my favorite Girl of the Year's now. I loved her to no end, and this book was amazing. I finished it in a little over an hour.

Sarah says

I thought this was a great book, about a girl who dose gymnastics, She isn' t doing so well at school so she gets tutored. She broke her leg an has to stop gymnastics fir a while. Will her leg get better do she can get onto the competitive team or will she have to wait? Will she get better at school? Read the book to find out . It is an realistic fiction, it's also an easy read.

Elizabeth says

4.5

I like this way better than the movie. I like the movie, but parts I didn't like or understand seem to be cleared up or written better in the book.

QNPoohBear says

The writing is decent. Sometimes it doesn't sound like a ten-year-old ("mink brown hair"). Mostly though it's not too bad. I liked McKenna's family. They're colorful and warm and loving.

The friend characters are a bit stereotypical but I sense a backstory for Toulane that isn't coming through in this first book.

The illustrations are dreadful. McKenna looks different in every picture and Toulane looks about 19.

If you like the GOTY books you'll probably like McKenna. I'm not wildly enthusiastic about any of them but some are better than others. This one falls in the better end of the spectrum but not the best.
