



***Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match/Marisol McDonald no combina* by Monica Brown**

Children's Book Press, an imprint of Lee & Low Books Inc., 2011

ISBN: 9780892392353 (Hardcover)

*Age Range: 5–8 (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: PreK–2 (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Marisol McDonald has flaming red hair and nut-brown skin. Polka dots and stripes are her favorite combination. She prefers peanut butter and jelly burritos in her lunch box. To Marisol, these seemingly mismatched things make perfect sense together.

Other people wrinkle their nose in confusion at Marisol—can't she just choose one or the other? Try as she might, in a world where everyone tries to put this biracial, Peruvian-Scottish-American girl into a box, Marisol McDonald doesn't match. And that's just fine with her.

A mestiza Peruvian American of European, Jewish, and Amerindian heritage, renowned author Monica Brown wrote this lively story to bring her own experience of being mismatched to life. Her buoyant prose is perfectly matched by Sara Palacios' mixed media illustrations.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"Marisol McDonald loves her fire-red hair and her brown, freckled skin, feels artistic pleasure in pairing polka-dotted shirts with striped pants and enjoys eating PB&J burritos. Misunderstood by her peers, she is continually teased for not ever matching until one day, confidence diminished, Marisol decides to conform and arrives at school in the same-colored clothes, chooses pirates over soccer rather than playing both simultaneously and eats a peanut butter/jelly sandwich on mushy bread. Bored and unhappy, Marisol is delighted when her teacher gives her a note that boosts her self-esteem with this very positive message: 'the Marisol McDonald that I know is a creative, unique, bilingual, Peruvian-Scottish-American, soccer-playing artist and simply marvelous!' . . . Marisol's varied, distinctive lifestyle and multiracial family affirms our increasingly blended society and clearly celebrates independent thinking. Brava!" —*Kirkus Reviews*, **starred review**

"In this lively bilingual book, Marisol is brought to life in both English and Spanish through Brown's dynamic prose, Palacios's vibrant illustrations, and Dominguez's outstanding translation. This fun book allows readers to meet a wonderful character. Children get a glimpse of what it means to grow up in a biracial family and have other people trying to define what is 'normal.' The story encourages readers to embrace their uniqueness and be exactly who they are." —*School Library Journal*

"The vivacious Peruvian-Scottish-American protagonist of this bilingual book has brown skin and hair 'the color of fire.' Her friends tell her that she 'doesn't match,' because of her appearance and her wardrobe, but when Marisol tones down her style, she realizes that it doesn't feel right. Palacio's collage work incorporates newsprint, vibrant patterns, and Peruvian motifs, echoing the message about being true to oneself." —*Publisher's Weekly*

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“Spirited text in English and Spanish describes the ways the mixed-race narrator ‘doesn't match,’ from clothing choice to physical appearance (“My cousin Tato . . . says, ‘Marisol, your skin is brown like mine, but your hair is the color of carrots. You don't match!’”). Palacios’s illustrations capture Marisol's exuberant style and wacky fashion sense, as does Dominguez’s thoughtful Spanish translation of Brown’s text. —*The Horn Book Guide*

“Brilliant, rambunctious, delightful. . . . [Author Monica Brown] revels in every child’s individuality, turning her own experiences of being told she and her cousins ‘don’t match’ into this infectiously engaging, empowering celebration. Illustrator Sara Palacios gleefully infuses Marisol with constant movement (her pigtails an indicator of her happiness level), her room filled with creative clutter, her clothing an especially eye-popping reflection of Marisol’s irrepressible energy.” —*BookDragon*

“It’s impossible to resist the quirky and colorful illustrations. The text is bilingual and presented in both English and Spanish. . . . The story touches on issues of race and gender but doesn’t do it in an obvious way. The kids in the story are of different races, and it’s never mentioned. Most of all, Marisol McDonald’s story shows that we don’t need to conform in order to be loved.” —*Spanglish Baby*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Pura Belpré Award Illustrator Honor
- ALA Notable Book
- International Latino Book Award
- Junior Library Guild selection
- Tejas Star Reading List, Texas Library Association

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Teacher’s Guide](#)
- [Activity Kit from Blue Slip Media](#)
- [Monica Brown reads Marisol McDonald Doesn’t Match](#) in English and Spanish
- [Story Map Multi-Levelled Lesson](#) from TeachingBooks
- [Cultural Representation Reflection](#) from TeachingBooks
- [Classroom Connections from Melissa Schoffstall](#)
- [Marisol McDonald Activity Kit](#)
- [Making Matches art activity](#) made by [Crayola® Creativity Central](#)
- [Storytime](#) and Story Guide in [English](#) & [Spanish](#) from [Jumpstart](#)
- [Children’s Defense Fund Freedom Schools® Banned Books We Love](#)
- [An Inclusive Children’s Reading List](#) from Learning for Justice

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

[Letter to Duval County, FL Schools from PEN America and We Need Diverse Books—Signed by 70 Authors—Calls for Return of 176 Book Titles Pulled from Classroom Libraries](#): In a letter sent to Duval County Public Schools in Florida, PEN America and We Need Diverse Books, along with 70 authors, questioned the removal of 176 book titles from classroom libraries in January 2022 for “review.” The decision to pull the *Essential Voices Collection* has kept books out of over 100 elementary schools, holding copies in storage for ten months with little indication of when they might return to classrooms. The letter was sent ahead of tonight’s school board meeting where the topic was expected to be discussed. . . . The *Essential Voices Classroom Libraries Collection*, collated by *Perfection Learning*, “features characters representing a variety of ethnicities, religious affiliations, and gender identities.” The Collection is designed to stock classroom libraries with diverse and inclusive books, so that “Students will see

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themselves in what they read, developing an understanding and appreciation of themselves as well as others around them.”

AUTHOR STATEMENT (OPTIONAL)

“Book banning boxes children into small places. Give our young readers a wider view into the world so that they might imagine possibilities and dream big!”

***A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

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