

Kendra Lechleidner

Dear Mr. Rawls,

I have now read your book, Where the Red Fern Grows, twice and I still enjoy it as much as the first time I read it as a child in fourth grade. Thank you for writing such a wonderful story!

I like your book because I can relate to it easily. I've grown up with dogs, and have a strong love for them just like your character Billy. In your story, Billy's passion for his dogs jumps straight off the page, and I think this story could make even a non-dog lover get a little teary-eyed.

This book has always been hard for me to put down; especially during the big hunts Billy has with Little Anne and Old Dan. I think that you are the type of writer who knows how to change a mood in a story very gracefully and at the right time. For example when everything is going fine, then you have the Pritchard boys challenge Billy to hunt the ghost coon, and then have Rubin have his accident. It was a sad part but it made the story good and added more suspense.

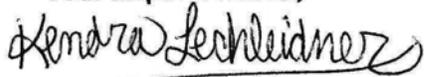
It must have been a very tough decision for you to decide whether or not to have Little Anne and Old Dan pass away. I have a feeling that you debated on whether to have it end that way. I think that you made the right choice. In my view, the story shows that life isn't always perfect, but moments can be and those moments will always be with you in your heart and mind, and will be something you will never forget.

Your story did more than just entertain me; it helped change my views on something that affected my life tremendously. In my early years of elementary school I struggled with reading and didn't like it much. I was put into a reading group that taught basic reading skills and practiced them with a group of other kids with the same needs. The reading group was there to help us catch up with our other classmates in our reading levels and helped tremendously. My Mom also got me Hooked on Phonics, and I read with her every night. I became a better reader, but I still didn't enjoy it very much. That is until I picked up your book in fourth grade. Your book showed me that there are wonderful stories out there just waiting to be read. I quickly became more eager to read and explore undiscovered worlds. I became a great reader and looked forward to curling up on the couch, wrapped in a blanket, lost in a world of stories. Once I realized how much I loved reading, I became aware of how much I loved

to write as well. In elementary school, mostly starting around fifth grade, I realized that I would love to be a published author as my profession. I've often looked up to you as a writer and hope that someday I can be some where close to as good as you. Thank you for opening my eyes to reading and writing.

Thank you very much for putting your beautiful words, feelings, and views on the bonds between dogs and humans on paper. It must be hard to expose feelings that come from your heart to anyone who wishes to explore them. I am grateful that you have.

Your inspired reader,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kendra Lechleidner". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

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