



## The Broken Fence

by James J Antonio



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Children - Grade 4th-6th

114 Pages

Reviewed on 04/17/2026

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### Book Review

**Reviewed by Demetria Head for Readers' Favorite**

The Broken Fence by James J. Antonio follows a young boy named Mark. Every weekend, he goes to his grandparents' horse farm, where a broken fence leads to a series of life-changing events. Mark gets used to the routine of helping his grandfather care for thoroughbreds. It even gives them the chance to bond. Mark also bonds with the horses, Gray Book, Sally Stevens, Ocala's Glory, and Prince George. When it is suspected that Sally Stevens is carrying a foal, Mark's grandfather agrees to give it to him. Mark's excitement grows into preparation for responsibility and purpose, especially as he dreams of seeing his foal become a racehorse. Readers are invited to see the personal challenges, joy, and uncertainty Mark faces, along with the lessons he learns about patience, hard work, and perseverance.

James J. Antonio's story is warm, charming, and reflective. Being told from Mark's perspective made it feel personal. The pacing was steady like life on the farm. It wasn't rushed, but it had so much purpose. I loved the black-and-white illustrations in each chapter. These enhanced the narrative and made it feel more meaningful. The author didn't shy away from sharing Mark's loss of his father. I appreciated this because it gave readers more backstory. There was also visual depth, especially during significant moments about his foal, Amazing Gray. Some important themes that I noticed were mentorship, grief, and pursuing dreams. It was written in a realistic and relatable way to appeal to middle-grade readers. It reminded me of Geraldine Brooks' Horse. It shared a similar emotional connection. Readers would find many reasons to enjoy The Broken Fence.