

Moderated Book Discussion  
Owly by Andy Runton  
Emily Brown  
Feb. 13-17  
LIBR 271-A, Spring 2012

Greetings and welcome to the second student led discussion forum. I hope you enjoy!

Details: The discussion will be open from 10:00pm Sunday February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012. I have posted 5 questions for you to review. Please pick at least one that you'd like to answer and post your original response. Then, please respond to at least one other posting from classmates. I'll be popping in to respond to your posts and commenting. Enjoy reading Owly, and my supplemental information about the book. Also, I want to encourage you to consider what your classmates think about Owly as the discussion progresses. So please check how the discussion unfolds, it might surprise you! I'll be checking the discussion throughout the day all week. The discussion will close Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 5:00pm. I am looking forward to hearing your ideas on this book!

Background Information: Andy Runton took 3 years to create Owly and publish the first book The Way Home. Owly is a graphic novel that relies on a mixture of symbols and expressions to convey it's story. Owly is a sweet and kind-hearted owl that has trouble making friends with other animals, since they are afraid of him. His first story, The Way Home, shows him making his first good friend and lasting companion, Wormy. This is a story of an owl who acts very human, carrying for others, respecting the environment and acting nobly. The presentation is very cartoon-like and cute with the characters having very expressive large eyes. The author stated that he loved the Powerpuff Girls and the style is similar. Andy Runton grew up in Atlanta and spent a great deal of time outside. His love of nature and gardening are also influences in the comic. The graphics are in black and white and there are usually no more than 6 panels per page. This comic is nearly wordless with the dialog containing

symbols instead of words. The only incidents of word usage are things like signage, books, and Owly's photo album captions.

Questions:

1. What was your favorite part? Anything pull at your heartstrings?
2. What might this comic, and comics like it, teach someone? Could you see this book having a place in a school setting? Why or why not?
3. What age group do you think this book is aiming for? Could other age groups enjoy it?
4. Does the “cuteness” of Owly take away from the emotional power of the narrative?
5. What did you think about the reliance on expression and symbols being used in place of text? Do you think it's effective?

Here's some additional information about Owly and the author, Andy Runton:

An Interview with Andy Runton about Owly

<http://blog.schoollibraryjournal.com/goodcomicsforkids/2010/06/12/interview-andy-runton/>

Publisher's Bio of Andy Runton

<http://www.topshelfcomix.com/catalog/andy-runton>

Author's description of Owly (This also has free PDF's of Owly shorts. They are adorable, so if you have some extra time, feel free to check them out!)

<http://www.andyrunton.com/owly/>