Krista Podolny  
LIT 372  
Book Talk  
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The Bad Beginning: A Series of Unfortunate Events

*“The Bad Beginning”* is the first novel of thirteen in the children's novel series “*A Series of Unfortunate Events”* by Lemony Snicket. The author’s real name is Daniel Handler, but he uses the pseudonym Lemony Snicket. Some of you may have read some of his picture books called “*The Dark*” or “*A Lump of Coal.*” The author was challenged by his publisher to write a book he would have liked to read when he was 10. This is that book!

1st lines of the book: “*If you are interested in stories with happy endings, you would be better off reading some other book. In this book, not only is there no happy ending, there is no happy beginning and very few happy things in the middle.”*

I bet everyone is asking… WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?!?

The book is about three siblings, Violet, Kaus and Sunny Baudelaire. Violet is a 14 year old inventor. Kaus is a 12 year old, who loves nothing more than reading, and he is very smart. Sunny is a baby, who like to bite. They become orphans in the beginning of the story and are sent to live with Count Olaf, who attempts to steal their inheritance. The children have to use their skills to outsmart the adults around them. Even Sunny’s skill for biting comes in handy.

**Publisher recommends ages:** 8 to 12

My recommendation: 3rd grade: 9–10 years.

The Book Jacket Reads:

*“Are you made fainthearted by death? Does fire unnerve you? Is a villain something that might crop up in future nightmares of yours? Are you thrilled by nefarious plots? Is cold porridge upsetting to you? Vicious threats? Hooks? Uncomfortable clothing?*

*It is likely that your answers will reveal A Series of Unfortunate Events to be ill-suited for your personal use. A librarian, bookseller, or acquaintance should be able to suggest books more appropriate for your fragile temperament. But to the rarest of readers we say, "Proceed, but cautiously.*"