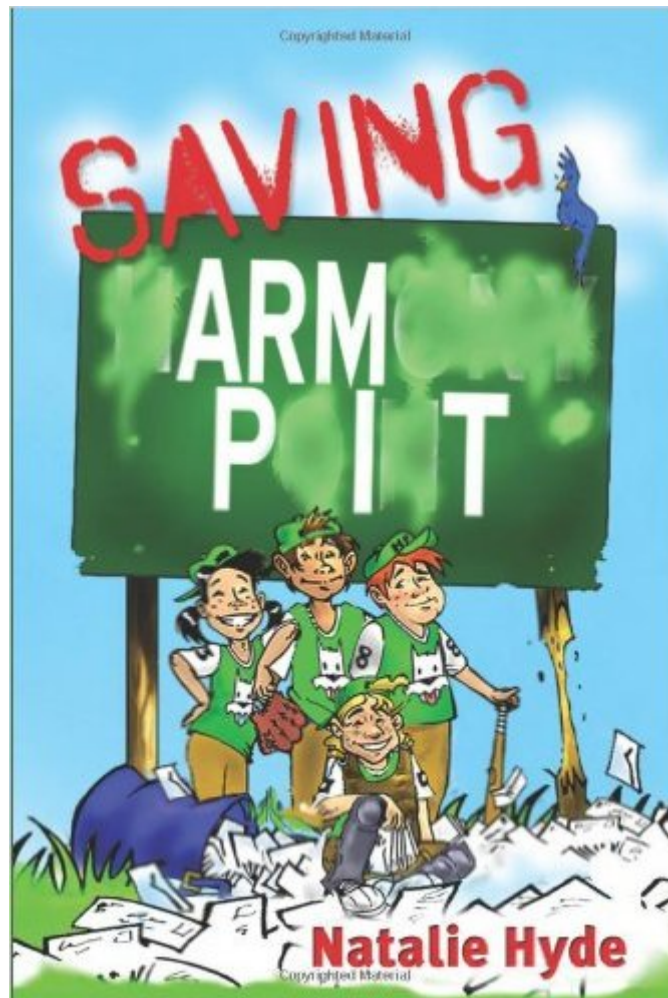


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# Saving Armpit



## Synopsis

Rocky Mountain Book Award finalist, 20132012 Silver Birch Express Award nomineeWhen vandals deface the Harmony Point sign, the town does indeed seem to become the "arm Pit" of the region. The baseball team hasn't won a game in two seasons and the town itself is falling into disrepair. But when the new postmaster becomes the ball coach, Clay and the rest of the Terriers finally seem to stand a chance of winning a game. Until they overhear a bureaucrat from the city say that the post office will close unless the "numbers" work out. The team begins "Operation Tennis Elbow" - a letter writing campaign designed to generate enough mail to keep the post office - and its postmaster - in town (and coaching their baseball team). And along the way, they learn the power of the pen in effecting positive changes in their community.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 740L (What's this?)

Paperback: 136 pages

Publisher: Fitzhenry & Whiteside; 1 edition (March 21, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 155455151X

ISBN-13: 978-1554551514

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.3 x 7.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #845,277 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #73 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Sports > Baseball & Softball #573 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > TV, Movie, Video Game Adaptations #705 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Sports & Outdoors > Baseball

Age Range: 12 - 14 years

Grade Level: 4 - 9

## Customer Reviews

No matter how engaging your story, delightful your setting, or generally accomplished your writing, a book like this only works really well if the kids feel authentic and you believe they really are playing baseball in a little town. This book scores high marks on all of those tests. The kids are just right, Sure, the team is composed of some recognizable "types", but even the most predictable types are sometimes surprising. Our narrator, Clay, is a little more responsible and observant, and certainly

more articulate than his fellows, but even he comes across more as a kid trying to follow what's going on than as an all knowing narrator. The rest of the team members each get a chance to shine, and whether they are just talking about stuff or working as a team they display that weird combination of innocence, wisdom, hope, despair, know-it-allness, and silliness that is the hallmark of the middle grader. You will like these kids and you will root for them. I don't recall any other kids in any other book I've read recently who are so convincingly portrayed. Whether just messing around and killing time waiting for baseball practice to start, or sitting on a wall discussing school matters, or hatching a scheme of some sort, they are real in a very satisfying and entertaining way. They are supported by a well imagined and crafted set of town adults. This feels very much like a middle school version of one of those classic droll English village comedies, where you have sharp tongued adults, vague or eccentric adults, and just slightly unfocused or addled adults. Particular care has been spent in the creation of the team's patient, wise and long suffering coach, and he provides a nice adult center for the antics surrounding the team.

SAVING ARMPIT by Natalie Hyde Non-fiction writers are known to fantasize about writing fiction, but few successfully make the leap to this differently demanding genre. Natalie Hyde has published nearly 20 non-fiction titles on topics as diverse as germ theory, micro life, and population patterns. With her first work of fiction, *Saving Armpit* (recently nominated for the 2012 Silver Birch Express Award), Hyde has successfully entered the land of make-believe or, as fiction has been called, the "lie that tells the truth." And *Saving Armpit* does tell truth -- about what it's like to live in a small-town close to a larger centre, and to feel your town getting ready to call it a day. The kids are especially disheartened to learn that they may lose their post office and with it Mr. Blackmore, the best coach they've ever had. The kids of Harmony Point (the defaced sign leading into town reads "Arm Pit") want to be winners, but how can you ever hope to win one game if every volunteer who coaches your team barely knows the game? Mr. Blackmore not only knows baseball, he knows kids. He comes equipped with patience, kindness, and a huge sports bag bulging with baseball gear. Now there will be new truths to learn, and the real game of baseball to be played. The kids are whipped into shape and slowly start to smell success, but, just as they get the first whiff, they must rally their forces to fight another battle -- that is, save the post office. They launch a letter writing campaign, and soon reap many surprising side benefits, besides the most important one -- keeping their coach. *Saving Armpit* is clever, funny, and fast-paced. The kids are straight out of Beverly Cleary -- that is, they are real.

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