

- ◆ ALA Best Book for Young Adults
- ◆ VOYA's Top Shelf Fiction
- ◆ Junior Literary Guild Selection

Vivian Vande Velde is an Edgar Award-winning author for her young adult book *Never Trust a Dead Man*. On writing, she says: "As a child, I would walk around with a notebook, ready in case a story should come to me. Of course, I never actually wrote in that notebook, but I was ready."

Heir Apparent

By Vivian Vande Velde

Giannine Bellisario decides to celebrate her fourteenth birthday at a computer gaming center, where she chooses a total immersion virtual reality game called *Heir Apparent*. Set in medieval times, the game turns Giannine into an exiled princess who must stay alive until she can return to court and assume the throne.

As she plays, a group of censorship advocates from the CPOC (Citizens to Protect Our Children) breaks into the arcade and damages the equipment. Giannine suddenly discovers that she must complete the game in the allotted time or die. Ghosts, witches, wizards, and magical tools help her as she races against time and faces many setbacks. Challenges range from barbarian attacks and peasant uprisings to a giant dragon. In addition, the half brothers and the hostile queen have treacherous plans to keep the crown for themselves.

Though Giannine is repeatedly (to her vast annoyance) forced to start over after being "killed," she learns from her mistakes, survives increasingly tricky, sometimes hilarious, challenges, and wins both crown and life at the last possible moment by not only overcoming opponents, but by also using newly developed diplomatic skills to win allies. Giannine's humor, ingenuity, and determination make her a worthy opponent and someone worth cheering for.

Thief Lord

By Cornelia Funke

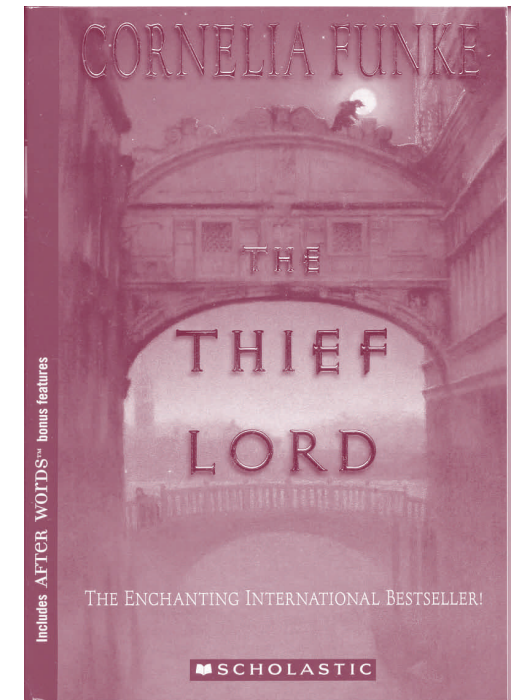
After their mother dies, 12-year-old Prosper and his brother, Bo, five, flee from Hamburg, where an awful aunt and uncle plan to adopt only Bo, and make their way to Venice. They live in an abandoned movie theater with several other street children under the care of the Thief Lord, an unusual masked youth who claims to rob the city's most elegant houses.

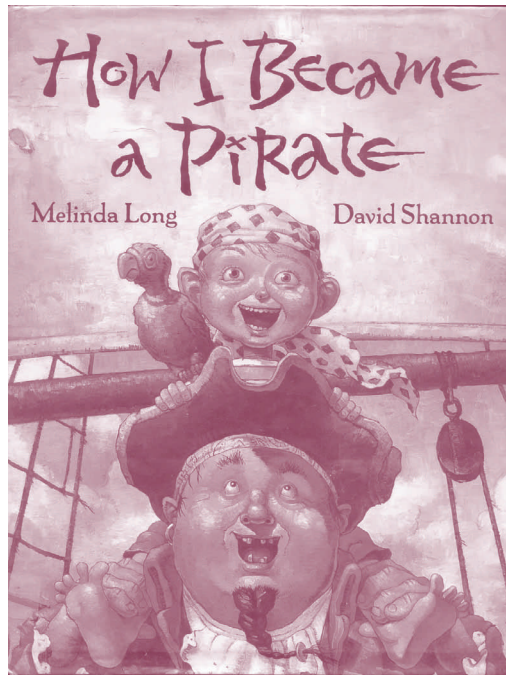
A mysterious man hires the Thief Lord to steal a wooden wing, which the kids later learn has broken off a long-lost merry-go-round said to make "adults out of children and children out of adults."

The plan changes when Victor, the detective Aunt Esther hired to track the brothers, discovers where they are living and reveals that the Thief Lord is actually from a wealthy family. The Venetian setting is perfect for mystery and the city's alleys and canals add to the twists and turns of the plot.

Cornelia Funke (*Did you know she. . .*)

- ◆ Wanted to be an astronaut when she grew up.
- ◆ Designed board games and illustrated children's books.
- ◆ Got her degree in Education Theory.
- ◆ Is the third best-selling children's author in Germany, after J. K. Rowling and R. L. Stine.





How I Became A Pirate

By Melinda Long

Illustrated by David Shannon

When pirates unexpectedly land on the beach in front of Jeremy Jacob and ask him if he'd like to join them while they bury a treasure chest, of course he says yes. Just as long as he gets home in time for soccer practice the next day.

Jeremy learns all about being a good pirate. Like how to sing chanteys, throw food across the table and say things like "Down the Hatch!" Trouble is, pirates don't get a good night kiss or have anyone to read them a bedtime story. Maybe being a pirate isn't what Jeremy wants to do after all.

What is "Read the Same Book?"

Communities across the U.S. have discovered that choosing a book to read together brings together friends and strangers to discuss good literature and ideas. *Idaho Statesman* writer Dan Popkey introduced the concept to Boise in late 2000, modeled after a similar program in Seattle. Boise began its program in 2001 with *Housekeeping*, by Marilynne Robinson, adding children's titles in subsequent years, so that the whole family could participate.

Books are chosen by a committee that includes representatives from local libraries, the teachers, writers and readers of all ages. The committee chooses a book based on literary merit and relevance to local readers.

As you and your family read a book, we encourage you to talk about it with friends and neighbors, and to attend related programs in the community. We hope you'll find it an avenue for exploring new ideas and making new reading friends.

2007 Adult Selection: Again this year, the Log Cabin Literary Center is presenting The Big Read, a national initiative from the National Endowment of the Arts. Like Read the Same Book, this program encourages literary reading by inviting communities to come together to read and discuss one book. This year, the Log Cabin chose *A Farewell to Arms*, by Ernest Hemingway.

Discussion Topics

How I Became A Pirate (Young Readers)

- ◆ What aspects of being a pirate would you like best?
- ◆ Braid Beard is the captain's name. Why? What would your pirate name be? Why?
- ◆ Do you play for a sports team? What is it's name? How or why do you think teams get their names?

Thief Lord (Middle Readers)

- ◆ Was it a good idea for Prosper and Bo to run away to Venice? Why or why not?
- ◆ Why do you think Scipio pretends to be the Thief Lord?
- ◆ If you could become an adult right now, would you?
- ◆ What do you think happens to Renzo and Morosina in the end?

Heir Apparent (Young Adult)

- ◆ When Giannine arrives and the protestors are outside, they claim they are protecting children from evil. Do they have a point? Should children be protected from violent games? If so, by whom?
- ◆ Every time Giannine "dies" in the game she makes better choices. How do you think your life would be different if you could see the results of your choices before you make them?
- ◆ Do you think she was better off as a shepherd with a loving family or as a princess? Why?

Watch for related activities and programs at your library, or visit www.idahokidsread.org.

Seventh Annual

Kids

Read the Same Book

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2007 Resource Guide

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