

Sharing pictures, sharing words



Love...

Written and illustrated by Emma Dodd
Nosy Crow £6.99
ISBN: 978-0857639318

Love... is a simple heartfelt story about a mother's unconditional love for her young, with beautifully simple pictures and words to which little ones can easily relate. Little rabbit

spends a wonderful day in the sunny meadow with his Mummy and comes to realise that a mother's love is better than any other. All of Emma Dodd's titles are the comfort books, the *go-to* books after a busy day when a short, but loving, story is required – a warm and cuddly book, perfect for snuggling up with on any day, warm or cold. The drawings are easily translated into words and are the perfect match for the text. Emma Dodd really captures a parent's love, not only in the thoughtful artwork but also in the story. The whole storybook experience comes across as calm and tranquil – perfect for bedtime reading, guaranteeing extra cuddles.

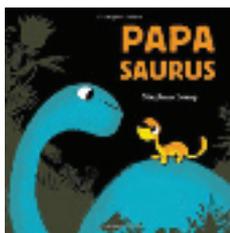
Ros Spence

Papasaurus

Written and illustrated by Stephan Lomp
Chronicle £10.99
ISBN: 978-1452144252

Babysaurus really enjoys playing hide-and-seek in the jungle with his father, Papasaurus. But, this time, Papasaurus is hard to find and the search involves asking a range of other prehistoric friends. Eventually, Babysaurus finds his father, who has really been there all the time. The very bold colour palette is limited, with the butter yellow Babysaurus and his blue father set against the grey and black forms of the landscape in which they live and play. Other creatures stand out in their bright colours contrasting with the dark background. The text is set in white against the black background, in a bold font which is both clear and readable. Although there are many versions of the classic story of a young animal seeking its parent in the dark, and asking help from other animals on the way, this one is a winner. Like its predecessor and companion volume, *Mamasaurus*, this is recommended for reading aloud to young children, especially at bedtime.

Liz Dubber



Everybunny Dance!

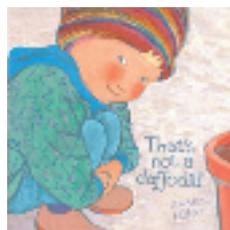
Written and illustrated by Ellie Sandall
Hodder £12.99
ISBN: 978-1444919868



A delightful, colourful picture book, written in verse with beautiful illustrations. Did you know that all bunnies love to sing and dance? When nobody is watching, all the bunnies enjoy themselves in the sunshine - dancing, singing and playing. But someone is watching - is he dangerous or just a lonely, sad creature looking to join in and play? With minimal text and

large double-page spreads this simple picture book is ideal for young children who will enjoy the different antics of the bunnies – they may even want to jump up and be a bunny. A lovely playful story with a message of friendship and sharing.

Ingrid Fox



That's not a Daffodil!

Written and illustrated by Elizabeth Honey
Allen & Unwin £6.99
ISBN: 978-1743368800

Tom is given a small brown bulb by his elderly neighbour, Mr Yilmaz, who tells him that it is a daffodil. Tom doesn't believe him, thinking it looks more like a brown onion. Mr Yilmaz

suggests they plant the bulb and wait to see who is right. So it begins, the patient wait as the bulb goes through its journey of growth. Tom shares the joy of the emerging daffodil with his neighbour. A lovely, simple story about a boy with an imagination, a thoughtful gardener, a growing friendship between a young boy and his elderly neighbour and the simple pleasure of nature. This was an Honour book in the Children's Council of Australia Children's Book of the Year Awards.

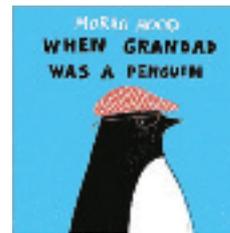
Annie Everall

When Grandad was a Penguin

Written and illustrated by Morag Hood
Two Hoots £11.99
ISBN: 978-1509814015

Sometimes you open up a simple, original picture book and just know it will be a future classic. "Last time I went to stay with Grandad," the book opens, "he seemed a little different." Small readers will at once spot a penguin sitting on the sofa, tea in hand, wearing glasses. Grandad loves fishing, his clothes no longer fit well, and he spends much time sitting *in* the loo. His granddaughter thinks he may just be getting older, as we notice him flying off the banister rail behind her. The juxtaposition of clear, very simple text and absurdly amusing illustrations works to excellent effect. At last, the zoo calls to explain that there has been a mix-up as Grandad is actually in the penguin enclosure there. The penguin returns to the zoo, but does Grandad come home? There is further fun to come, as the endpapers show Grandad standing on one leg in the flamingo enclosure, while a flamingo wearing his glasses follows his granddaughter home. Much fun for sharing and very first steps in reading - completely loveable and not to be missed.

Tina Massey



Chicken Nugget in Scrambled Egg

Written by Michelle Robinson
Illustrated by Tom McLaughlin
Puffin £6.99
ISBN: 978-0141371153

In a heart-warming tale of bravery and family togetherness, Chicken Nugget saves his unhatched sibling, baby Benedict, from the clutches of wily Franz Fox. Asked to take new little brother outside to play, and to keep him safe and warm, Nugget is a little fed up that he doesn't really join in and doesn't kick the ball back. So, when neighbour Mrs Kiev offers to look after him, Chicken Nugget agrees, unaware that it is actually Franz Fox, who has other ideas for the egg, and the real Mrs



Kiev. The football come in very useful and Benedict learns to kick at just the right time, as Chicken Nugget comes to the rescue. With its bright colours, distinctive style and clear simple text this is a humorous book to share, encouraging young listeners to look carefully and spot the clues in the pictures.

Jayne Gould

Leaping Lemmings

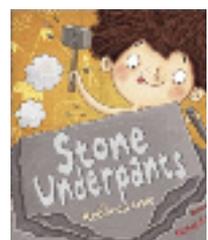
Written by John Briggs
 Illustrated by Nicola Slater
 Sterling £12.99
 ISBN: 978-1454918196

Lemmings all look alike, sound alike and act alike, don't they? Well, not this little lemming. He's off sledding with the puffins, dressing up and demanding that the others call him Larry. Larry knows he doesn't fit in so he tries other options. However, when his fellow lemmings need him most, he is there to save the day. In this tale, all the lemmings are conforming perfectly, doing what lemmings do, but Larry is a free spirit who wants to live life differently. Full of humour, the witty illustrations are charming. Larry and his fellow lemmings are full of character - the placing of a pupil in an eye, the wave of a whisker or the action of an arm can convey so much. Larry, whether in a Hawaiian grass skirt, a Brunel-style top hat, or a Cossack hat, stands out in each spread, waiting to be found. A lovely book which encourages us to think for ourselves and reminds us that we are all individuals.

Sue Wilsher



Stone Underpants



Written by Rebecca Lisle
 Illustrated by Richard Watson
 Maverick £6.99
 ISBN: 978-1848862210

In this inventive, funny picture book, Pod, a stone age boy is fed up with feeling cold. He's only wearing a few leaves around his waist so he's in need of a good pair of underpants. In the Stone Age, it's difficult finding decent material from which to make them. Stone proves too heavy and means he can't play football without letting in goals or go swimming without sinking. Wood is too scratchy, mud too dirty and feathers too itchy. But Pod is not discouraged easily and eventually comes up with the perfect solution. Fabulous, bright, colourful and amusing illustrations accompany the text and the story is great fun for younger readers. You just keep wondering how he never felt the need for a jumper!

Richard Monte

I Love You (Nearly Always)

Written and illustrated by Anna Llenas
 Templar £14.99
 ISBN: 978-1783707614

The most striking feature of this book is the extraordinary paper engineering. Each double-page spread employs a different technique which will amaze both the young reader and their adult alike. The story is about Roly, a woodlouse, and Rita, a firefly, two very different creatures who frequently annoy each other. They try to adapt and be considerate, eventually realising that their differences are what make them love each other. The pages are most successful when their structure mirrors the text, for example, when the angry characters turn their backs on each other at the pull of a tab or when the final page brings them together with a kiss. All in all, this is an attractive, warm-hearted book that children will love. As with all pop-up books, this one should not be



handed over to children until they are able to be careful with the mechanics but it will be enjoyed when read together.

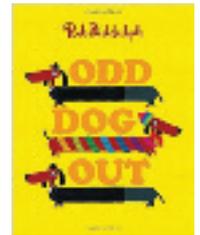
Annalise Taylor

Odd Dog Out

Written and illustrated by Rob Biddulph
 HarperCollins £12.99
 ISBN: 978-0007594153

Wonderfully bright blocks of strong colour fill every page of this busy, amusing picture book. The heroine is a sausage dog with a love of wearing a very long and brightly coloured striped scarf. The trouble is that she does rather stand out. It seems that every other dog, whether they are swimmer, sailor, soldier, or scout, knows exactly what to wear so that they are all the same and no-one appears different. It isn't only what they wear, as this odd dog just does not fit in anywhere, no matter how hard she tries. So, she embarks on a journey to travel far and wide until she finds a place where others are just the same as her. The atmospheric illustrations are delightful with so much subtle detail. The rhyming text is deceptively simple and cleverly recounts the story of this endearing character who, having found a place where she does not stand out, meets another dog who dares to be different and tells her she should be proud of who she is. She decides to return home and is delighted to be warmly welcomed as she and her friends realise that being different can be a good thing!

Louise Stothard



The Lumberjack's Beard

Written and illustrated by Duncan Beedie
 Templar £6.99
 ISBN: 978-1783706884



Jim is a lumberjack. Lumberjack's cut down trees. Trees are home to hundreds of little creatures. Not only that, they provide leaves, cones and twigs which other animals use in their daily lives. Suddenly small visitors are knocking angrily on Jim's door and making a temporary home in his beard. But Jim can't stand the bird poo and the itching so he's got to come up with another solution to make amends for destroying so many homes. With its gentle environmental message and mischievous humour, this is a picture book which puts you firmly on the side of the animals. In the end, Jim sits in a chair reading a book on planting trees, which suggests he realises there is more to the job of being a lumberjack than just chopping down trees.

Richard Monte

The Night Gardener

Written and illustrated by Terry Fan and Eric Fan
 Simon & Schuster £12.99
 ISBN: 978-1847809391

In Grimloch Lane, when all is quiet, a mysterious person sets about creating wonderfully beautiful topiary sculptures to delight and entrance the residents. One morning William discovers that the tree outside his house has been sculpted into the shape of a wise owl. More and more beautiful masterpieces appear each night. The grey little town gradually becomes full of colour and life. Who is the Night Gardener and why does he garden in secret? William becomes determined to find out. This is a truly beautiful book, with gorgeous illustrations to accompany the gentle text. *The Night Gardener* will reward multiple revisits, so richly detailed are the pictures. A treat for both child and adult alike.

Rebecca Watts

