High School Musical: The Essential Guide (Dk Essential Guides) by Catherine Saunders

Sing and dance your way through East High with Troy, Gabriella, and the rest of the gang from Disney's latest phenomenon, High School Musical! With photographs from the movies, information on your favorite characters, and behind-the-scenes access to East High, Lava Springs, and more, High School Musical: The Essential Guide will give fans the inside scoop on Troy, Gabriella, Sharpay, Ryan, Taylor, and Chad as they face graduation and prepare for college.

My Personal Review:

You knew it was coming...it just had to. With 2 hit musicals aimed at the pre-teen/teen market, 3 was an inevitability. With that, the vast array of licensed goods from toothbrushes to jammies, to books, and `The Essential Guide' from DK! As the official publisher of note for Essential Guides, DK and author Catherine Saunders, have unraveled the confusion, brought out the pom-poms, and given readers a look behind the music, dance, and romantic rivalries.

Just how do you dissect the biggest Disney franchise for decades? Most of my family loves HSM. My son sings along, My daughter loves it. My musical wife even watches it again. I have appreciated it for the resurrection of musicals in popular media, and the emergence of a young Zach Effron into Hollywood. If only Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, and the great musical composers were still alive to appreciate this....

Having said that, the book tackles the three film franchise (likely to be more), by topic. New Years' eve, East high, The Playmaker, Mathgirl, Natural Leader, What Team? Senior Year and Graduation. Don't read this book if you want to `spoil' the ending of the film due out October 24th.
As with all Essential Guides from DK, their use of remarkable photos and layouts is exceptional. The Did You Know sections add little tidbits that give this a `Teenbeat' feel too. Readers of Teenbeat will find this book just as interesting as the newest romantic rumors of the week. These books are infectious and DK has a good thing going. Here's to HSM4! (just kidding, I think)

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Tim Lasiuta

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