

Tamira Bell

June 7, 2013

Independent Reading Project

Unlocked is meritorious novel by the Christian author, Karen Kingsbury. It is a modern day story into the lives of the two families. This story contains issues that take place today, such as autism, bullying, and acceptance. *Unlocked* is a tale of family struggle, but also miracles in the simplest things. This novel is a story of love, faith, struggle, and the supernatural. *Unlocked* was first released back in October of 2010.

Unlocked pans into the lives of the Harris and Reynolds families. The families were the best of friends, the parents grew up together, they all went to the same church, lived in the same neighborhood, and had their children at the same time. Their children Holden Harris and Ella Reynolds were inseparable. They always played with each other and spend most of their time together. The two families had a picture perfect life. But that changed when Holden went to the doctors office.

When Holden went to a regular check-up to get a few vaccinations, some thing went wrong. Out of no where, he became sick. Then he was diagnosed with autism. Because of Holden's regression, both family's began for form their separate ways. The Harris family stayed in Atlanta and the Reynolds moved to New York. Finally, both Holden and Ella were reconnected 15 years later. Although Holden was still suffering with autism, him and ella became friends again and that would soon bring a miracle.

Ella Reynolds is my favorite character of the book. With her mother always getting plastic surgery and working out late at night, her brothers always across the street at their friends house, her dad always out of town playing major league baseball, Ella was always left alone and thinking about what happened to her family. She reminds me of myself because just as Ella was the different person in her family, who just wanted love, so am I. We both have a love for helping others and trying to restore peace in peoples lives.

After reading this book, almost anyone will have their heart touched. Once peering into the lives of these two families, Unlocked will leave you brushed with grace, gratitude, humility, spiritually, and love for the ones who are dear to you. Once both of the families reconnected, they found peace and the years that they had lost apart. Because of the trails and tribulations they had to endure, they received that precious gift they prayed and longed for for years.

While reading this novel, Tracy Holden, the mother and care-taker of Holden, is the character that best relates to me. As she struggles trying to raise her autistic son, she depends mostly on the power of God. We both share a similar faith and a similar patience on something unexpected. When we face adversity in life, we trust and pray about our situation.

Unlocked has incontestably been one of my favorite books. I love this novel of miraculous power because it gives me hope that all things are possible. Both families were torn apart by the wages of life, but were brought back together by a special plan of God. This story is a testament of how lives can be changed and transformed when it looks like things won't get better. I believe that there are not any flaws in this book. Unlocked has many strengths, one of which is its message of hope. There is nothing that I would change about this book because it presented the conflict in the beginning, it had its many peaks and a rising and falling action. But

most of all, the resolution ended the story with so much strength and revelation. Thus, I would not change anything about this story.

Therefore, I recommend this book to Christians and to anyone who knows the effects of autism and family problems. These people fit into this category because the characters portrayed in this book are relatable to the recommended readers. This book is a **MUST READ** for those who are in desperate need of hope. It will leave you wondering if the impossible can be possible.

Creative Piece:

For my creative piece, I made PECS cards. PECS stands for Picture Exchange Communication System. PECS cards are used as a form of communication for people with autism and special needs. The person just simply holds up a card that explains what he/she is feeling. For instance, if that person is sleepy, he/she would hold up a PEC card with a picture of a bed. In *Unlocked*, one of the main characters, Holden Harris, used PECS cards to communicate. When he wanted to watch a movie, he showed his mother a card with a picture of a television on it. When he wanted raisins, he held up a card with a pictures of raisins on it. I made several PECS cards that Holden used in the book, such as ones that said, "I love music, I see, I hear, Movie, I pray, and Dance."