



My Name Is Seepeetza

By Shirley Sterling

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Her name was Seepeetza when she was at home with her family. But now that she's living at the Indian residential school her name is Martha Stone, and everything else about her life has changed as well. Told in the honest voice of a sixth grader, this is the story of a young Native girl forced to live in a world governed by strict nuns, arbitrary rules, and a policy against talking in her own dialect, even with her family. Seepeetza finds bright spots, but most of all she looks forward to summers and holidays at home.

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My Name Is Seepeetza By Shirley Sterling Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Written in what PW called a "devastatingly simple" style, this "rather desolate" autobiographical novel chronicles a girl's harsh experiences at an Indian residential school in 1950s British Columbia. Ages 10-12. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5⁺-10. Her name is Seepeetza, but at the Indian residential school in British Columbia, she is called Martha. She hates her white name, but she is beaten if she talks "Indian." Her long hair is cut off. At the same time, the other students pick on her because she has green eyes and looks white. When she wets her bed, the nuns make her wear the wet sheet over her head. She gets in trouble for daydreaming about the family ranch on the reservation that she was forced to leave to come to school. First published in 1992 in Canada, where it won the Sheila A. Egoff Children's Book Prize, this autobiographical novel is written in the form of Seepeetza's diary in her sixth-grade year in the 1950s. The drawback of the journal format is that the vignettes are sometimes static, repetitive, and disjointed. The great advantage is the immediacy of the child's voice and viewpoint. We feel her bewilderment and fear, her helplessness, and, above all, her longing for home. Few books dramatize this experience for young readers. Without preaching or rhetoric, the cruelty is laid bare. *Hazel Rochman*

Users Review

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Ruth Haakenson:

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