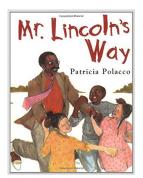
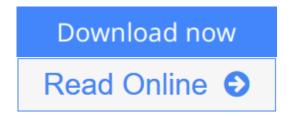
# Mr. Lincoln's Way



By Patricia Polacco



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Mr. Lincoln is the coolest principal ever! He knows how to do everything, from jumping rope to leading nature walks. Everyone loves him. . . except for Eugene Esterhause. "Mean Gene" hates everyone who's different. He's a bully, a bad student, and he calls people awful, racist names. But Mr. Lincoln knows that Eugene isn't really bad-he's just repeating things he's heard at home. Can the principal find a way to get through to "Mean Gene" and show him that the differences between people are what make them special?

With Patricia Polacco's trademark illustrations and gentle text, **Mr. Lincoln's Way** celebrates the unforgettable school principal who touches the lives of his students and truly empowers them.

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# **Editorial Review**

### From Publishers Weekly

Everyone thinks Eugene "Mean Gene" Esterhause, the school bully, is trouble "with a capital T." Everyone but Mr. Lincoln, that is, "the coolest principal in the whole world," who is determined to reach the boy after he's caught calling an African-American first-grader a racist name. Mr. Lincoln enlists Eugene's help in attracting birds to the school's new atrium, a project the fourth grader embraces with enthusiasm. Nevertheless, he again makes racist remarks and lands in the principal's office ("My old man calls you real bad names, Mr. Lincoln. He's got an ugly name for just about everybody that's different from us," the boy says to the African-American principal). Mr. Lincoln points out a heavy-handed parallel the diversity of the birds that Eugene loves. Mr. Lincoln helps free the boy from intolerance, just as Eugene finds a way to free the baby ducklings and their parents from the atrium so they can reach the pond outside. Polacco's (Thank You, Mr. Falker) artwork is assured, from the carefully delineated birds to the expressive faces of her characters, but the intertwining themes result in a thumping message and a too-tidy solution. Ages 6-9.

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#### From School Library Journal

Gr 1-4-In her many books, Polacco has dealt sensitively with a broad spectrum of circumstances and issues. Here she tackles both intolerance and bullying. Mr. Lincoln is the "coolest" principal: he is Santa at Christmas, lights the menorah at Chanukah, and wears a dashiki for Kwanza and a burnoose for Ramadan. The author chronicles his attempt to reclaim "Mean Gene," a child who sasses his teachers, picks on other children, and makes ethnic slurs. "`He's not a bad boy, really,' Mr. Lincoln said. `Only troubled.'" However, the distinction is not clarified. When the principal discovers that the boy is fond of birds, he capitalizes on this interest. He involves him in attracting the creatures to the school atrium while at the same time showing him that just as the differences in the birds render them beautiful, so do the differences in people. While the theme is an important and timely one, Polacco has allowed her message to overwhelm both plot and character development. The story emerges as didactic, laden with heavy-handed metaphor, and too simplistic a solution to a deep-rooted problem. The book may be useful to schools in need of a springboard for discussion of the topic and is graced with impressive watercolors, but it is not up to the author's usual literary standards.

### Grace Oliff, Ann Blanche Smith School, Hillsdale, NJ

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#### From **Booklist**

Ages 5-8. Mr. Lincoln is the coolest principal ever, except in the mind of Eugene "Mean Gene" Esterhause, a bully of legendary proportions. Certain that Gene is only troubled (rather than rotten to the core), Mr. Lincoln sets out quietly to discover Gene's strengths (he is an avid bird watcher) and enlists his help in creating a bird sanctuary for the school. The principal also learns the source of Gene's racial intolerance and makes some important strides toward reversing the boy's prejudices. This story is vintage Polacco--a multicultural neighborhood setting, a cast of believable characters (some larger than life), and a satisfying ending guaranteed to bring tears to even hard-boiled cynics. Polacco's signature watercolor illustrations take on springtime hues here; they're especially apparent in Mr. Lincoln's bright pink shirts and ties. An excellent choice for storyhours, this should prompt some interesting discussions about bullies and their motivations.

# Kay Weisman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

# **Users Review**

## From reader reviews:

# Patricia Lopez:

Playing with family in a very park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. One particular activity that make you not feeling tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love Mr. Lincoln's Way, you may enjoy both. It is fine combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its named reading friends.

## Sylvia Langley:

Are you kind of hectic person, only have 10 as well as 15 minute in your morning to upgrading your mind proficiency or thinking skill perhaps analytical thinking? Then you are receiving problem with the book compared to can satisfy your short space of time to read it because pretty much everything time you only find reserve that need more time to be read. Mr. Lincoln's Way can be your answer since it can be read by a person who have those short free time problems.

## **Gloria Lafreniere:**

Beside this Mr. Lincoln's Way in your phone, it may give you a way to get nearer to the new knowledge or data. The information and the knowledge you are going to got here is fresh in the oven so don't end up being worry if you feel like an old people live in narrow town. It is good thing to have Mr. Lincoln's Way because this book offers to you personally readable information. Do you often have book but you do not get what it's interesting features of. Oh come on, that will not happen if you have this within your hand. The Enjoyable agreement here cannot be questionable, similar to treasuring beautiful island. Techniques you still want to miss the idea? Find this book in addition to read it from now!

## **Anthony Wilson:**

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