

EPISODE 26

How Illustrations Nourish the Imagination

Guest: Zach Franzen

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Meet Zach Franzen



Zach is the illustrator of the Green Ember and The Black Star of Kingston. He lives in South Carolina with his wife and daughter, and illustrates textbooks by day and freelances at night. Find him on [Instagram](#) and at his [website](#).

In This Episode

Sarah and Zach discuss whether illustrations help or hinder a child's imagination and why illustrations deeply matter. You'll just love to hear Zach tell about the one-sentence story he wrote as a child— My dad can lift a truck— and how that one sentence story provided a watershed moment for him in realizing that perhaps there was an illustrator inside him.

The Listening Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.

- 5:53 Meet Zach Franzen
- 7:27 Zach's first story
- 10:45 The role of illustrations
- 14:55 Sunlight & Moonlight
- 18:20 Illustrating Heather and Picket
- 23:06 What's next for Zach
- 29:45 Why have books lost their richness?
- 33:30 Rightly ordered relationships
- 39:28 Hospitality and the Holy Imagination
- 40:18 Let the Kids Speak

If somebody suggests that they don't like audiobooks or they don't like being read to, they're lying to you. - Zach Franzen

Quotes and Questions

* In what ways can you help connect your kids with what they love?

“I had very supportive parent who looked for opportunities to nurture those gifts and connect me with people.”

Are there ways you can help your kids connect more with their passions? Are there people you could help them connect with?

* The value of illustrations.

“Illustration helps to make the book valuable as an object ... It makes it a more human things to have disciplines woven together for one end.”

Sarah and Zach discuss the impact of illustrations and how they flesh out a story. Do you have a child who is deeply affected by illustrations? How do you seek out beauty in books you share with your children?

* Sunlight & Moonlight.

Zach shares C.S. Lewis’s thoughts and applies his metaphor of sunlight and moonlight to books: “In some ways, I think, text acts as sunlight, and perhaps if they’re doing a good job, if it works right, when it works right in a book that you provide some of the romance and maybe some of the moonlight (through illustrations).”

* New book; old soul.

Zach says a publisher friend told him that kids’ books have changed to either “makes kids laugh or makes moms cry.”

To combat this we can either collect old books or be very careful about building our libraries, as Sarah puts it, searching out new books with an old soul like *The Green Ember*.

Show Notes

Books from today's episode:

- [The Green Ember](#)
- [A Beatrix Potter Treasury](#)
- [Understood Betsy](#)
- [The Chronicles of Narnia](#)
- [T.S. Eliot Collected Poems](#)
- [War and Peace](#)
- [The Histories](#)
- [The Indian in the Cupboard](#)
- [Tumtum and Nutmeg](#)
- [The Mitchells: Five for Victory](#)
- [Miss Hickory](#)
- [Treasure Island](#)

Other links from today's show:

- [Zach's guest blog post](#) about Hospitality and the Holy Imagination
- Find Zach on [Instagram](#)
- Visit Zach at [his website](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit ReadAloudRevival.com.