

**Children's Literature  
Association  
of  
Utah**

**Beehive Picture Book  
Nominees  
2018  
Book Activities**



## **The Cow Who Climbed a Tree by Gemma Merino**

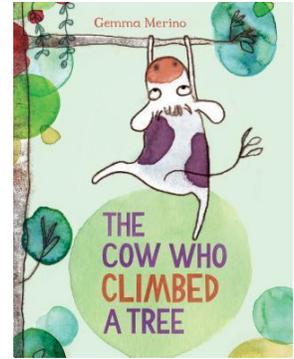
Publisher: Albert Whitman & Company

Publication Date: March 1, 2016

ISBN: 978-0807512982

Grade Level: Preschool – 3

Number of Pages 32



### **Description:**

Tina isn't like the other cows. She believes that the sky is the limit and that everything is possible. But her sisters aren't convinced—and when Tina tells them she has climbed a tree and met a dragon, they decide that her nonsense has gone too far. Off they go into the woods to find her...and soon discover a world of surprises!

### **General Review:**

PreS-Gr 2—Tina is a cow with perfectly purple spots. Her three sisters have neat navy spots. Tina has "a thirst for discovery." Her sisters do not, preferring instead to focus on procuring fresh and juicy grass, like good cows do. One day, while exploring the woods, Tina decides to try something new, and climbs a tree ("Up and up she went. When she got to the top, Tina couldn't believe her eyes..."). Who knew there would be a dragon at the top of the tree? A friendly, vegetarian dragon. Wearing red boots. Tina and her new friend spend all afternoon talking about their dreams and sharing stories. That night, Tina tells her sisters about her new friend. They respond with their typical refrain of "IMPOSSIBLE! RIDICULOUS! NONSENSE!" The next morning, Tina's sisters find a note, announcing that Tina has "gone flying with the Dragon of the woods." Completely disgruntled, the three sisters stomp into the woods, where cows do NOT belong, to find Tina and bring her home. Entering the woods for the first time, the sisters are struck by its beauty. Dreamy illustrations, rendered in watery shades of supple reds and a variety of green and brown hues and highlighted with slightly fuzzy dark brown lines, build upon the text, making this a pleasurable read-aloud. The sublime silliness depicts Tina "flying" with the help of a parachute, along with a mouse, pig (yes, pigs fly), rabbit, and owl. And, as it turns out, her three sisters decide, "YES, WHY NOT?" and don parachutes to join the flying festivities. "And after that, they just couldn't wait to see what else was possible." VERDICT Readers will delight in listening to this story about creativity, independent thinking, and being true to oneself.—Lisa Kropp, Suffolk Cooperative Library System, Bellport, NY  
-School Library Journal

### **Themes:**

Curiosity, friendship, cows, dragons, relationships, sisters, perseverance, dreams

### **Author/Illustrator Information:**

Gemma Merino spent the first half of her life in her hometown near Barcelona where she became an architect with very itchy feet. And after living and working in Dublin, Tel Aviv, and finally London, she discovered the fascinating world of picture books. Gemma won the Macmillan Prize for children's book

illustration in 2011 for her first book, *The Crocodile Who Didn't Like Water*, while studying for her MA in children's book illustration at the Cambridge School of Art. <http://gemmamerino.blogspot.com/>

### Discussion Questions:

1. Ask kids if they ever had an idea that somebody else didn't like. How did it make them feel? What did they do?
2. Ask the kids, if they could do anything, what would it be?
3. Discuss some of the vocabulary, i.e. vegetarian.
4. On page 1 Tina is reading a book, ask why they think she is reading a book.
5. The book says that Tina had a "thirst for discovery." What does that mean?
6. Why did the other cows change their mind?
7. Cows can't really climb trees, but what are some things that cows can do that some other animals can't do?

### Activities:

1. Make a cow craft and use story as a writing prompt. See example at [www.applesandabcs.com/2014/04/click-clack-moo-freebie.html](http://www.applesandabcs.com/2014/04/click-clack-moo-freebie.html)
2. "If a cow can climb a tree, then I can..." (use as a writing prompt, draw a picture, play charades, etc.)
3. Read the book in conjunction with Cow Appreciation Day and do other fun cow activities.
4. Have kids read a non-fiction title about something that they are curious about.

More Resources:

<http://equalitiesplans.blogspot.com/2016/07/challenging-prejudice-thinking.html>

There are lots of examples of cow crafts on Pinterest.



### Similar Books:

#### *Fiction Titles:*

Panda Pants by Jacqueline Davies and Sydney Hanson

The Sheep Who Hatched an Egg by Gemma Merino

The Cow That Laid an Egg by Andy Cutbill

What Do You Do With an Idea? By Kobi Yamada

#### *Nonfiction Titles:*

Curiosity by Sara Antill

Barnyard Kids by Dina Rudick

## It Came in the Mail by Ben Clanton

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books

Publication date: 2016

ISBN 978-1481403603

Grade Level Preschool – 3

Number of Pages: 40



### Description:

Liam really wants some mail, so he writes a letter to his mailbox asking for something in return. His mailbox delivers, sending Liam more than he could have hoped for...and how! But as the mail starts to pile up, Liam realizes that the best packages and parcels are even better when shared with friends.

### General Review:

From School Library Journal

PreS-Gr 1—Liam almost gets his freckles scorched off when he opens the mailbox at the end of his driveway and meets Sizzlefritz for the first time. Once the dragon's flames die down, readers see Liam has a toothy smile because he's finally gotten something in the mail. In his thank you letter, he writes, "You are the best mailbox ever!" Once Liam learns the secret to receiving mail (and it's not what you think), he is bombarded with surprises like a funny bone that tells jokes, a whale stamped "air whale," and a wearable red mustache. In the process of finding homes for all his mail, he learns that he enjoys sending things more than receiving them. Against a backdrop of lined paper and burned envelopes, the pencil and watercolor characters say things like "diddly-squat," "krink," and "squibble, wibble, whoop!" Clanton's latest picture book reminds readers that the mailbox is and will always be a magical invention, no matter where you live in the world. VERDICT Storytimes and classroom units on community helpers will be enlivened by a read-aloud of this selection.—Tanya Boudreau, Cold Lake Public Library, AB, Canada

### Themes:

Mailbox, friends, boys, dragons, imagination, Postal Service, sharing, wishes

### Author Information:

I'm Ben! I'm a story-scribbler, picture-squiggler, book aficionado, child advocate, dragon tamer (someday), and avid sock wearer. I have spent most of my time on this planet reading, drawing, playing basketball, gardening and eating chocolate. I live in Tacoma, WA with my wife, Kelsey (a photographer and designer!), my son, and a wild goldendoodle named gigi. <http://www.benclanton.com/>

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Liam start getting mail?
2. What would you ask the mailbox for?
3. Who do you want to send a letter to?
4. Which item would you keep from the mailbox?

**Activities:**

1. Bubble Wrap Painting  
Materials Needed: Bubble wrap, paint, paper, brushes. The children paint their bubble wrap and then press a white piece of paper over it to make a print...the harder they press, the more the bubbles pop!
2. Make your own stamps and post card, etc. <http://www.preschool-plan-it.com/post-office.html>
3. Have your class get a copy of the book and send it to another class across the country or to a different country.
4. Write a letter to the Post Office and see if you get a response.
5. Make your own mailbox.

**Similar Books:**

## Fiction Titles:

Too Many Carrots by Katy Hudson  
Mr. Tiger Goes Wild by Peter Brown  
There's a Bear on My Chair by Ross Collins  
Lion Lessons by Jon Agee  
Dragon Was Terrible by Kelly DiPucchio  
I Will Not Eat You by Adam Lehrhaupt

## Non-Fiction Titles:

Big Pets by Catherine Ipcizade  
America's Oddest Hobbies by Michael Canfield

## Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion by Alex T. Smith

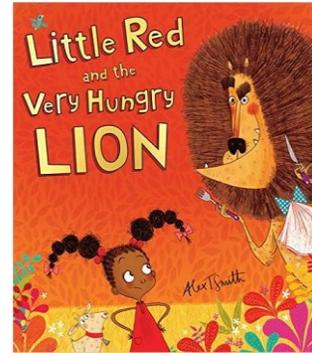
Scholastic Press

Publication date: July 26, 2016

ISBN: 978-0545914383

Grade Level Preschool – 2

Number of Pages 32



### Description:

*Little Red and the Very Hungry Lion* is a fractured fairy tale version of *Little Red Riding Hood*. It's a classic fairy tale with a safari twist!

### General Review:

"A clever story, but what really makes this pop are Smith's full-color illustrations, which depict each fantasy in thought bubbles crammed with hysterically funny details. Great for reading aloud or for savoring alone." -- *Booklist*

"Smith keeps the story zipping along, effectively using repeating phrases, story elements, and scenarios. The pages teem with digitized colors, textures, and photos, but the overall atmosphere is quiltlike and cozy. It's a persuasive argument for finding creative solutions to problems instead of walking away." -- *Publishers Weekly*

### Themes:

Fractured fairy tales, creativity, problem solving

### Author/Illustrator Information:

Alex T. Smith is a UK based author and illustrator. He is best known for being the creator of the Claude books. <http://www.alexsmith.com/>

### Discussion Questions:

1. What is the setting for this Little Red story?
2. How is this story the same as the original Little Red Riding Hood?
3. How is this story different from the original Little Red Riding Hood?

### Activities:

1. Make up your own Little Red story in a new setting.
2. Diagram and illustrate a plan you have just like the Lion diagrammed and illustrated his plan.
3. Research information about what could have caused the Auntie's spots to appear.
4. Learn to braid using yarn.
5. Eat donuts.

More Resources:

Book unit: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Little-Red-and-the-Very-Hungry-Lion-Book-Unit-2828616>

**Similar Books:**

Fiction Titles:

Little Red Riding Hood by Trina Schart Hyman

Red Riding Hood by James Marshall

Honestly, Red Riding Hood Was Rotten! by Trisha Spped Shaskan

Ninja Red Riding Hood by Corey Rosen Schwartz

Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China by Ed Young

Little Red Riding Hood by Gennady Spirin

Lion Lessons by Jon Agee

Doctor De Soto Goes to Africa by William Stieg

Nonfiction Titles:

Face to Face with Lions by Dereck Joubert

Baby Animals from Africa by Barb Asselin

Africa by Mel Friedman

## **The Lion Inside by Rachel Bright**

Illustrator: Jim Field

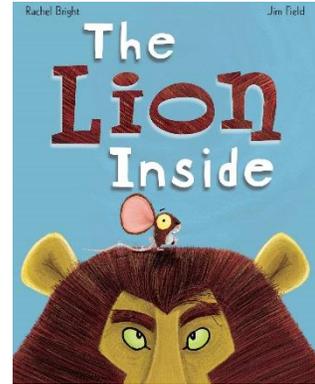
Publisher: Scholastic Press

Publication Date: May 21, 2016

ISBN: 978-0545873505

Grade Level: Preschool – Kindergarten

Number of Pages 32



### **Description:**

A mouse feels small and insecure and determines that what he needs to do is learn how to roar like a lion. He knows he has to act brave when he approaches a lion to learn how. In a hilarious turn of events, the lion is afraid of mice! The mouse comforts the lion, they become friends, and we learn that there's a lion and a mouse inside all of us.

### **General Review:**

Field's impressive array of perspectives enhances Bright's rhyming text about a downtrodden mouse who longs to live large. Comical cartoon critters of the savanna seem sympathetic to the mouse's leonine ambitions, which lead him to request instruction from the regal roarer himself, despite the possibility of becoming a meal. Tables turn when our mouse is forced to allay the lion's fear of rodents, and the two become pals who together roar with laughter, since "We all have a mouse and a lion inside." Bright's language play ("tinyful," "tippity-toes") works well with Field's hysterical expressions and spot-on composition arrangements. VERDICT There's much to enjoy here, but the basic tale is well-worn. A solid addition for storytime sharing.—Gay Lynn Van Vleck, Henrico County Library, Glen Allen, VA  
-School Library Journal

### **Themes:**

Friendship, lions, mice, self-confidence, size, courage, fear, helping others

### **Author/Illustrator Information:**

Rachel Bright is Lecturer in Modern History at Keele University, UK. Previously she was a post-doctoral fellow at the University of East Anglia, and has taught at the London School of Economics and Goldsmith's College, London. Bright completed her PhD at King's College London in 2009 and before that, was Programme Manager for scholarships at The Fulbright Commission. <https://www.facebook.com/Rachel-Bright-178082788933871/>

Jim Field is an illustrator, character designer, and animation director. During his career he has worked on a variety of different projects from music videos to picture book illustration. His first book was *Cats Ahoy!* written by Peter Bently won the Booktrust Roald Dahl Funny Prize in 2011. He currently lives in Paris with his girlfriend and a small grumpy cat. <http://www.jimfield.co.uk/>

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Do you think that the mouse really wanted to roar, or maybe just be a little braver?
2. Nobody ever notices the mouse because he is so tiny. How do you think that makes him feel?
3. The mouse realizes that “if you want things to change, you first have to change YOU.” What does that mean?
4. Discuss the rhymes and vocabulary in the story
5. Discuss what the story means when it says, “You don’t have to be big and brave to find your roar.” Ask the kids to identify their lion inside.

**Activities:**

1. Retell the story using animal puppets.
2. Compare and contrast with Aesop’s fable, The Lion and the Mouse
3. Have the kids draw something that they might be afraid of and them overcoming that fear.
4. Research animal food chains. Do lions really eat mice?

More Resources:

<http://www.whatdowedoallday.com/picture-books-about-fear-and-courage/>

**Similar Books:***Fiction Titles:*

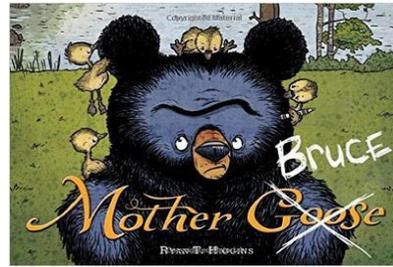
Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell  
Mr. Tiger Goes Wild by Peter Brown  
Giraffes Can’t Dance by Giles Andreae  
Sheila Rae, The Brave by Kevin Henkes

*Nonfiction Titles:*

any Aesop fable  
Books about lions  
Courage by Bernard Waber  
Feelings by Aiki

## **Mother Bruce by Ryan T. Higgins**

Illustrator: Ryan T. Higgins  
Disney-Hyperion  
Publication date 2015  
ISBN 978-1484730881  
Grade Level Kindergarten – 3  
Number of Pages 48



### **Description:**

"Bruce is a grumpy bear who likes no one and nothing but cooked eggs, but when some eggs he was planning to boil hatch and the goslings believe he is their mother, he must try to make the best of the situation"--Provided by publisher.

### **General Review:**

Bruce, a grumpy bear with an off-putting unibrow, likes only one thing—eggs, collected (or more accurately purloined) fresh from the nest and cooked into fancy found-on-the-internet concoctions. He's busy preparing a taste-bud-tantalizing treat when he's "met with an unwelcome surprise"—his goose egg ingredients manage to hatch before hard boiling, and suddenly, four goslings are perched on the pot and cheerfully chirping, "MAMA!" Since no amount of scowling, roaring, or creative planning (think giant slingshot) rids him of his unwanted offspring, Bruce resignedly—and hilariously—makes the best of the situation, and an unconventional family is born. Deadpan text is expanded via humorously earth-toned artwork to create a tale at once drolly funny and emotionally uplifting.

-School Library Journal

### **Themes:**

bears/geese/migration/imprinting/humorous fiction

### **Author/Illustrator Information:**

Ryan T. Higgins is the author/illustrator of many books for children, including *Wilfred*, *Be Quiet*, and *Twaddleton's Cheese*. Ryan Higgins was born in 1983. As a child, he lived on a diet of cartoons, cheese sandwiches, and climbing trees. At the age of four he decided to become a cartoonist. He's been making his own cartoons ever since and hasn't grown up yet. <http://www.ryanhiggins.com>

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. In what ways was Bruce a good and not so good mother to the goslings?
2. Where, besides Miami, could Bruce and the goslings have migrated?
3. What would have happened to the goslings if an animal other than Bruce had been their mother?

**Activities:**

1. Talk about what imprinting is and do some research about animals that imprint. Talk about objects, people or other animals that these animals might imprint on and how these other “mothers” might impact the animal’s development.
2. Learn about Mother Goose and read some rhymes together ([The Real Mother Goose](#)) Talk about the author’s choice for the book’s title and how it is significant.
3. Do some research to see what animals migrate through your area? Do any of these animals stop to feed or rest near your school? Make a migration calendar to show when these animals will be migrating through your area.
4. Using a map, discuss other possible destinations besides Miami that would have been suitable for the geese and Bruce to travel to as they migrated.

More Resources:

Geese Fly Together

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdtpI33EXHQ>

Geese Migration Map

<http://www.birdnature.com/flyways.html>

**Similar Books:**

Fiction Titles:

Hibernation Station by Michelle Meadows

Skylar: A Story by Mary Cuffe-Perez

Sleep, Big Bear, Sleep by Maureen Wright

When It Starts to Snow by Phillis Gerhator

Time to Sleep by Denise Flemming

Nonfiction Titles:

The Long, Long Journey: The Godwit’s Amazing Migration by Sandra Markle

Home at Last: A Song of Migration by April Pulley Sayre

Going Home: The Mystery of Animal Migration by Marianne Berkes

Animals in Winter by Henrietta Bancroft

## **The Night Gardener by Terry and Eric Fan**

Simon and Shuster Books for Young Readers

Publication date 2016

ISBN 978-1481439787

Preschool-Grade 2

Number of Pages 48



### **Description:**

A depressed town is transformed into a delightful community when fantastical topiaries begin to appear each night in the trees on Grimloch Lane.

### **General Review:**

With spare text and a simple palette, *The Night Gardener* tells the story of a depressed town's transformation with the help of a nocturnal gardener. The book begins on Grimloch Lane, a street where every head hangs down and an orphan boy, William, is down in the dumps. A dapper elderly man with a green leaf shining in his pocket passes him, and the magic begins. Every night, a new fantastical topiary appears in a tree on Grimloch Lane, to the neighborhood's delight. People begin playing outside, drawing, playing the tuba, and looking up in wonder: it's an urban planner's delight. William gets to tag along one night, and as the season changes, the work of creating community-revitalizing topiaries is passed to him.

-School Library Journal

### **Themes:**

Gardening, Nature, Topiaries, Community, Service

### **Author/Illustrator Information:**

Brothers Eric and Terry Fan received their formal art training at the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto. Their work is a blend of traditional and contemporary techniques, using ink or graphite mixed with digital. *The Night Gardener* is their first picture book.

Terry spends his days (and nights) creating magical paintings, portraits, and prints. Visit him online at Society6, and on Facebook (Terry Fan Illustration).

Eric has a passion for vintage bikes, clockwork contraptions, and impossible dreams. See more of his work at Society6 and Redbubble, and on Facebook (Eric Fan Illustration).

<http://www.thefanbrothers.com/about/>

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. If you were to make a topiary, what shape would it be?
2. How did the topiaries make Grimloch Lane a happier place?
3. If you lived on Grimloch Lane what could you do to bring your community together?

**Activities:**

1. Draw the topiary you would like to see outside your bedroom window.
2. Plant a seed in a paper cup.
3. Draw an animal shape or other interesting shape on construction paper. Cut leaves out of green paper and glue them to your drawing to make it look like a topiary.
4. Plan an activity or project that will bring your class together.

**More Resources:**

Activity sheets

<http://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Night-Gardener/Terry-Fan/9781481439787>

YouTube videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UeMab4U9p4>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mX\\_oxe1yEcM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mX_oxe1yEcM)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygpNTvNzvD4>

**Similar Books:**

Fiction Titles:

Grandpa Green by Lane Smith

The curious garden by Peter Brown

The gardener by Sarah Stewart

The imaginary garden by Andrew Larsen

Greenling by Levi Pinfold

The magical garden of Claude Monet by Laurence Anholt

The leaf man and the brave good bugs by William Joyce

If you plant a seed by Kadir Nelson

Nonfiction Titles:

Topiary by Twigs Way

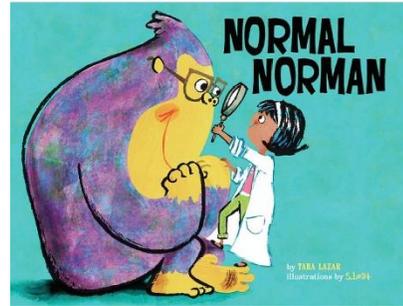
Topiaries and espaliers: plus other ideas for shaping plants by Linda Yang

The book of gardening ideas for kids: 101 ways to get kids outside, dirty and having fun by Whitney Cohen and John Fisher

Kids garden: the anytime, anyplace guide to sowing and growing fun by Avery Hart and Paul Mantell

## Normal Norman by Tara Lazar

Illustrator: Stephan Britt  
Sterling Children's Book  
Publication date 2016  
ISBN 978-1454913214  
Grade Level Preschool and up  
Number of Pages 40



### Description:

What is "normal?" That's the question an eager young scientist, narrating her very first book, hopes to answer. Unfortunately, her *exceedingly* "normal" subject—an orangutan named Norman—turns out to be exceptionally strange. He speaks English, sleeps in a bed, loves his stuffed toy, goes bananas over pizza, and even deep-sea dives! Oh, no: what's a "normal" scientist to do? A humorous look at the wackiness that makes us all special— and a gentle reminder that "normal" can't ever be defined!

### General Review:

K-Gr 2—A junior scientist is very excited (and a little nervous) to be narrating a book that will define the word normal. Her subject is Norman, a gorilla who we are told is exceedingly normal. Unfortunately for our scientist, no one told Norman. The girl is stymied in her endeavor to show readers normal behavior at every turn. Norman likes pizza, not bananas; he speaks in English, not animal sounds; he sleeps in a bunk bed with his stuffed animal; and his best friend is a snake. Eventually, Norman invites the scientist to see him and his friends in their natural habitat, which of course turns out to be completely abnormal. Having an epiphany, the scientist quits to go back to her normal hobby of playing a Dr. Seuss-esque musical instrument. In case anyone has missed the point, the last illustration shows the senior scientist (father) taking note: "Results: 'Normal' is impossible to define. Assignment complete!" The humorous text is an eye-catching mix of various fonts, instructional labels, and word bubbles. The amusing illustrations use color, detail, and white space to good effect and perfectly capture the mood and expressions of the characters.—School Library Journal

### Themes:

individuality, gorilla, humorous stories, scientist, being different, normal

### Author Information:

Street magic performer. Hog-calling champion. Award-winning ice sculptor. These are all things Tara Lazar has never been. Instead, she writes quirky, humorous picture books featuring magical places that everyone will want to visit.

Her debut THE MONSTORE released in June 2013, with I THOUGHT THIS WAS A BEAR BOOK and LITTLE RED GLIDING HOOD following in 2015. NORMAL NORMAN made his entrance in March 2016 and you can stay up WAY PAST BEDTIME in April 2017. If you know the answer to "Why was 6 afraid of 7?" then you'll love her book 7 ATE 9, coming from Disney\*Hyperion in May 2017. She displays her love of fun words in THE WHIZBANG WORDBOOK, an illustrated dictionary and word game tome coming in 2018.

Discover original stories, book reviews and giveaways at her award-winning blog "Writing for Kids (While Raising Them)" at [www.TaraLazar.com](http://www.TaraLazar.com).

**Illustrator Information:**

<http://www.sbritt.com/>

Read a funny bio about Stephan Britt on his website here.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What does it mean to be normal
2. Is anyone normal?
3. What lessons does the scientist learn? How does she learn them?

**Activities:**

1. Activity packet on Tara Lazar's website  
<https://taralazar.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/nnactivitykitlowres.pdf>
2. Learn more about scientists and do some experiments.
3. Talk about strengths and weaknesses that you have.
4. Make an all about me collage showing the great qualities you have that make you unique.

More Resources:

Tissue paper collage

<https://homemadecity.com/2016/03/01/this-picture-book-life-tissue-paper-collage-creature-feature/>

**Similar Books:**

Fiction Titles:

I don't Want to Be a Frog by Dev Petty  
Quackers by Liz Wong  
Mother Bruce by Ryan T. Higgins  
Wonder by R. J. Palacio  
Giraffe's Can't Dance by Giles Andereae  
Small Knight and George by Ronda Armitage

Nonfiction Titles:

Ivan the Remarkable True Story of a Shopping Mall Gorilla by Katherine Applegate  
Gorillas by Seymour Simon  
Amazing Gorillas by Sarah L. Thomson  
Gorillas Gentle Giants of the Forest by Joyce Milton

## Poor Little Guy by Elanna Allen

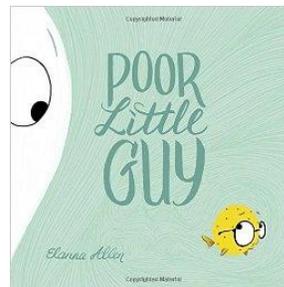
Publisher: Dial Books

Publication date: June 2016

ISBN: 978-0525428251

Grade Level: Pre K-K

Number of Pages 40



### Description:

An itty-bitsy, glasses-wearing fish is minding his own business when a playful (and hungry) octopus snatches him right up. Luckily, this poor little guy is not quite as innocent as he seems...and he has a BIG surprise up his sleeve!

### General Review:

From School Library Journal

K-Gr 2—There is always a larger fish in the sea. And sometimes that larger fish can be a little...insensitive. A small yellow fish, sporting stylish spectacles, is swimming through the ocean, minding his own business, when he is grabbed by a much larger octopus. The fish swims a little faster, hoping he can escape, but the octopus reaches out one sinuous tentacle and drags him back to "play." The octopus's play is rough and inconsiderate—he flings the little yellow fish from tentacle to tentacle, shouting, "Catch of the Day!," among other tricks that the octopus finds hilarious and the little yellow fish finds terrifying. The octopus gets wilder and wilder until he finally decides he might swallow the fish. When he tries to do so, he gets a big surprise. That little yellow fish is a puffer and leaves the octopus with spines in his mouth. This book has very few words, so the illustrations take center stage. Allen uses a variety of perspectives to convey feelings, both those of the little fish and the boisterous octopus. Readers will feel a wide range of emotions—fear, annoyance, frustration, and, finally, vindication. There is a gorgeous palette here, too, atmospheric and full of motion. VERDICT The large, clear images will show up well in a storytime, and the surprise ending will have readers going back again and again to see the octopus's reaction. The term poor little guy is relative.—Susan E. Murray, formerly at Glendale Public Library, AZ

### Themes:

Animals, Survival, Humor, Clever, Fish

### Author/Illustrator Information:

Elanna Allen designed characters and directed animation for Disney Junior, Nick Jr, PBS, wrote the book *ITSY MITSY RUNS AWAY*, and illustrated 9 others. She graduated from Brown University and studied animation and illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design, and FAMU, the Czech National Film School. Elanna lives in New York City with her husband and two boys, and is learning to play the ukulele. <https://www.elannaallen.com/>

### Discussion Questions:

1. How did the little fish survive being eaten?
2. How does the Octopus play with little guy?
3. Before you read the book what did the title make you think it was going to be about?

**Activities:**

5. Finger Play:

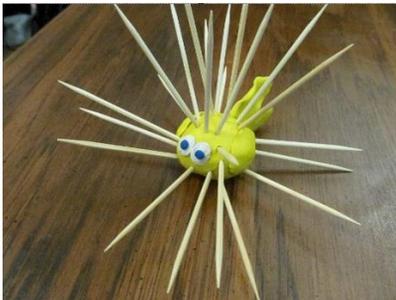
**Three Puffer Fish (Tune: Three Blind Mice)**

Three puffer fish,  
Three puffer fish,  
See how they swim,  
See how they swim,  
Their tails go left and  
Their tails go right,  
Their gills breathe in and  
Their gills breathe out,  
Did you ever see such a prickly sight as  
Three puffer fish?

6. Octopus Craft: You will need an octopus pattern, crayons, cereal, and glue.



7. Puffer Fish Craft: playdough, eyes, and toothpicks.



8. Download a digital copy of the book at <http://textbookscheapest.us/pdf/poor-little-guy>  
9. Book trailer at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmpOwMYL0rc>  
10. Lesson on puffer fish at <http://betterlesson.com/lesson/557927/pufferfish-and-sea-turtle>  
11. Amazing video <http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/videos/animals/pufferfish.html>  
12. Draw an easy cartoon puffer fish <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42j1QkcEbiQ>

**Similar Books:**

Fiction Titles:

I am the biggest thing in the ocean

Alan's Big Scary Teeth

My Lucky Day

I want my hat back

There's a bear in my chair

I will not eat you

Nonfiction Titles:

Puffer Fish by Rebecca Pettiford

## Strictly No Elephants by Lisa Mantchev

Illustrator: Taeun Yoo

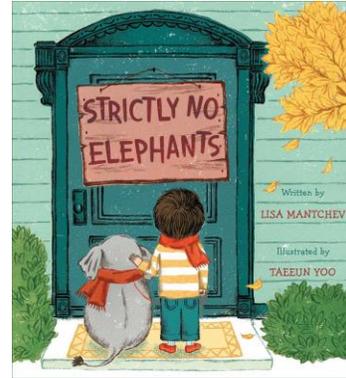
Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books

Publication date: 2015

ISBN 978-1481416474

Grade Level Preschool – 3

Number of Pages: 32



### Description:

Today is Pet Club day. There will be cats and dogs and fish, but *strictly no elephants* are allowed. The Pet Club doesn't understand that pets come in all shapes and sizes, just like friends. Now it is time for a boy and his tiny pet elephant to show them what it means to be a true friend.

### General Review:

#### From School Library Journal

K-Gr 2—It's Pet Club Day, and the sign on the door at #17 clearly states, "Strictly NO Elephants." Current members treasure their birds, fish, cats, and dogs, but a young boy taking a walk with his tiny elephant, sharing an umbrella in a cool fall rain, sees no welcome for his friend, so he simply gives his usual support. "That's what friends do—lift each other over the cracks...brave the scary things for you." The boy and his elephant meet a girl with a skunk, who were also excluded from the Pet Club meeting, and decide to start a club of their own, one in which all are welcome. Friends "never leave anyone behind." Illustrations emphasize the warmth of this message with Photoshop, block prints, and pencil in color spreads alternated with smaller vignettes highlighting the expressions of the children and their pets. VERDICT With a gentle message of inclusion and helping others, this title reaches beyond a mere friendship story. A solid general purchase for libraries and classrooms.—Mary Elam, Learning Media Services, Plano ISD, TX

### Themes:

Clubs, pets, animals, elephants, friendship

### Author Information:

Lisa Mantchev is a temporally-displaced Capricorn who casts her spells from an ancient tree in the Pacific Northwest. When not scribbling, she is by turns an earth elemental, English professor, actress, artist, and domestic goddess. <http://lisamantchev.com/about-lisa/>

### Illustrator Information:

Taeun Yoo received her MFA from the School of Visual Arts Illustration as Visual Essay program <http://www.taeunyoo.com/>

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why were some animals not allowed in the clubhouse?
2. What are some things that friends do for each other?
3. When they built their own club, did they exclude anyone?

**Activities:**

1. Enjoy the adorable, animated book trailer for the Taiwan edition, published by San Min Book Co.! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Frw8KhgBUUs>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qB6Hr4crujE> Do the song with actions.
3. Have the kids draw and share a picture of a pet for the clubhouse.
4. Make animals out of play dough <http://booksandgiggles.com/2016/04/craft-strictly-no-elephants.html/>
5. <http://tippytoecrafts.blogspot.com/search/label/safari>



6. <http://missmegsstorytime.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/elephants-in-bathtub.pdf> Kids can make five elephants in a bathtub.
7. Fun facts <http://www.happyelephantcontest.com/fun-facts/>
8. Elephants facts quiz. See how many the kids can get right. <http://www.123facts.com/play-quiz/Elephants-True-or-False-2251.html>

**Similar Books:**

## Fiction Titles:

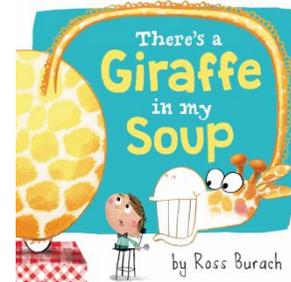
Where's Tumpy? by Polly Dunbar  
Have you Seen Elephant by David Barrow  
Giraffe's Can't Dance by Giles Andreae  
Sparky! by Jenny Offill and Chris Appelhans  
Children Make Terrible Pets by Peter Brown

## Non-Fiction Titles:

Big Pets by Catherine Ipcizade  
America's Oddest Hobbies by Michael Canfield

## There's a Giraffe in My Soup by Ross Burach

Publisher: HarperCollins  
Publication date: 2016  
ISBN 978-0062360144  
Grade Level Preschool – 3  
Number of Pages: 32



### Description:

What if you found a giraffe in your soup, an alligator in your entrée, an elephant on the table, or even an ostrich in your dish?

### General Review:

#### From School Library Journal

PreS-Gr 2-Many people have experienced going out to eat and finding something they didn't order in their soup. The boy in this story is surprised to find a giraffe in his bowl, followed by an alligator, an elephant, a yak, and a whale. This is a funny book that engages readers from the very first page, when the young diner arrives at the restaurant on his Big Wheel and leaves it with the valet. The waiter does not initially believe the boy at first but realizes that the child is right and quickly brings him a fresh bowl. Each new serving brings a bigger and more difficult dilemma. The animals prove to be more of a problem for the waiter than the boy. He ends up with bandages, cuts, and a broken leg. Children will be eager to see what comes next. They will also enjoy watching the waiter become more frightened and exhausted with each trip to and from the kitchen. When it is suggested the young boy have a free dessert...things become even worse! The ending will surely elicit laughs. The exaggerated cartoon artwork is colorful and expressive. VERDICT This is a great, silly read-aloud for storytime or one-on-one sharing, especially for finicky eaters.-Barbara Spiri, Southborough Library, MA(c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

### Themes:

Food, animals, giraffe, humor, restaurants

### Author Information:

Ross Burach is a writer and illustrator residing in New York City. His first book, There's A Giraffe In My Soup!, HarperCollins 2016, was named to the Spring 2016 Indie Next Select list.

<http://www.rossburach.com/>

### Discussion Questions:

1. What would you do if you found an animal in your food?
2. Where did the restaurants food go?

### Activities:

1. Book Trailer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJkqGdgWGrU>
2. You could talk about table manners <http://emilypost.com/advice/top-table-manners-for-kids/>
3. Manners games and ideas <http://www.childfun.com/themes/people/manners/>

4. Make a handprint giraffe.



5. Rhyme:

Zoo Animals song

(Found this from the Madison Public Library, originally from the Whatcom County Library)

If you want to be a monkey, jump up high  
If you want to be a monkey, jump up high  
If you want to be a monkey If you want to be a monkey  
If you want to be a monkey, jump up high

parrot... flap your wings  
elephant... swing your trunk  
lion... roar out loud  
giraffe... stand up tall

6. Make a clothespin giraffe <http://springtimetreats.blogspot.com/2013/01/clothespin-giraffe-free-printable.html>

### **Similar Books:**

Fiction Titles:

Dragons Love Tacos by Adam Rubin  
The Watermelon Seed by Greg Pizzoli  
Oh No, George! by Chris Haughton  
I Want My Hat Back by Jon Klassen  
Alan's Big, Scary Teeth by Jarvis  
Life on Mars by Jon Agee

Non-Fiction Titles:

Life-Size Zoo by Teruyuki Komiya