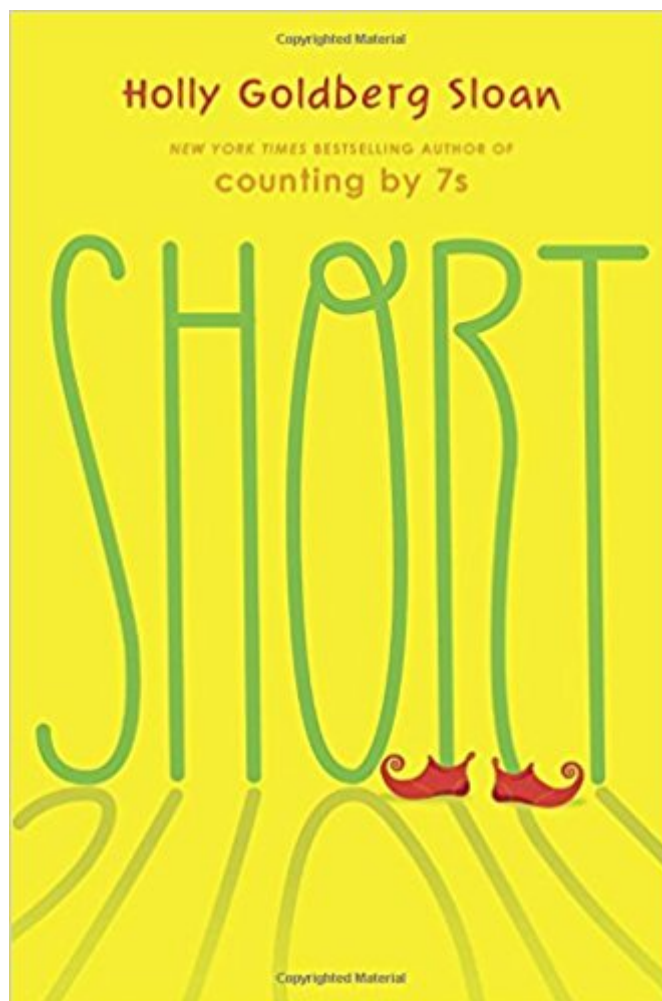


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# Short



## Synopsis

A New York Times Bestseller! In this heartwarming, funny middle-grade novel by the bestselling author of *Counting by 7s*, Julia grows into herself while playing a Munchkin in a production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Julia is very short for her age, but by the end of the summer run of *The Wizard of Oz*, she'll realize how big she is inside, where it counts. She hasn't ever thought of herself as a performer, but when the wonderful director of *Oz* casts her as a Munchkin, she begins to see herself in a new way. Julia becomes friendly with the poised and wise Olive--one of the adults with dwarfism who've joined the production's motley crew of Munchkins. With her deeply artistic neighbor, Mrs. Chang, Julia's own sense of self as an artist grows. Soon, she doesn't want to fade into the background--and it's a good thing, because her director has more big plans for Julia! Bubbling over with humor and tenderness, while emphasizing the importance of role models, this is an irresistible story of self-discovery.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0810 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 304 pages

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 1 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 22 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #20,771 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts #137 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > New Experiences #173 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Self-Esteem & Self-Respect

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8 • Middle schooler Julia Marks reluctantly lands a part as a munchkin in a summer stock production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Tentative at first about her performing abilities, she's helped along by a group of adults who see what she has not yet realized about herself: she makes

a big impression for such a small person. Julia is indeed very small; the title of the book describes the protagonist, who is several inches shorter than her classmates and has been uncomfortable about her height since she overheard her parents discussing it negatively. Julia's rambling first-person narration is very funny as she resists every new opportunity (lead munchkin dancer; second string winged monkey) and then decides she loves it once she tries it. Julia finds mentors in the well-drawn characters who make up the theater group, especially the charismatic director, who works lying down after he breaks his tailbone, and a septuagenarian costume designer and former prima ballerina. She changes her perspective on her own size when she befriends Olive, an actress with dwarfism who wows the protagonist with her singing and dancing chops, her fashion sense, and her confidence as she dresses down the director for his bias against an aspiring cast member. Brief chapters and an accessible writing style add to the novel's appeal. VERDICT Theater kids and fans of Tim Federle's "Nate" books will love this. —•Beth Wright Redford, Richmond Elementary School Library, VT

Praise for ShortNew York Times —•Bestseller —•“Short joins other middle-grade novels . . . in celebrating the transcendent power of theater for kids.” —•The New York Times Book Review —•“Holly Goldberg Sloan is skilled at creating sympathetic and utterly charming young characters, and in —•Short —• she succeeds once again. . . . Sloan manages to deftly weave —• in tough topics like grief and identity with both the same humor and tenderness that made —• Counting By 7s —• such a hit.” —•Entertainment Weekly\* “Sweet and uplifting. . . . It’s refreshing that Julia doesn’t mind being short and believes she’s ‘little, but big inside.’ Her self-acceptance is inspiring and the joy she experiences in her foray into theater is irresistible.” —•Booklist, starred review“A charming read with an important message that no matter one’s stature, ‘the way we move tells the world who we are.’” —•Kirkus“Very funny. . . . Theater kids and fans of Tim Federle’s ‘Nate’ books will love this.” —•School Library Journal“Sloan again captures the authentic voice of a child dealing with weighty topics, including loss and identity, in a charming and often funny way. . . . A narrative filled with lighthearted and candid moments.” —•Publishers Weekly“A joy to read.” —•School Library Connection“This is . . . a jubilant story about the way a new context can give kids a whole different perspective on life and themselves, and readers feeling stuck in their roles will particularly appreciate the implication.” —•BCCB —• “The funny narration is in Julia’s rambling, middle-school voice, which allows readers to experience her emotions and maturation with her. . . . Highly recommended.” —•VOYA

Daughter loves it and has much positive messaging for growing minds. A must read!

Beautifully crafted story with a message that resonates with all of us.

Really enjoyed and highly recommend Holly Goldberg Sloan's *Short*. Her identification of theater as a place where people can be whoever they are is wonderful (reminiscent of Tina Faye's summer theater experience from her memoir- the welcoming nature of both is palpable) - particularly appreciated in this era of rising intolerance and lack of support for the arts. Sometimes children's books that tackle issues fall into the trap of being pedantic; not so here. As is the case with ALL of Goldberg Sloan's novels, I SO appreciate her writing - real and varied characters who think about and work through understanding things that matter..

*Short* was TOO short! I didn't want it to end. All too typically, the formula for girl's books is their social difficulties, their problems making friends and dealing with fitting in, because of problems with their appearance or personality. *Short*'s Julia has her problems -- her height, something so many kids deal with, as well as her very real grief over her "passed on" dog. Simple, basic stuff. Then author Holly Sloan hangs Julia on one of the cleverest plots I've seen in a while. She's cast as a Munchkin in a summer semi-professional performance of the Wizard of Oz. The book opens up like an oyster to include the director, a talented next door neighbor, her performing brother, and a very sympathetic and helpful Little Person, who at 4' 9" is just her height only with a lot of wisdom to share. Every minor character in the cast is well drawn and charming, with their own set of problems, and Julia's voice bubbles along as she alternates between observations both naive and astute. Maybe I'll get lucky and Sloan will cast Julia in another production next summer. I can't wait.

Libby's Literary Corner for Young Readers: Ages 8-12, Grades 3-7 (I recommend the older half of the age range unless you have a top insightful reader or a young theatre bug.) I love it when I see that an author I've enjoyed has written a new book. When I spotted *Short* by Holly Goldberg Sloan, author of *Counting by 7s*, at Barnes and Noble last week, claiming it with my coupon was a no-brainer. Savor this gem WITH a child you love. Julia is short. That doesn't bother her, though, until she overhears her parents' concerned conversation and then notices that even her little brother is surpassing her in size.

Summer has arrived and Julia's mom has decided she and her little brother should try out for the summer theatre production of "The Wizard of Oz". Randy is a natural, but Julia has no discernible talent or particular interest and figures her mom just wants to save on paying Julia to babysit. She endures the auditions and is assigned a role as a munchkin. Great. Just great! Well, actually, it does become great! This quirky insightful munchkin/winged monkey has the summer of her life. Three of the munchkins are adults with dwarfism. Julia becomes best friends with one of them, Olive, watching her closely as a mentor. She also becomes unlikely friends with the director, Shawn Barr, and her own fascinating older neighbor, Mrs. Chang, who helps with costumes. Barr surprisingly and humorously looks to Julia for leadership. Mrs. Chang reveals her own sense of loss. The summer of interesting adult friendships and observations help Julia work through the grief of losing her beloved dog, Raymond. The summer also helps her figure out who she is and the rich gifts that are uniquely hers. I enjoyed the offhanded humor in this book which is why I recommend reading it aloud with a young friend or using it as a book club book with a grand from afar: When Julia is at the orthodontist's: I look over and manage a half smile, but without showing teeth. "I'm waiting for Dr. Brinkman." The woman answers, "I'm waiting for Dr. Brinkman." I don't say anything because the other two times I was here, I met a man named Dr. Brinkman. Who knows what happened to him in six months? We live in a rapidly changing world. On opening night of the show: I lean into the window on the passenger side of the car. I smile at Mom and tell her something I've wanted to say all summer. "Thanks, Mom. Thanks for making me try out for this play." "I think I might just have made being a mother totally worthwhile for her. I will try to never forget her face. It's too bad I don't have a cell phone, because I could have taken a picture and that would have been great for my scrapbook. Mom's got tears in her eyes and she's smiling. It's an amazing look. I have to remember how powerful it can be to say thank you. Especially to the people you live with. They probably least expect it. This is a quirky, fun, stream-of-consciousness tale, a book that reminds me of the adults who were my friends when I was a child and how important they made me feel as I began to gain my own sense of self.

Holly Goldberg Sloan has done it again: *SHORT* will make you laugh out loud and tear up in the same sentence. It's the book we need right now •one that reminds us that

measuring up isn't about the way we look. Instead, as heroine Julia Marks learns, "the way we move tells the world who we are."

Sometimes the thing we fight turns out to be really good for us. That's what happens to Julia Marks when her mom forces her to try out for a Munchkin role in the local theatrical production of *The Wizard of Oz*. She's already quite sensitive to her short stature and at first, her being cast as a Munchkin makes her feel resentful, but when she begins to look around at the other cast members, especially the three adults who share her lack of height, she starts to see the world in a very different way. Holly does an excellent job of letting Julia walk a fine line between extremely mature insight and the very appropriate doubts and feelings someone her age would have. I loved her last book *Counting By 7s* and this is just as good. It's an excellent choice for both school and public libraries.

I stayed awake all night just to finish. I am in LOVE with "SHORT" !!Unmissable -- .

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