



Nana Star - Children's Storybook review

Posted by Kim

[Nana Star](#) is the first in a series of children's storybooks written by Elizabeth Sills and Elena Patrice and Illustrated by Linda Saker.

Who is Nana Star?

Besides being the subject of a children's storybook, Nana Star is actually a real person who inspired the writing of the book.

Elizabeth Owens originally created Nana Star for her grandson who moved away. In order to remain an inspiration in his life, she created and became Nana Star, sending him hand-crafted cards with wonderful stories of Nana Star and the Moonman. It was "Elizabeth's way of showing Vance that she was always with him."

Now, 4 generations have collaborated to bring Nana Star to a medium that others can enjoy.

From the book:

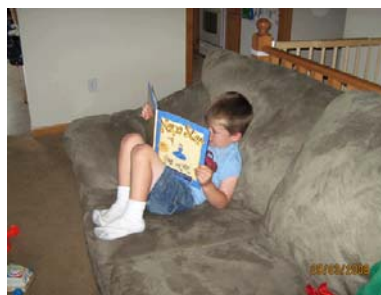
Elizabeth is the original creator; her eldest daughter, Linda, is the series illustrator; her granddaughters, Elizabeth and Elena, are the writers and publishers of this book; and her great-grandchildren, Allie, Nicky, Julianne, Christian, and Eve have been the inspiration for this special undertaking.

Both the Nana Star book and plush figure have won numerous parenting awards and they continue to receive rave reviews from parents and kids!



What We Think of Nana Star

We were sent a copy of the Nana Star book and CD and a Nana Star posable doll to enjoy and review and I have to admit that I was skeptical. I didn't doubt the quality or enjoyability of the book in general, just the appropriateness and interest it would receive from a 4 year old boy.



As I said, I was skeptical, but certainly wasn't going to let that get in the way, so I popped the CD in, handed Jake the book, and we sat down to listen/read. The CD contains a narrated version of the story and even though my son can read well, he still likes to be read to. I was surprised when Jake actually became engrossed in the story right from the first page.

Nana Star is a story about a little girl who finds a fallen baby star. The little girl sets out on a journey to return the star to his home. They are guided by the Moonman on their way. The writing is very vivid and hits on all of the senses, and the illustrations are light and beautiful. We enjoyed the story and I was again surprised by how much Jake seem affected by it. Somehow it really struck a chord with him and he wanted to re-start the CD and re-read the book, and he actually wanted to do it by himself.



There are a number of themes running quietly through the book that I think are what captured him. First is the lesson about helping others. Nana rescues the baby star and is determined to help him find his home. The second is a lesson about being little. Nana was "just" a little girl, but she was able to take on a big job of helping this baby star. The third theme that the book hints at is the protection offered by the wise tree and the Moonman. Even alone, she didn't have to feel scared when faced with this daunting task.

I didn't know the history of this book before we received it and now having read it, I truly can feel the purpose and intent behind the story - for Elizabeth to offer guidance and protection over her grandson, even though they were not together.

I asked Jacob what he especially liked about the book and he said he liked it all. I pressed him a bit and asked him to show me which was his favorite page. He flipped through and stopped on page #15 and said that was his favorite. I asked him why and he said "because of the talking trees." He's only 4 and cannot vocalize what touched him about the book, but that doesn't matter.

I had originally not opened the Nana Star doll (because of my doubt that he would like the book) and figured I would give it to Abby when she got older. After reading and re-reading Nana Star, I asked Jake if he would like to play with the doll. Without hesitating he said "yes!" I reminded him that Nana Star is a girl and he said "I don't care. I will play with her and she can sleep with my other 'guys' (he has a small group of stuffed animals that he calls 'guys' that have special places on and around his bed each night, Max, Chuck, Ace and Beary - yeah, I know their names...)." So I opened the Nana Star doll for him and he's been carrying her around the house with him all day along with Ace. Ace is top dog in the 'guy' world, he's a very ragged looking leopard and for Nana Star to receive a place next to him is a high honor. I think he really enjoys interacting with the character in the book in a tangible way.

One thing I forgot to mention in detail was the CD, and in general it is very nice to have it with the book. Jake prefers to listen to the CD while reading the book and I think it is because of the way the narrator captures the voices and inflections. There is a Nana Star song at the end of the CD but we have yet to make it all the way through the song because he keeps re-setting it to listen to the story!

Quick Summary of My Reactions

I went from skeptic to fan in one afternoon. Now I want to read the next book. And Abby must have a Moonman! I really can't say enough good things about the Nana Star book and the accompanying CD and possible doll. They don't scream "wow" at first glance, but after Jake's reaction to it, I'm certainly left with a "WOW."

Nana Star Audience

The publisher says the reading level is ages 4-8 and that may be a stretch. I would say more like 3-5 or 3-6, but it really depends upon the child. At first glance, too, Nana Star may appear to appear to an audience of girls before boys, I know I thought that, but obviously that is not necessarily the case. I don't think gender is an issue with this book, and even my husband didn't say anything when Jake was playing with the doll and I think that is because he saw how much Jake liked the book. You can buy both of the Nana Star series books and their accompanying plush figures from their [online store](#) or you can purchase the books from [Amazon.com](#).