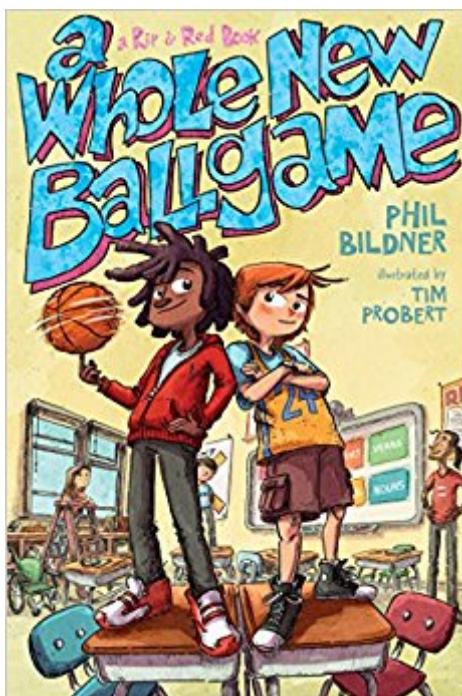


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A Whole New Ballgame: A Rip And Red Book



Synopsis

Fifth grade is one crazy ride in this middle grade novel about two best friends. Rip and Red are best friends whose fifth-grade year is nothing like what they expected. They have a crazy new tattooed teacher named Mr. Acevedo, who doesn't believe in tests or homework and who likes off-the-wall projects, the more "off" the better. And guess who's also their new basketball coach? Mr. Acevedo! Easy-going Rip is knocked completely out of his comfort zone. And for Red, who has autism and really needs things to be exactly a certain way, the changes are even more of a struggle. But together these two make a great duo who know how to help each other and find ways to make a difference in the classroom and on the court. With its energetic and authentic story and artwork, *A Whole New Ballgame* by Phil Bildner is a fresh, fun book about school, sports, and friendship. Cartoony illustrations lend energy and personality to the likable cast of characters. A school story with heart.

Kirkus Reviews This title has Common Core connections.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 540 (What's this?)

Series: Rip and Red (Book 1)

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (July 12, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250079764

ISBN-13: 978-1250079763

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.7 x 0.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 0.3 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #7,189 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in Books > Children's Books > Sports & Outdoors > Basketball #23 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Special Needs #132 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > School

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 4-6-Fifth graders Rip and his best friend Red, who has high spectrum autism, deal with an unusual new teacher plus an unconventional basketball coach and in the process learn a great deal

about teamwork and friendship and about meeting challenges in school. Upbeat drawings add a positive dimension. Readers will also enjoy the outstanding sequel, *Rookie of the Year* (2016).¹ (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

• "Pure fun with a lot of heart."
• *School Library Journal* "Cartoony illustrations lend energy and personality to the likable cast of characters. A school story with heart."
• *Kirkus Reviews* "This warm slice-of-life novel from Bildner engages and entertains."
• *Publishers Weekly*

My 9 year old daughter, who happens to play basketball, loved this book. It held her interest and she looked forward to reading it every night.

This is a great book for kids to read either independently or as a read aloud!

Great...my son loved it.

Great story about a student with dyslexia, told with empathy.

It's hard to categorize this book - and the series it's the first volume of - as it's supposedly intended for readers aged 8 through 12 but it's so good that anyone of any age can read it and be thoroughly engaged by it. Rip and Red are best friends. Rip's real name is Mason Irving but everyone calls him by his basketball nickname, Rip. Everyone except Red, that is, who calls him Mason Irving. Because Red calls everyone by their first _and_ last names, always - one of a number of odd quirks he seems to have. Red's real name is Blake Daniels. His nickname stems from his thick red hair. In *A Whole New Ballgame*, Rip and Red are starting the fifth grade at Reese Jones Elementary. And they're finding that a lot of things are changing at their school, starting with their homeroom teacher, Mr. Acevedo, a brand-new teacher at their school whom they quickly learn has a very different approach to teaching than the teachers they've been used to. The story is told solely from Rip's point of view, but Rip is a very good observer and Bildner gives Rip an engaging narrative voice, as you can see in this scene where he's describing Mr. Acevedo reading to the class: "--With my basketball eyes, I followed Mr. Acevedo as he walked the classroom while reading *Lawn Boy* by Gary Paulsen. It's an awesome story about this kid who gets a beat-up old lawnmower from this grandmother for

his birthday. Then he goes into business with his crazy but super-smart neighbor named Arnold. Before he knows it, he's making loads of dough.--At RJE, all the teachers read to their classes, but I'd never had a teacher read like this. It didn't feel like Mr. Acevedo was reading. It felt like the boy - the narrator - was reading. For the different characters, like the grandmother and Arnold, Mr. Acevedo used different voices. Sometimes he read quickly, sometimes slowly. His voice rose and fell as he strutted, dipped, slid and danced around the tables. He stood on the tables, too. And when Mr. Acevedo stopped to ask a question about a character or to have us make a prediction, he did it in such a way that it didn't interrupt the flow. It was almost as if that was part of the performance, too.-- Yea, it was a performance. Like being at a theater.-- Teacher's Theater time.-- "That's all, folks," he said, closing the book just before the end of a scene. "Tune in tomorrow for another exciting episode of Room 208, Unexpected." There is a lot to like about Bildner's approach to these books. He is very subtle at dropping things into the dialogue, like mentioning books the characters are reading, real books that the readers can go look up. And working in words to build vocabulary when Mr. Acevedo talks to his students, like when he says "Of course, it may mean that I'm a delusional rookie teacher, and if you don't know what delusional means, look it up." Another subtlety is in how he presents the world of Reese Jones Elementary school, where the students have to deal with things like changes due to budget cuts, something a number of readers can probably relate to. An additional plus in this series are the illustrations by Tim Probert, who also did the illustrations for Kim Baker's Pickle: The (Formerly) Anonymous Prank Club of Fountain Point Middle School. Probert wonderfully captures a lot of moments in A Whole New Ballgame, giving additional depth to the characters and the situations they find themselves in through their facial expressions, body language and the world of the 5th grade that the story takes place in. Highly, highly recommended for anyone who loves a well-told story of best friends, basketball, fifth grade and the challenges kids that age can face.

Rip and Red are best friends. Due to budget cuts, their fifth-grade year will be vastly different, starting with a new teacher, Mr. Acevedo (He has tattoos!). Mr. Acevedo is anything but a conventional teacher. Instead of test-prep, he inspires his students through the most disgusting project any of them have done in school before. And, surprise, surprise, Mr. Acevedo is also their new basketball coach! Author Phil Bildner writes a fun, fun story any fifth-grade kid (or teacher) can relate to. Through his writing and character development, Phil Bildner portrays caring, passion, and kindness. Not all kids are alike. Not all teachers are alike. A WHOLE NEW BALLGAME is a story of acceptance and understanding. A must read for grades three and up!

This is a story about best friends Rip and Red, and their experience in 5th grade. They expect things to go a certain way but are greeted with unexpected change everywhere they look. The school district budget has been cut and with these cuts come staff changes and changes to the sports program. Rip and Red have been looking forward to playing basketball together and having a certain 5th-grade teacher. Red has some issues, but Rip has always been there to guide him through. But the changes this year challenge both of them. This is a fun realistic fiction story that kids who love basketball (and others) will enjoy. The friendship between Red and Rip is special and meaningful. The new teacher, Mr. Acevedo embodies the naivete and hope of teachers fresh out of college. He really wants to make a difference in the lives of his students. (Library copy)

I absolutely loved this book. The inclusion of the students at this school and the friendship of Rip and Red show what our education system should look like. In this story, Mr. Acevedo is the new fifth grade teacher. He does not want to spend time "teaching to the test" but wants to immerse his students in authentic learning. He believes they will be able to apply their knowledge wherever and whenever it is needed. Rip and Red are best friends. Rip helps Red whenever he gets over anxious and thinks he can not do something. They are looking forward to playing basketball together in the Grade Five program, only to find out it is all different. This was a fun story with lots of lessons. Phil Binder (author) has important things to say to a number of different readers. To kids, the author has an important message about inclusion, friendship, and hard work. All of the characters in this story have ways that they struggle: Red is autistic, Avery is wheelchair-bound, and Rip is the glue that holds everyone together. Mr. Acevedo is working hard to teach and reach children in an environment of budget cuts and standardized testing. There are also some exciting basketball scenes for sports fans, too. The parents do not understand the way Mr. Acevedo is teaching their children, but in the end, they are successful. Teachers can learn a lot about being willing to try new techniques with their students. I think this is a great book for any 5th grade classroom library. I received a copy of this book from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

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