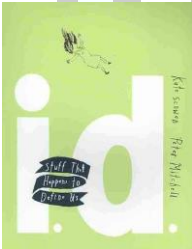




Fr. Michael Goetz Library Learning Commons Teacher's Book Review



***I.D. Stuff That Happens to Define Us* by Kate Scowen,
illustrated by Peter Mitchell
Reviewed by Ms. Cosgrove, April 18th, 2012.**

Someone once said, “We have two lives – one that we are given and one that we make.” This quirky little book embodies this philosophy. It is a compilation of twelve stories, told using the first person point of view, and it covers a variety of subjects ranging from divorce and family violence to betrayal and body issues. Each personal narrative is told simply and briefly and is accompanied by a series of interesting colorized sketches. As well, each story concludes with a Q&A response which refers to the challenge, the person’s response to it, the reason for the response and the most interesting of all – what the person has finally learned from the experience.

The author emphasizes how the events in our life have the potential to shape us, but asserts that we ultimately have more control over our lives than we think. We can’t prevent certain events or circumstances into which we might be born. However, the choices we make, in response to our circumstances, are ultimately our own choices to make. In this way we are defined by our choices, not our circumstances. We shape our own destiny.

The situations described in the stories include significant events that take place in a very short period of time, but which take years, sometimes, to come to terms with. Others are circumstances which challenge people for most of their young lives. The common element in these stories is that who we are is not just shaped by what happens to us, the life we are given, but rather how we respond to it, the life we make.

This is a remarkable quick read and a very worthwhile one for those of you who are facing some tough challenges in your day to day lives. It will make you think deeper about your own situation and you will feel stronger by the end of the book.