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Samurai Spirit: Ancient Wisdom For Modern Life



Synopsis

Named an Honor Title by the Storytelling World Awards in the category of "Storytelling Anthologies" The samurai prepared themselves for battle through physical practice, and the study of the arts. These ancient stories that inspired warriors so long ago have special significance for today's teens who face battles of their own: battles against bullies; battles with self-doubt and lack of confidence; and battles with the injustices they see around them. Burt Konzak has taught martial arts for over 20 years and has used these stories, drawn from sources including the Hagakuri, the Book of Five Rings, and other Japanese classics, to help young people gain emotional and mental strength. Whether or not readers are interested in the martial arts, they will find centuries of wisdom in this fine collection.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 6 Up-Martial-arts devotees will find inspiration in these tales of Japanese samurai warriors and present-day heroes possessing a samurai spirit. In a mix of lore and testimonial, the author offers a history of these men who were taught to be skilled swordsmen with incredible powers of concentration. In one story, Musashi Miyamoto, a legendary samurai from the 1500s, is challenged to a duel by the finest swordsman in the land. Suspense is key to the outcome of most of these tales, and the author gratifies readers each time by building up the odds against survival then delivering a heroic solution derived from wit, patience, strategy, or courage. Fact boxes follow the legends or stories about the author's own journey toward becoming a modern-day samurai. Konzak

describes overcoming a fear of sharks, trying to break up a street fight, and being put on the spot to perform tough karate moves before a large crowd. By alternating past and present, he succeeds in drawing the connection between this ancient philosophy and daily life for any adolescent, male or female, interested in martial arts or self-improvement. Vicki Reutter, Cazenovia High School, NY Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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As a devotee of samurai-themed books, I was surprised to have never come across this little collection before. I just happened to see it on the shelf of my local used bookstore and decided to have a quick skim. Though intended for a teen audience, I didn't know that when I bought it. Oddly enough, I didn't read the back cover until I got home. But I must admit that while I read the small portion at the bookstore nothing about the writing or tone struck me as overly "teen-ish" in nature. But yes, it is far from an in-depth, analytical breakdown of Japanese history. This is just a great little book with some very classic samurai stories, peppered with insights from the author on how the moral of the story can help guide us in our day to day lives. If you're a fan of samurai writings, you can't go wrong with this one for only four dollars! (\$.01 for the used book + \$3.99 shipping)

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