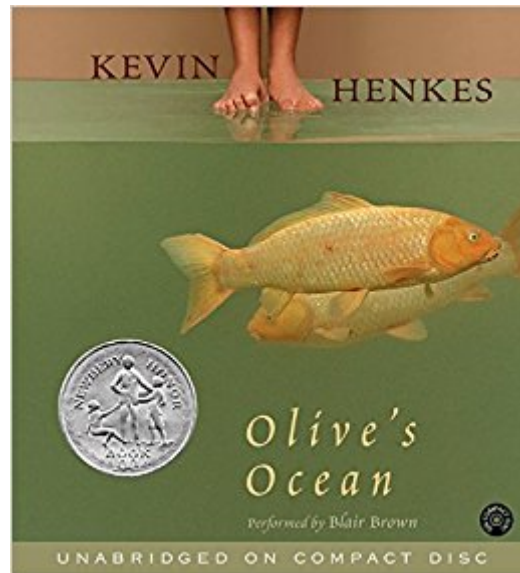




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# Olive's Ocean CD



## Synopsis

"Olive Barstow was dead. She'd been hit by a car on Monroe Street while riding her bicycle weeks ago. That was about all Martha knew." Martha Boyle and Olive Barstow could have been friends. But they weren't -- and now all that is left are eerie connections between two girls who were in the same grade at school and who both kept the same secret without knowing it. Now Martha can't stop thinking about Olive. A family summer on Cape Cod should help banish those thoughts; instead, they seep in everywhere. And this year Martha's routine at her beloved grandmother's beachside house is complicated by the Manning boys. Jimmy, Tate, Todd, Luke, and Leo. But especially Jimmy. What if, what if, what if, what if? The world can change in a minute. Performed by Blair Brown

## Book Information

Audio CD

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Best Sellers Rank: #2,844,746 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in [Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > \( H \) > Henkes, Kevin](#) #1088 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Short Stories](#) #1390 in [Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > General](#)

## Customer Reviews

Grade 5-8-As Martha and her family prepare for their annual summer visit to New England, the mother of her deceased classmate comes to their door. Olive Barstow was killed by a car a month earlier, and the woman wants to give Martha a page from her daughter's journal. In this single entry, the 12-year-old learns more about her shy classmate than she ever knew: Olive also wanted to be a writer; she wanted to see the ocean, just as Martha soon will; and she hoped to get to know Martha Boyle as "she is the nicest person in my whole entire class." Martha cannot recall anything specific she ever did to make Olive think this, but she's both touched and awed by their commonalities. She also recognizes that if Olive can die, so can she, so can anybody, a realization later intensified when Martha herself nearly drowns. At the Cape, Martha is again reminded that things in her life are changing. She experiences her first kiss, her first betrayal, and the glimmer of a first real boyfriend,

and her relationship with Godbee, her elderly grandmother, allows her to examine her intense feelings, aspirations, concerns, and growing awareness of self and others. Rich characterizations move this compelling novel to its satisfying and emotionally authentic conclusion. Language is carefully formed, sometimes staccato, sometimes eloquent, and always evocative to create an almost breathtaking pace. Though Martha remains the focus, others around her become equally realized, including Olive, to whom Martha ultimately brings the ocean. Maria B. Salvadore, formerly at District of Columbia Public Library Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 5-8. More than anything Martha wants to be a writer. The problem is that her father does, too. Is there room for two writers in a single family? This is only one of the many questions that beg to be answered during Martha's twelfth summer. Here are others: Is Godbee, the paternal grandmother whom the family is visiting at Cape Cod, dying? Why is Martha's father so angry? Could Jimmy, the eldest of the five neighboring Manning brothers, be falling in love with her (and vice-versa)? And what does all this have to do with Olive, Martha's mysterious classmate, who died after being hit by a car weeks earlier? Olive, who also wanted to be a writer and visit the ocean, and hoped to be Martha's friend. Like Henkes' *Sun and Spoon* (1997), this is another lovely, character-driven novel that explores, with rare subtlety and sensitivity, the changes and perplexities that haunt every child's growing-up process. He brings to his story the same bedrock understanding of the emotional realities of childhood that he regularly displays in his paradigmatically perfect picture books. This isn't big and splashy, but its quiet art and intelligence will stick with readers, bringing them comfort and reassurance as changes inevitably visit their own growing-up years. Michael Cart Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I am a middle school English teacher and mom of three, ages 16, 12 and 7. I am currently revamping our school's summer reading list. I just read this book, hoping to include it on our new reading list. I think it is well written and deals with a number of different issues from the perspective of a 12 year old girl. The author allows us to see things through Martha's eyes, such as death and family relationships. For me, the most gratifying parts of the book were interactions between Martha and her wise and kindly grandmother, affectionately known as "Godbee." I often hesitate to share my recommendations because every child is different. Some are more mature than others so parents need to make decisions with that in mind. I personally feel that "Olive's Ocean" is geared toward

readers 12 to 14. There is some profanity ("as#hol#s, shi##y, prick") and a situation where a 14 year old boy bets his brothers and friend that he can get the 12 year old main character, Martha, to kiss him while he films it. She is crushed when she discovers he basically used her to win a bet. This could provoke some good conversations with middle school kids. There is also a description of Martha's parents kissing in the kitchen and she thinks about how her brother refers to this as "MSB"-Morning Sex Behavior. "When they do it in the morning," Vince had informed Martha earlier that summer during one of their nightly chats, "they're all giggling and kissy and weird for at least an hour afterward. It's unmistakable." Although this was a very brief part of the story, I found it to be awkward and not helpful in developing either the story or the sibling relationship. Again, that's just my opinion and I'm sure others may disagree. As with anything, I think parents need to be aware and make informed decisions about what books are best for their kids.

I LOVE this author and as far as we've read the story is very good. However, the quality of the book itself is TERRIBLE. My daughter opened it just after it arrived and the very first time she opened it the pages split off the spine of the book as though the book was very old and had been exposed to excessive sun or heat or something. Although I'm sure we will enjoy the rest of the story, I'll probably have to throw the book away when done instead of passing it on to the other kids as the pages are falling out. Disappointed.

Olive Barstow was the kind of quiet kid who blended into the woodwork. When she died unexpectedly, her mother brought over a diary page to Martha, the protagonist. Stunned by Olive's writing that she wished they could have been friends, and guilty over not knowing of this during her life, Martha decides to try writing a novel as her family spends a summer at the beach. Her relationships with the boys next door, her grandmother whose house they are staying at, and her family are unexpectedly described in more thoughtful detail than the average young adult book. Not since the Anastasia Krupnik books, have I read such a three-dimensional portrait of a senior citizen. Martha, on the cusp of puberty, finds her relationship to the two boys next door has changed. Every exchange between them feels genuine and what ultimately happens is what would happen in real life, not a glossy teen movie. In the end, she makes little progress on her novel, but discovers much about herself, helped by both adults and peers.

great book

This was one of the best books I have ever read in my whole entire life and the end was amazing to read!

This is an amazing book. I loved it so much. It has bad language so I would recommend anyone 12-and up to read this book. It also has things about sexuality but it is only because of one kiss. This book is definitely a page turner and I can't wait to read more of Kevin Henkes' books!

This novel was well-written and engaging. While the initial premise seemed a bit somber, overall the book is very life-affirming and positive. The main character and her family are portrayed realistically and the themes take it beyond just a fluffy read. It would be a good one for class discussions as well as independent reading for grades 5 and up.

This is the very first book I learn to read from. I loved every second of it!

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