

The Acadia Files: Book One: Summer Science

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The Acadia Files introduces kids to science via the readily observable principles and easy-to-reproduce experiments of its precocious and endlessly curious lead character, Acadia, who's enjoying the summer before she enters fifth grade. Both of her parents are science teachers, so learning is naturally encouraged.

The book introduces important scientific information in a clear and enjoyable fashion. Each chapter highlights a new topic based on Acadia's summer activities and what she observes. Acadia uses the scientific method to discover who is stealing her blueberries from the bushes. She learns about genetic inheritance of traits like height and curly hair. She learns how sand is formed and what creates seasons and tides. Her summer adventures will open young minds to science and how it helps to make sense of the world.

Illustrations from Acadia's scientific notebook include amusing images, notes from experiments, and summaries of what she learned. Lists of vocabulary terms and further questions are also included. Notebook pages beautifully reflect the perspective of a ten-year-old girl. They are fun and entertaining, supporting and clarifying scientific concepts.

The science in the book is wonderfully presented, but there is also another layer of lessons: Acadia learns not to accuse someone without proof; she learns to treat others with kindness; and she learns to accept and even celebrate things that might otherwise irritate her, such as the early morning sun and the temporary nature of a sandcastle. These age-appropriate lessons are clearly conveyed, without taking attention away from the book's science.

The Acadia Files is an excellent book that will help its audience look at the world in a new way.

CATHERINE THURESON (July/August 2018)

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