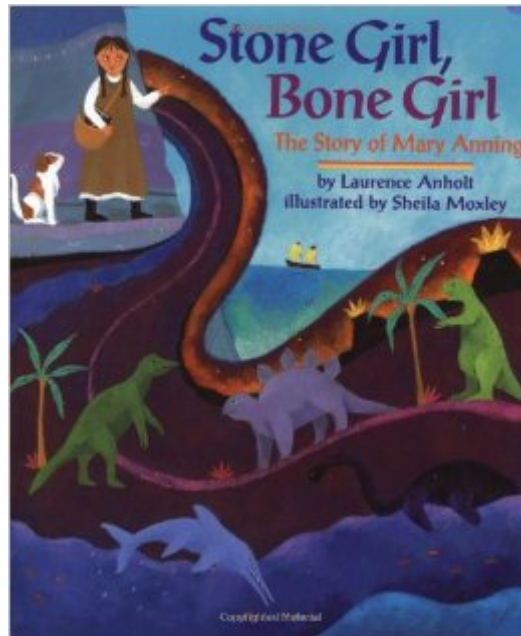


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Stone Girl, Bone Girl



Synopsis

A brief biography of the English girl whose discovery of an Ichthyosaurus skeleton in 1811 when she was twelve led to a life-long interest in fossils and other important discoveries.

Book Information

Age Range: 5 and up

Lexile Measure: 520L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (14 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #414,676 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Archaeology #51 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Fossils #299 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Science & Technology

Customer Reviews

First let me say that by all means I think every child should be taught about Mary Anning. She is a role model and her life story is an inspiration. This book, however, does not tell her life story. The older I get the more convinced I become that one of the worst things we do to our children is fill their heads at a young age with supernatural "tall tales" -- which are, really, downright lies. We tell our children there is a Santa Claus and read them stories about Paul Bunyon, John Henry, and St. Francis of Assisi levitating and charming animals As they grow up, they begin to realize that none of these things are true, and then we wonder why they quit listening to us (i.e., trusting us) as they become teens! I mean, duh! Wake up, people! (Yes St. Francis was real, but you will find very little about his real life in the MANY tall tale/legend children's books about him.) Mary Anning did not accomplish what she accomplished because she was given "supernatural fossil-finding powers" as an infant after a supposed-narrow escape from lightning: this is a tall tale created by local townspeople who could not accept that a 12-year-old girl could actually, on her own human powers, make a major scientific find. Her father did not fashion a 'magical' box for her out of wood from a

tree struck by lightning. Mary did not value ammonite fossils because they "were golden" and made her feel like "the cliffs are full of treasure." She valued fossils for what they were: evidence of prior life on earth. Similarly, her father did not teach her 'strange, magical names' for fossils: he understood fossils as being interesting, unexplained curiosities (period).

Stone Girl, Bone Girl tells the story of Mary Anning, an extraordinarily prolific fossil hunter born in England in 1799. When Mary began fossil hunting, she did not understand the significance of what she was finding. She was just hunting for curiosities, which she could sell to tourists in Lyme to make a bit of money for her extremely poor family. Her first major find came at the age of 12, when she uncovered an ichthyosaur. Over the years as she continued to hunt in and around the cliffs of Lyme Regis, Mary Anning found hundreds of fossils, including plesiosaurs, pterosaurs, and several more ichthyosaurs. Although she herself never left Lyme Regis, the fossils Mary found made their way to museums worldwide and contributed to the work of many of the major scientists of the day. Among them was Charles Darwin, who used her fossils to help develop the theory of evolution, which he described in his book, *On the Origin of Species*, published in 1859. The good: I found this book nearly as interesting as my daughter, and so, didn't mind reading it to her as many times as she asked. My daughter loved that Mary Anning found her first important fossil at the tender age of 12. I love that she hunted for it despite being laughed at by the other children, and that she persisted in fossil hunting even though it was an odd thing for a woman, much less a 12-year-old girl, to do in early 19th C England. And we both enjoyed the illustrations, which are dramatic and imaginative. What I didn't care for: The mysticism surrounding the dog. I didn't much care for the dog being presented as the spirit of Mary's father, come to comfort her after his death and find the ichthyosaur for her.

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