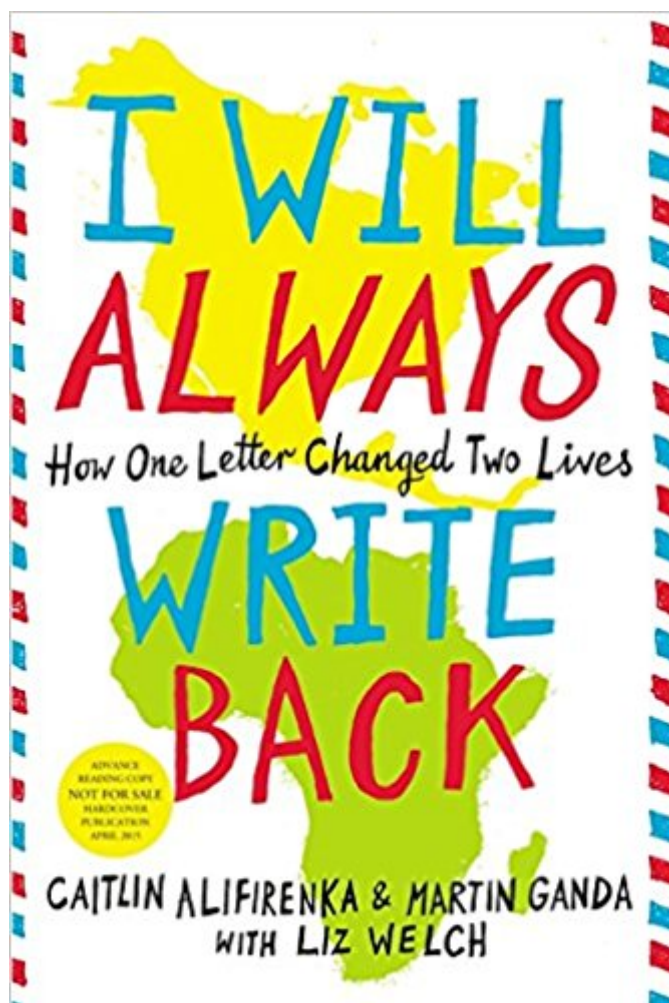


The book was found

I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives



Synopsis

The true story of an all-American girl and a boy from Zimbabwe and the letter that changed both of their lives forever. It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place. Martin was lucky to even receive a pen-pal letter. There were only ten letters, and fifty kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one. That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives. In this compelling dual memoir, Caitlin and Martin recount how they became best friends --and better people--through their long-distance exchange. Their story will inspire you to look beyond your own life and wonder about the world at large and your place in it.

Customer Reviews

Gr 6 Up • The true story of two young pen pals who forge a life-altering connection. In 1997, Caitlin, a typical 12-year-old girl from a middle class American family, began writing to Martin, a studious 14-year-old from a Zimbabwe slum. In her letters, Caitlin described her life, which consisted of shopping trips, quarrels with friends, and problems at school. Martin was initially far more circumspect in his responses. Inflation had rocketed in Zimbabwe, and even finding money for postage was a struggle for the boy. Staying in school, which required paying costly fees, became merely a dream. Eventually, Martin revealed the harsh realities of his life to Caitlin, who began sending money and gifts. What started as chatty letters turned into a lifeline for Martin and his family, as Caitlin and her parents helped the boy stay in school and achieve his goal of studying at an American university. This is a well-written, accessible story that will open Western adolescents' eyes to life in developing countries. Told in the first person, with chapters alternating between Caitlin's and Martin's points of view, this title effectively conveys both of these young people's perspectives. Caitlin's early chapters, however, in which she discusses friendship and boyfriend woes, feel somewhat superficial compared with Martin's genuinely troubled life. While these chapters provide an effective contrast between the two teens' lives, they may discourage some readers from continuing with what becomes a strong and inspiring story. VERDICT A useful addition to most collections and an eye-opening look at life in another culture. •Michelle Anderson, Tauranga City Libraries, New Zealand

Praise for *I Will Always Write Back*: An Indiebound Bestseller An Big Spring Book Selection 2015*
"Sensitively and candidly demonstrating how small actions can result in enormous change, this memoir of two families' transformation through the commitment and affection of long-distance

friends will humble and inspire." — Publishers Weekly (starred review) "The remarkable tenacity of these two souls pulled like magnets across the world by their opposite polarities - one committed to helping, the other to surviving - is deeply affecting...It's quite a little miracle of unexpected genuineness." — New York Times Book Review

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