



## TALK ABOUT A FAIRY TALE !

Back in the 1970s my 2 year old son and I followed the advice of several mothers whose wisdom we respected and visited all the Montessori Schools in the metropolitan Washington area. After that intensive adventure I asked his opinion of the experience. He said, "School is great if you don't have anything better to do." I grabbed the *Time Magazine* that had just arrived and retired to the bathroom to consider what he had said.

*Time* had an amazingly appropriate article about John Holt, a forward-thinking educator who was about to publish a magazine called *Growing Without Schooling*. I signed up and followed Holt faithfully from that moment on because I could find no reason to disagree with my son.

I could have written about my family's extraordinary experiences as members of the early homeschooler underground. Instead I wrote *The Single-Minded Prince*, a fairy tale about a boy who, because of his strong will and determined resistance to authority, was given permission to educate himself.

The story evolved into a unique analysis of the learning and behavior patterns of children. Prince Bertie's decisions are not always good. Some are very bad. He often sees adults as a threat. He discovers he can lie to get what he wants. He strongly disagrees with adult concepts like compromise. But having his own way eventually leads him to understand that if he is going to accomplish his goals, whether you believe they are good or bad, he must ask adults to provide useful education.

After his parents disappear on an ocean voyage he becomes king and is able to accomplish his primary goal in life, to banish all cats from his kingdom and create an ideal environment for his beloved birds. He is extremely successful. But as king, he realizes he must be sensitive to the opinions of all his subjects, not just the birds. Every time he thinks he has solved a problem, another pops up. Each perfect solution creates another more difficult problem. Fortunately he is single-minded and willing to persevere.

Readers of the story are able to make significant judgments and decisions about right and wrong as they analyze the actions of the prince and observe the results of those actions. They are able to join with the opposition, Princess Timothy, the Wizard Fernwake and a beloved family of cats hiding illegally in the castle, as they plot and struggle to win the return of all cats to their rightful homes in the kingdom.

There is a second adventure woven into the book, the story of the capture of the king and queen and their crew by the terrifying pirate, Captain Brute Nastie. How they manage to survive a fate worse than death may be the only place in a fairy tale where you will encounter an introduction to banking, investment and high finance.

To all homeschoolers, age 6 and beyond, *The Single-Minded Prince* offers everything from slapstick humor to profound, quotable wisdom plus endless topics for fun and serious family discussions. Hang on for an exciting, memorable ride through a uniquely modern fairy tale for all ages.