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Title

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Abstract Review of *My First Scripture Stories* (1994), by Sherrie Johnson, illustrated by Tyler Lybbert.

Sherrie Johnson, illustrated by Tyler Lybbert. *My First Scripture Stories*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994. 30 pp. each. $4.95 each.

Reviewed by Elaine A. Andelin

This review responds to a request to look over the Stepping Stone series of Book of Mormon illustrated storybooks designated "My First Scripture Stories," written by Sherrie Johnson and illustrated by Tyler Lybbert.

Let me first clarify that I make no pretense to academic excellence in the field of literature or composition. I have not been involved in formal education for almost two decades and even at that time my degree was in accounting. However, I will give my opinions based on my current role as a mother and homemaker.

As I reviewed these little paperback books with my children, I found them very enjoyable. The text is clear and accurate, and the illustrations are vivid and creative, eliciting emotion without being overly graphic or harsh. However, I found the text and illustrations inconsistent in the age level they appealed to. For example, my six-year-old son loved to thumb through them and look carefully at the pictures but became discouraged when attempting to read the text. Words such as *wroth, sought, pondered,* and *prophesied* are words he is familiar with but had difficulty sounding out.

My eleven- and thirteen-year-old sons enjoyed the books and spent quite a bit of time "sneaking" into them, but they were somewhat embarrassed to be caught reading "My First Scripture Stories." My eight- and ten-year-old daughters seemed to catch the little subtle humor clips on the corners of the pages and enjoyed immensely the text and illustrations, but I wouldn't categorize my daughters as "first scripture story readers" as they are very familiar with the Book of Mormon.

Perhaps it was never the intention of the author to have children read the books. If a parent reads the text while the child follows the illustrations, the experience is positive and successful. But

if they are to be, in fact, "First Scripture Stories," the text is far too advanced.