

A WISHING SHELF BOOK REVIEW

31st January 2022

TITLE: The Canterville Ghost

AUTHOR: Oscar Wilde, abridged by Fiza Pathan and Michaelangelo Zane

Star Rating: 4

CATCHY QUOTE

"An accessible abridgement of this amusing classical tale from Oscar Wilde. Perfect for schools!" The Wishing Shelf

REVIEW

As a high school English teacher, I'm often looking for new abridgements of classical texts. They can be an enormous help in accessing the writer's work and then analysing it at a level suitable for the children. I was, for the most part, very impressed by the work of Fiza Pathan and Michaelangelo Zane who have not only shortened the text but have also offered the readers a wonderful array of line drawings to help illustrate it and improve understanding.

Having worked with a number of abridgements in the past, I suspect this book would work well with 10 - 13 year olds. Personally, I wouldn't market it to younger children as the story in itself demands a level of maturity to understand the many comical nuances. The Canterville Ghost is a wonderfully amusing story (possibly one of Oscar Wilde's best)

with excellent comic timing throughout. I think the two editors have worked hard to keep this comic timing alive, at the same time developing the small group of central characters.

To sum up, I'm very happy to recommend this book to schools and to any library looking for a solidly written and cleverly crafted abridgement of this classic text. The drawings do add a lot to the story, and I think most children will, after closing this book, not only understand the story, but will also have fully enjoyed Oscar Wilde's dry sense of humour.

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