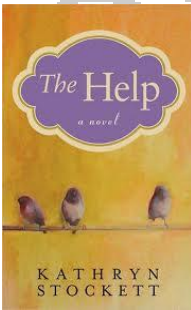




**Fr. Michael Goetz Library Learning Commons  
Teacher's Book Review**



***The Help*, Kathryn Stockett  
Reviewed by Ms. Cosgrove, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013.**

People acting in unpredictable ways build an intriguing foundation upon which to construct a story. What leads us to step outside our comfort zone and do or say things that surprise others and ourselves? This phenomenon is the building block for some great fiction. Today's book focuses on three women who do the unexpected and with great courage and conviction, based on the hope that they can improve their lives and the lives of others.

The action takes place in Jackson, Mississippi in the early 1960s. It is the story of two black housemaids and a young privileged white woman whose lives intersect when they decide to challenge the status quo. Together, they embark on a mission to write a book about what it is like to be a black maid working for a white woman in the South, just as the Civil Rights movement is about to take the country by storm. Like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, it is about doing the right thing when the risks are great and the possibility of success is tenuous, at best. It is a mission born of despair and ultimately driven by the power of hope.

Some books become favourite among readers because of a strong storyline combined with unforgettable characters and this is one such book. Dialogue and description work in harmony to create exquisitely detailed characters, people you are convinced that you would recognize if you bumped into them on the street. The highly acclaimed film based on the novel did not disappoint in this regard, either. Abileen, Minny, and Skeeter didn't just jump – they leapt off the screen!