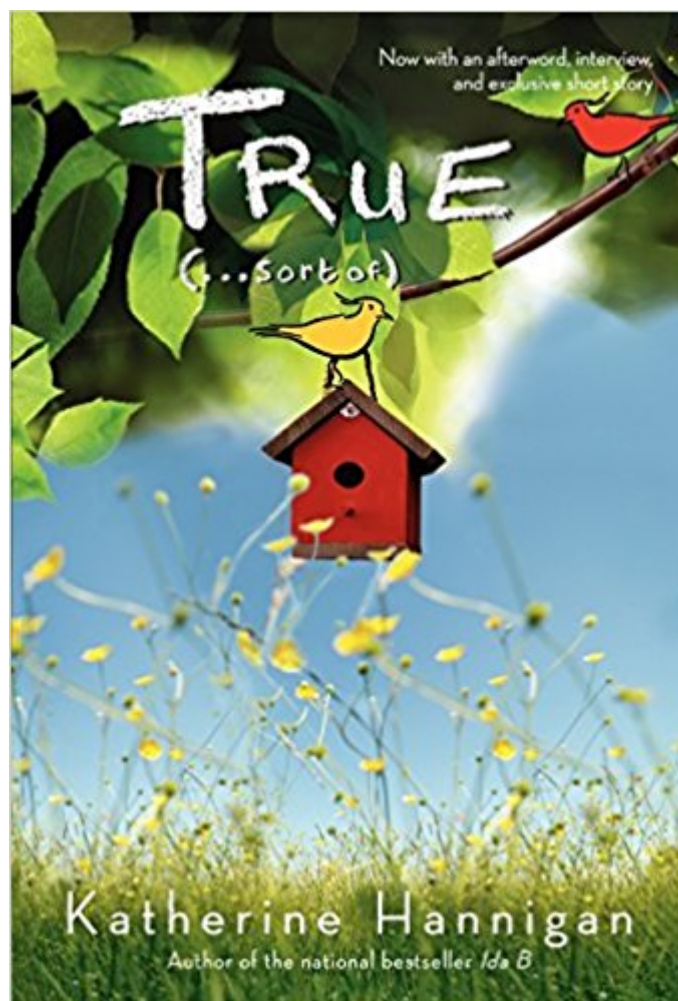


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## True (. . . Sort Of)



## Synopsis

Can friendship save you? The day Ferris Boyd moves to town, Delly Pattison is sure a special surprise (a present that is a surprise) is on its way. Instead, Delly ends up in even more trouble than usual. The Boyds' arrival in River Bluffs means big changes for Brud Kinney, too. He can't believe who he's hanging around with. Ferris Boyd isn't like anyone Delly or Brud have ever known. Ferris is a mystery and a wonder. Through friendship, though, Delly, Brud, and Ferris discover truths that will change their lives. And bring them the best surprise of all. Includes an all-new afterword featuring a short story, photographs by the author, and more

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 510 (What's this?)

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: Greenwillow Books; Reprint edition (April 24, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0061968757

ISBN-13: 978-0061968754

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.8 x 7.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 54 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #445,237 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #67 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Dysfunctional Relationships](#) #147 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Abuse](#) #2811 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > School](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

**Product Description** True: Delly Pattison likes surprises (presents that are a surprise). The day the Boyds come to town, Delly's sure a special surprise is on its way. But lately, everything that she thinks will be good and fun turns into trouble. She's never needed a surprise more than now. True: Brud Kinney wants to play basketball like nothing anybody's ever seen. When the Boyds arrive, though, Brud meets someone who plays like nothing he's ever seen. True: Ferris Boyd isn't like anyone Delly or Brud have ever met. Ferris is a real mystery (an extremely curious

mystery). True: Katherine Hannigan's first novel since her acclaimed *Ida B* is a compelling look at the ways friendships and truths are discovered. It's all true (sort of). A Q&A with Author Katherine Hannigan

Q: In your debut novel *Ida B*, *Ida B* declares, "There is never enough time for fun." I suspect Delly, your protagonist in *True (Sort Of)* would say the same thing except fun for Miss Pattison often leads to trouble. What draws you to such fun-loving characters such as these two? Hannigan: First, there's this: In my experience, most children expect life to be fun, and they are constantly on the prowl for it. Delly and *Ida B* are just experts at finding it. But there's this, too: When I'm writing a story, I spend a long, long time with the characters. *Ida B* took one and a half years to write, *True (Sort Of)* took longer. So if I'm going to spend that much time with somebody, she has to be fun. And finally, there's this: Life can be tough, and there are some tough times in these stories. Fun helps temper the tough times. A lot.

Q: *Ida B* was written in first-person, but in *True (Sort Of)* you write from a third-person-omniscient perspective and on top of that you're focusing on two characters, Delly and Brud. How was the experience of writing this time around different from writing *Ida B*? Hannigan: There's something wonderful about writing in the first person—knowing a character so completely, and seeing the world through her eyes and with her heart (especially if she's someone like *Ida B*). There's a real flow to the plot, too, when I'm only considering one character's point of view. But that's the limitation of writing in the first person—the world is only as big as that character's perception. The great thing about writing a story in the third person is that the world is as big as you want it to be. You can go wherever any of the characters go, you can understand what any of them is feeling. The hard thing about that, though, is it can get pretty complicated. In *True*, I wanted the reader to know a town, and lots of the people in it. I especially wanted the reader to know four kids: Delly, Brud, RB, and Ferris Boyd. And I wanted to show how the four of them, with all their troubles and their talents, could come to be friends and sort of save one another. To do that really well, I needed to write *True* in the third person. It was harder than writing in first person, and it sure took longer, but it was worth it.

Q: In both novels, a favorite teacher plays a significant role in the course of the story—offering wisdom and encouragement at important times. Is there a teacher from elementary school that filled that role for you? Hannigan: I write about great teachers like Ms. Washington (in *Ida B*) and Lionel Terwilliger (in *True*) because I know how important teachers are. On any weekday, many children will spend more time with their teacher than with their parents. And so much learning is happening in school—not just cognitive or motor stuff, but social and ethical stuff, too. When a teacher's really good, kids

are learning things like how to be decent people, how to do the right thing after doing lots of wrongs, and how to help one another be their best. Not all the teachers in my stories are great, or even good. I focus on the wonderful ones, though, because that's what I'd wish for every kid, every day. I also write about teachers like Ms. Washington and Lionel Terwilliger because while I'm writing, I get to spend time with them, and they are wonderful to be around. That's one of the gifts of writing. Q: You don't shy away from tough issues (abuse, cancer) in your novels. Do you ever struggle with how to approach such troublesome issues for a younger audience? Hannigan: Not really. Maybe because I don't see them as "issues." I see them as hard things that have happened to lots of people, including me and the folks I know. I realize that kids have hard things happen in their lives all the time. What I am careful about is making sure that my characters' reactions to difficulties are genuine. They all struggle, and handle things imperfectly, just like me and everybody I know. But they all have hearts that help them figure out what's right and good, as I believe we all do. And I'm careful to surround all the hard times with humor and with love, because I think that's what saves us. Life is beautiful and wonderful and amazing. And sometimes it's awful and ugly. In my stories, I hope I'm showing kids (and maybe grownups, too) some of the ways we can be more aware of the wonderful, and come away from the awful better than we were before. Q: In Delly's world a "surpresent" is a present that is a surprise (the best ever, she says). What would be your best "surpresent" ever? Hannigan: Well, I was going to answer, "My cats," because there are five of them, and all of them started as strays. So they were all surprises, and they are all presents (although sometimes I wonder about Tinken, who is 3/4 cat and 1/4 hellion). But I think the best surpresent ever was learning that I could write stories, because I didn't know that until I was almost 40-years-old. Then I wrote *Ida B* and it was one of the best times of my life. So that was a great and wonderful surprise. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Katherine Hannigan studied mathematics, painting, and studio art and has worked as the education coordinator for a Head Start program and, most recently, as an assistant professor of art and design. She is the author of *True (Sort Of)*, *Emmaline and the Bunny*, and the national bestseller *Ida B . . . and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World*. She lives in Iowa with a bunch of cats and the occasional bunny or bird visitor. Her backyard hosts an additional array of creatures, including deer, raccoons, possums, and sometimes a skunk. But no alligators . . . yet!

Excellent read aloud for elementary students in grades 3 to 6.

Beautifully written book about friendship with a quiet backstory of the sadness of child abuse. I'm an elementary school teacher and I use this as a read aloud EVERY year. The kids love it.

This is a great read. It made me - an adult - both laugh and cry. It addresses a lot of issues like self esteem, positive and negative thinking. And shines a light on how we all make a difference and impact others.

This book is a quiet book about a girl named Delly who is trying to grow up in a world that is boring. She feels like she has to create her own adventure to make life more exciting. But her idea of fun always gets her into trouble. She is about to be sent away to a reform school, when she gets some help from her brother and a new girl comes to town. Then her life changes. People are complimenting her because she has learned how to stay out of trouble.

A very honest portrait of childhood done in an extremely unique way.

Ms. Hannigan is a master of the simple story with a meaning and purpose behind it. There are no wasted words. To that end it is perfect for children but also special for moms and dads who enjoy reading to their kids, or just reading it by themselves! Like Ida B., the author takes us on a little journey with a wonderful ending that asks for more...what's next?

My 6th graders loved this book when we did a unit on it. They loved the characters and when I read it this past summer I loved it.

This is my favorite book, and I'm glad I got the chance to buy it~!

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