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Stars and Poppy Seeds

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News & Choice:

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This stunningly designed picture book is translated from Ukrainian and mingles fact and fiction to celebrate mathematics. The book tells the story of Flora, daughter of famous mathematicians, who loves to count. She counts all the animals in the world and everything around her, from poppy seeds to grains of rice, polka dots, ants and bricks. Her mind whirls constantly as she thinks of the numbers of grains of sand and drops of water. But when Flora tries to count all the stars in the night sky, she realises that not even all the numbers, formulae and equations she knows would be enough to count them. She turns to her mother who encourages Flora to achieve her dreams by starting with small steps. The book ends with double pages of fascinating facts about figures, information about famous mathematicians and a list of centres and museums where the world of maths can be explored further.

This is an unusual and intriguing book which will draw the young reader into the complicated world of mathematics. From the graph grid endpapers through the quirky, sometimes surreal, depictions of eye-catching patterns, formulae, constellation maps, plans, mazes and tiny details to pore over, the illustrations portray an amazing world in an offbeat, abstract and visually stimulating way. The character of Flora, motivated, curious, scientific and thorough, gives a positive message about the joy of learning. The deep blue tones and shining silver stars of the cover draw the eye into a book that combines story and information to present the fascination and ubiquity of maths and the importance of having dreams to young readers.

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