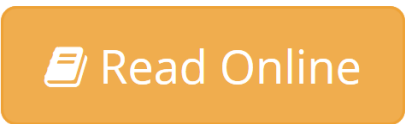


## Fear Itself (Benjamin Pratt and the Keepers of the School)

By Andrew Clements



**Fear Itself (Benjamin Pratt and the Keepers of the School)** By Andrew Clements

Time is ticking as the countdown to total school demolition continues. But in addition to deciphering maritime clues that could save the building, Ben Pratt and his friend Jill have to stay one step ahead of Lyman, the snake posing as the school janitor—who will do anything to preserve the \$30 million development deal that pays his salary.

The second book in this riveting six-book series is as action-packed as the first one, culminating in a faceoff between Ben and Lyman. “After five bells sound, time to sit down” makes for a good riddle, but Ben also knows when it’s time to stand up...for Oakes School and for himself.

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## **Fear Itself (Benjamin Pratt and the Keepers of the School) By Andrew Clements Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #423485 in Books
- Brand: Atheneum Books for Young Readers
- Published on: 2011-08-30
- Released on: 2011-08-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.00" h x .80" w x 5.00" l, .52 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 240 pages

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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 3-6—Although this book is a satisfying read by itself, the story will make more sense to readers familiar with *We the Children* (S & S, 2010). Benjamin Pratt and his friend Jill are trying to find the clues that will keep their 200-year-old school from being torn down and replaced by a theme park. Ben goes to the funeral of Mr. Keane, the janitor who died in the first book, where he meets Tom Benton, who held the job before Mr. Keane. The janitor's widow gives Ben a large set of keys, and he and Jill solve the clue, "after five bells sound, time to sit down" and find a codicil from Duncan Oakes, founder of the school, that might change everything. The current janitor is stalking Ben and Jill and taunts them with the fact that in three weeks the building will be demolished. Expressive pen-and-ink illustrations add detail and excitement to the adventure, including the clues and coins found. Solid writing, likable characters, danger, a seaside setting, and now treasure will make readers eager for the third installment. *Debbie Hoskins, Grand Rapids Public Library, MI*  
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From [Booklist](#)

In this second installment of the *Keepers of the School* series, Benjamin Pratt and his friend Jill make new contacts and uncover more clues in their effort to save their historic New England school from amusement-park developers. As the plot unrolls, the villain, a school janitor who actually works for the developers, is revealed to be even more unsavory than the kids initially suspected, and Benjamin becomes friends with another, retired janitor, who turns out to be a valuable source of information. Clements cleverly weaves his clues together, creating an intriguing, suspenseful multipart mystery. Grades 4-6. --Todd Morning

Review

Gr 3-6-Although this book is a satisfying read by itself, the story will make more sense to readers familiar with *We the Children* (S & S, 2010). Benjamin Pratt and his friend Jill are trying to find the clues that will keep their 200-year-old school from being torn down and replaced by a theme park. Ben goes to the funeral of Mr. Keane, the janitor who died in the first book, where he meets Tom Benton, who held the job before Mr. Keane. The janitor's widow gives Ben a large set of keys, and he and Jill solve the clue, "after five bells sound, time to sit down" and find a codicil from Duncan Oakes, founder of the school, that might change everything. The current janitor is stalking Ben and Jill and taunts them with the fact that in three weeks the building will be demolished. Expressive pen-and-ink illustrations add detail and excitement to the adventure, including the clues and coins found. Solid writing, likable characters, danger, a seaside setting, and now treasure will make readers eager for the third installment.-*Debbie Hoskins, Grand Rapids Public Library, MI*

"- SLJ Sept "2"010"

Working frantically to save their historic school from the wrecking ball scheduled in three weeks, sixth graders Ben Pratt and Jill Acton find the first of five safeguards planted more than 200 years earlier, an ally and treasure that may also help their cause. The story opens immediately after Ben has saved his arch enemy's life, and readers will need to be familiar with *We the Children* (2010), the first in this planned six-volume series, to identify the characters and understand their relationships. Like that title, this is fast-paced and full of intriguing details ranging from clues leading to a hidden document and antique coins to the story of Horatio at the bridge and references to Jack London. Ben alternates between parents; in the first book he

was living on his father's sailboat, so this week, he's home with his mother. Janitor Lyman continues to threaten, and even Jill seems nervous. The Massachusetts seaside setting takes a back seat to the increasing tension. Readers who've begun this well-written, modern kid-power mystery series will be glad to see this and eager for more. - "KIRKUS, "November 15, 2010

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

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