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Iris's Ukulele - Kathy Taylor

Published by Scholastic New Zealand Limited , RRP \$19.50

Iris is one feisty girl and her best friend, Sidney is very definitely his own man.

They plan to enter her rap song in a talent quest. She would love to win the money and be able to replace her old ukelele.

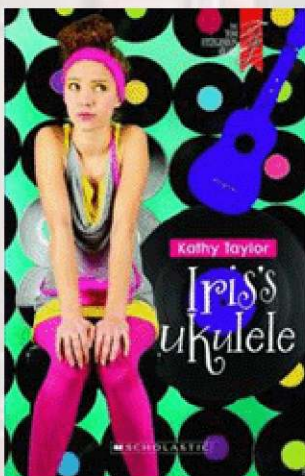
But suddenly everything starts to go wrong her relationship with her mother, her 'joined-at-the-hip' friendship with Sidney, her responses to classmates everything, that is, except her close relationship with her grandmother. Despite her best intentions, everything else seems destined to turn pear-shape.

This book is aimed for the 'in-between-ers', as shown in the name of the clothing shop "Betwixt & Between" the 10-14 year olds or thereabouts.

It's an easy read with big themes handled lightly: Iris and Sidney; Iris's attraction to Elijah; Iris's irritation with Morgan; Iris's sometimes stormy relationship with her mother; Iris's thoughts about her deceased father; Iris's love of music and her intense focus on writing rap. The climax is both unexpected and thought-provoking.

Iris's Ukulele is a worthy winner of the Tom Fitzgibbon Award 2011 for previously unpublished New Zealand authors.

Reviewed by Bookrapt member Chris Wright.



Promoting the enjoyment of children's literature.