

Autobiography

Spiderwise Evaluation

Date of Evaluation: 01/01/01

Evaluated by: Jenni Harrison

Book Title: An Autobiography

Author: M.Y. Self

Brief overview of the plot/subject:

An autobiography of the author, mainly focusing on his career as a miner, from starting as a young boy to the closures of the pits and life after the mines.

Give the book a mood/genre:

Autobiography

Give a description of the book's target audience (gender, age, hobbies etc):

Anyone with an interest in the period, or the mining industry. Would give a first-hand account to anyone researching the mining industry.

Would also be of interest to anyone who was growing up/living around the same area at a similar time.

Where is it set?

Yorkshire

Who are the main characters?

The author and his family and colleagues

What did you enjoy about this book?

The writing is clear and easy to follow and the anecdotes are interesting, with a balance of humour and more serious topics.

With autobiographies it's easy to fall into a linear retelling of your life - one year after the next - which can be dry and monotonous if not done well. By occasionally grouping anecdotes and memories together by theme you have avoided this, so although the overall 'plot' is linear from birth to present day, it is broken up to keep the reader interested.

What could be improved?

The maps on page 17 are a little unclear - could do with a key or labelling for clarification

On pages 13 and 35 you have some swearing in the narrative. I'd advise you to take out the swearing. Your narrative voice doesn't naturally contain swearing, or it would be throughout the book, so it doesn't fit and could offend some readers. Later on in the book you have some in the dialogue, but that would be acceptable as it's a direct quote.

Occasionally important information is missed out, for example on pg 58 it mentions Susan and Timothy. Presumably these are two more siblings judging by the information further on, but there is no mention of them previously or of them being born like the other children, so there could be confusion for the reader as to who they are. Just a line or two of explanation would clear it up, without having to add in a whole new section.

The blurb could be more concise, without revealing the whole of the story. You want the reader to find out what happens by reading the book, not by reading a summary of events on the back. Also in places it reads more like a review of the book rather than a blurb.

Have you considered adding a family tree? A lot of family members are mentioned and with so many siblings and cousins in one community it does get a bit confusing/difficult remembering who's who. It would be useful for the reader to have a visual representation to keep it straight or refer back to.

Any proofreading/editing needed:

I'd recommend a standard proofread to account for some editing of sentence structure as well as spelling and grammar corrections.

What rating out of 10 would you give this book?

7

Any further notes?

Office use only

BISG Category:

Word count: 107,240

Editing: Standard Proofread

Hours: 20