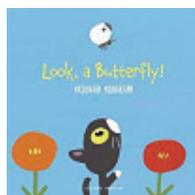


Books are FUN!

Chosen and reviewed by Bev Archer
from the Birmingham Children's Book Group



Look, a Butterfly!

Written and illustrated by Yasunari Murakami
Translated from Japanese by Cathy Hirano
Gecko £6.99
ISBN: 978-1776571901

The minimal text and stylish illustrations in this 20 page board book are typical of Japanese design. It begins "Look! A white butterfly in the blue sky.", and the butterfly goes on to land on a coloured flower bud. The repetition of the word "Pop!" as each flower opens, is an opportunity to point to the words as well as identifying the different colours. A delightfully gentle book for sharing over and over again with the youngest member of the family. Enchanting.

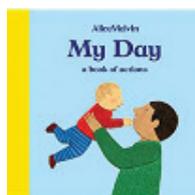
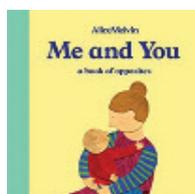
Me and You

ISBN: 978-1849765855

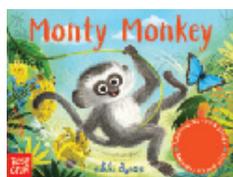
My Day

ISBN: 978-1849765862

Written and illustrated by Alice Melvin
Tate £6.99 each



The design of these 20 page board books sees a single word on each page clearly illustrated by pictures made up of textile collages. In *Me and You*, described as "a book of opposites", the scenes take the child and his mother through a day of playing in the park, having a bath and finally snuggling up to go to sleep. Dry and wet, hide and seek, in and out, light and dark are just some of the opposites depicted. In *My Day*, described as "a book of actions", the child is seen taking part, generally with his father, in different activities, such as waking, waving, playing and flying. Two very simple, sturdy books for very young children, with two further titles due out later this year.



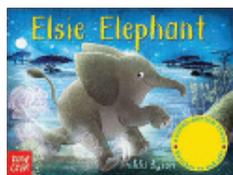
Monty Monkey

ISBN: 978-1788002288

Elsie Elephant

ISBN: 978-1788002295

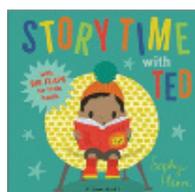
Written and illustrated by Nikki Dyson
Nosy Crow £5.99 each



When Monty Monkey becomes bored of bananas he sets off through the jungle to find something yummier to eat. Along the way Monty meets other jungle inhabitants and takes their preferred fruits, until he meets Gorilla! It's nighttime but Elsie Elephant isn't ready to sleep. She makes her noisy way through the jungle disturbing all the animals she meets. Eventually she becomes tired and ready to snuggle down but by then – it's morning. Both these sturdy board books are boldly illustrated, capturing life in the jungle. An added attraction are the sound buttons, which can be switched on and off, as they add realistic sound to the rhyming text.

Storytime with Ted

Written and illustrated by Sophy Henn
Bloomsbury £6.99
ISBN: 978-1408888780

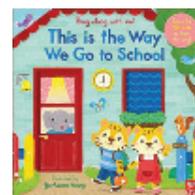


It's storytime and Ted wonders what the story will be about this time. On each double page Ted enthusiastically imagines what kind of story it could possibly be. He hopes it might be a spooky, scary story and the large flap can be lifted to show some friendly, floaty ghosts! He wonders whether it could be a different kind of story - it might be a fairy tale or an adventure story. The

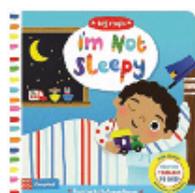
book ends when Ted is sitting comfortably. "Once upon a time ...", leaves the child and adult to tell a story, either their very own favourite, or, even better, a new one invented together. Complete with large flaps for little hands, this is definitely a book to stimulate any child's imagination. There are numerous other titles in this series featuring Ted – *Dress Up with Ted*, *Bedtime with Ted*, *Teatime with Ted* and many more.

This is the Way We Go to School

Illustrated by Yu-hsuan Huang
Nosy Crow £6.99
ISBN: 978-1788003070



Chunky sliders to push and pull encourage everyone to join in with this nursery song. For those unfamiliar with the tune there's a QR to scan to hear the song. The fun begins even before the book is opened, with the slider opening a window and the front door. From getting out of bed, eating breakfast and cleaning teeth the morning routine builds to waving goodbye "early in the morning." It's almost impossible to read without singing. If you enjoy this singalong board book you will be pleased to hear that there are a large number of titles in the same *Sing Along with Me!* series – *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*, *If You're Happy and You Know It*, *Incy Wincy Spider*, *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* and many, many more.



I'm Not Sleepy

ISBN: 978-1509836291

No More Nappies

ISBN: 978-1509836314

Illustrated by Marion Cocklico
Campbell £6.99 each



Part of the Big Steps series, these books are described as reassuring stories. *I'm Not Sleepy* is subtitled *Helping Toddlers Go to Sleep* and *No More Nappies* is subtitled *A Potty Training Book*. They have flaps, pull tabs and wheels to invite participation as the stories deal with two familiar challenges facing every child and their carers. The ten, boldly colourful pages, with minimal text, will

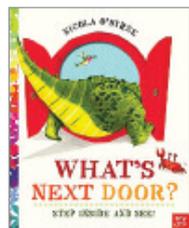
be attractive to very young children. At the bottom of each page there is a tip for the adult, for example, letting the child choose their own potty when it's the right time to toilet train, or, reading a story when it's time to snuggle down in bed.

and Toddlers

5 Wild Numbers

Illustrated by Bella Gomez
words & pictures £9.99
ISBN: 978-1910277560

This is a chunky board book very attractively illustrated by a textile designer. On each double-page spread animals can be found in their habitat. Particularly attractive is "One fierce tiger paces and prowls. He smiles and purrs, then snarls and growls." The animals can be very easily counted amongst the trees, on the savannah, or in the lake, providing opportunities to develop language skills whilst talking about the different habitats. The circular sliding discs help develop fine motor skills and the correct formation of the numerals 1 to 5. But, just a warning - small parts are not suitable for children under 3 years.



What's Next Door?

Written and illustrated by Nicola O'Byrne
Nosy Crow £6.99
ISBN: 978-0857638335

From the very first page, where there is an invitation to "clap your hands" to turn on the light, there is involvement and fun. Carter, a crocodile, is lost and if he doesn't get help to find his way

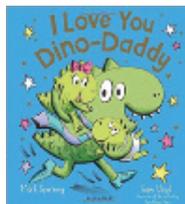
home he'll "eat you!" On every page of this interactive book with die-cut pages there are actions required to help Carter on his way, be it using a finger to draw a door, or turn the book upside down to shake the snow out. The large print, the bold illustrations and the need for involvement will make this a favourite, so why not "Step inside and see!"

I Love You Dino-Daddy

Written by Mark Sperring
Illustrated by Sam Lloyd
Bloomsbury (R) £7.99
ISBN: 978-1408893449

This is a new edition of the tale of the dino children and their Dino-Daddy, with a new title!

Written in rhyme, it tells the story of an action-packed day at home where Dino-Daddy is described as a brilliant balloon blower-upper and a Dino-Deadly tickling machine. The warm and loving relationship between Dino-Daddy and the two little dinos is reinforced by the lively and colourful illustrations. Also look out for the original *Dino-Baby*, as well as the repackaged *I Love You Dino-Mummy*.



Make & Play: Safari

Written and illustrated by Joey Chou
Nosy Crow £7.99
ISBN: 978-1788002530

This unusual book has twenty press-out play figures to make up a safari scene at home.

Included are animals, trees and a vehicle with binocular holding tourists. When the scene is set there are activities to make a bendy monkey or a snake sandwich. Lots of fun and activities for the whole family, which is likely to encourage research by older siblings. Look out for lots of other titles in the same interactive *Make & Play* series, including *Easter*, *Christmas*, *Nativity* and *Farm*.



The Steves

Written and illustrated by Morag Hood
Two Hoots £11.99
ISBN: 978-1509834839

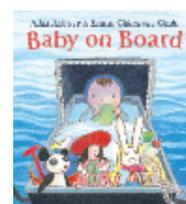
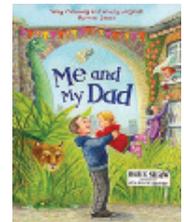
The story begins with one puffin introducing himself by saying, "I'm Steve", and a second puffin, crossly replying, "I'm Steve." What follows are the familiar and silly arguments where the puffins try to out-do each other with their claims of being the fastest, the strongest, the tallest, the wisest and the Stevest. When the claims begin to get rather personal the boldly simple, but expressive, illustrations show the hurt felt by both of the Steves. Lots of strong feelings to talk about here, including a very happy resolution to the problem.

Me and My Dad

Written and illustrated by Robin Shaw
Hodder £6.99
ISBN: 978-1444928129

A girl goes for a walk into town with her dad and everywhere she looks her imagination conjures up wonders from everyday experiences. Crocodiles lurk in puddles, trains become dinosaurs, houses appear like castles harbouring sleeping princesses, the plant shop conceals a jungle, the pet shop hides treasure and outside the ironmongers are metal bins which look like spaceships. But the best place of all is found at the end of the journey and the little girl can't wait to get there. Bright colourful pictures convey the seamless transition between reality and fantasy. There's a warmth about the characters as they share a much-loved journey together and the satisfying conclusion neatly ties up all the ends and gives us an opportunity to reflect on everything which came before.

Richard Monte



Baby on Board

Written by Allan Ahlberg
Illustrated by Emma Chichester Clark
Puffin £12.99
ISBN: 978-0141366791

This deceptively simple and engaging picture book, from a master story-teller, is a lyrical drama that combines artistic techniques with empathy, to portray a satisfying story for young readers. The baby looks out from his old-fashioned pram on the front cover and is believably real. The illustrations of his sister's toys - together with numerous friends and pets - are full of humour and witty observations of the everyday routines, chaos and clutter of children playing out-of-doors. The book is carefully designed to lead the young reader through an exciting adventure including the panda's panic when the sea threatens to frighten and overwhelm them. Calm is restored with split pictures detailing the baby gradually drifting off to sleep. A curious puffin almost wrecks the outing but the final, nostalgic, full-page illustration completes the circular story and reunites all the characters making this a very enjoyable book.

Ann Adkin