

Uncharted Waters

Leslie Bulion

Reviewed By: Victoria Oto, Age: 15

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In Leslie Bulion's novel, *Uncharted Waters*, a young boy named Jonah Landers spends his summer with his Uncle Nate and younger sister, Jaye. As his uncle is busy writing a novel during the summer, Jonah is signed up for swim camp and Jaye is signed up for arts and crafts camp. Upon learning he has to swim in pond water, Jonah becomes terrified and has his sister go to the camp for him. On his first day free, Jonah gets in trouble with Bert, the local store and dock owner for accidentally breaking one of his boat's engines. Jonah has to work for two days at Bert's to pay for the engine.

Having to work at Bert's store is the least of Jonah's problems though. Before the school year ended, Jonah received a letter from the school informing his parents that, without summer school and a short story written by the end of summer, Jonah will fail English. Jonah hides the letter from his parents, thinking he can solve the problem by himself. Jonah is constantly putting off writing his short story, and instead is spending time working at Bert's to save up money to buy an engine for his skiff boat.

Jonah faces many fears throughout the story, and learns that he doesn't always have to face his troubles alone. He realizes that all the problems he had could have easily been solved had he just asked for some help from his relatives and friends. I recommend this book for beginner readers as it is interesting yet simple. For readers who enjoy this book, I recommend *North of Beautiful*, *Twilight*, and *Seventeen Second Miracle*.