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When the National Animal Choir performs the latest song by renowned composer and conductor Mr. Herbert Timberteeth, nothing goes exactly as planned. Mr. Timberteeth has some preconceived notions of what animals like to do that are reflected in his song. But it turns out that lions prefer flower arranging to prowling and shrimp would rather ski than swim! With all the dissension and mayhem, will the show still go on? This hilarious picture book delivers a subtle message about stereotyping that kids, who are so often pigeonholed, will appreciate.

What Animals Really Like Details

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From Reader Review What Animals Really Like for online ebook

Betsey Stahler says

I really liked this book. It highlighted the fact that the things we think about people (animals) might not be who they really are. You might think that the favorite thing of wolves to do is to howl but they really might prefer to do magic tricks....

Amy Forrester says

At the concert tonight the animals will be performing a new song composed and conducted by Mr. Hebert Timberteeth. The curtains open and the song starts out simply enough; lions that like to prowl, wolves that like to howl, pigeons that like to coo, and cows that like to dig. Wait, what? Cows that like to dig? Hebert can't believe his ears. One animal and then another and another changes the lyrics to sing about what they really like to do. Finally, they convince Herbert to let them sing the song their way. Pretty soon the pages are full of ballet dancing pigeons, deep-sea diving horses, ping-pong playing kangaroos, and more. As the animals sing their thanks the curtains close and the audience cheers for the wonderful, new song written by Mr. Hebert Timberteeth.

The text begins with rhyming text, but just like the song, the text veers off into the unknown in a delightfully chaotic manner after the animals take over. Herbert, a beaver in a tuxedo, is a charming straight man against the offbeat animals. The pen, ink, and marker illustrations continue the tongue-in-cheek style of humor. Robinson's precisely drawn characters cavort across the pages, using every bit of space available. This is a concert, so the animals are dressed in evening clothes; it's hilarious to see the worms bowling in their bow ties and the warthogs parachuting in their pink puff-sleeved dresses. The book is cleverly designed with two sets of flap pages for the opening and closing of the stage curtains.

Full Review at Picture-Book-a-Day: <http://picturebookaday.blogspot.com/2...>

Shazzer says

As posted on Outside of a Dog:

Ah, the humor that comes from subverted expectations. Comedians the world over had made millions laugh with such verbal sleight of hand. One of the latest entries to this grand tradition of humor is What Animals Really Like by Fiona Robinson. Here we get the story of "legendary conductor Mr. Herbert Timberteeth" (excellent name, a beaver by trade), and his latest musical masterpiece. A whole menagerie of animals has come out to perform this latest opus, but little does Mr. Timberteeth know that his performers have a mind of their own. It all starts well: we have lions who like to prowl, wolves who like to howl, pigeons who like to coo and cows, who like to...dig. Dig!?! It all goes downhill from there, as the animals take over and sing their own version of the song with things they really like to do. Did you know lions like flower arranging? Neither did I. Robinson's art, done in pen and ink and marker pens is imaginative, colorful and downright gleeful. Just imagine the expressions of some shrimp declaring their love of skiing. We also get a few wonderful shots of the listening audience, mere peering eyeballs in the darkness of the theater. The cover is a little bit of genius, bursting with animals in fancy dress preparing for the coming performance. The only thing that could have made this better would have been some giraffes. Seriously, where were the giraffes? This is going to be

a wonderful read-aloud, perhaps well paired with JoAnn Early Macken's Baby Says "Moo"!.

Christina says

This book is the perfect read aloud. It is humorous and provides opportunities for creating voices. It has several large page fold outs. It might not be as fun if you aren't comfortable pretending to sing a song as you read. But I say give it a try. I think this book can hook lots of children so it is worth the effort.

Lisa Vegan says

This story is so cute, and it would probably have left me helplessly and uncontrollably giggling were I at the target age. As it is I thought it was fun to read and it would be even more of a blast to read aloud to kids. It's a fabulous read aloud book. And the last page is a hoot. I also appreciate that this can be enjoyed at more than one level. There is a message (well) hidden within this silly story that can be noticed and discussed, or not. Either way, it's a worthwhile book.

babyhippoface says

Think you know what animals like? Pig like mud, cows like to moo, huh? Wrong. The humor in this one is so crazy-silly that kids will love it. I just wish publishers would find some way to reinforce those big fold-out pages!

Hayden Drescher says

A plethora of ideas for different classroom uses came to mind when I read this book, What Animals Really Like. There is a multiple part song involved, different groups of animals, and irregular physical actions for each animal. All of this to help the audience understand stereotypes, judgment, etc., through somewhat of a song. What really liked about each animal is that they liked something totally random (except for the mice). There are lions liking flower arranging, shrimp liking skiing, and warthogs liking to blow enormous bubbles. One of my many ideas to incorporate this book in a classroom would be with the different sections of animals. The class could split into animals and go through the song, or make up their own by agreeing on what they all like to do. This setup could also be used in many cultural aspects of world studies that the students could research and explain.

I believe this book can very useful to teachers and educators for a means of getting kids actively involved in class.

meg says

so much fun--both the story and the art. i just know this one will be a storytime hit.

Kathryn says

So darn cute and FUNNY! I really enjoyed the humor of this little book. Our poor conductor is all ready to lead a performance in which various animals sing about their favorite activities. Such as, "We are lions, and we like to prowl/We are wolves, and we like to howl." The rhyme scheme and our own expectations about animals sets readers up for a very obvious pairing of the animal and its interests. But, there are some surprises! "We are pigeons, and we like to coo/We are cows, and we like to . . . dig." Dig!?! What!?! How is that? Why? Soon, much to the consternation of our conductor, many animals are rebelling from the standard song and stating their real likes. Fun and mayhem ensues. And also a good lesson that we do not have to like what is expected of us! ;-) The illustrations are also a hoot and the fold-out pages are a lot of fun.

Deb (Readerbuzz) Nance says

We human beings think we know, don't we? But we don't. And this little children's picture book proves it. When asked to participate in a musical about what animals really want, animals at first comply and reply with stereotypical animal likes but, gradually, as the musical progresses, the animals begin to rebel and answer from their quirky animal hearts.

Like all really good picture books, this book can be about more than the real preferences of kangaroos and cows. With foldout pages and big bright illustrations that make the real book much, much better than an e-book.

"We are monkeys, and we like to play.
We are horses, and we like fresh hay.
We are worms, and we like to wiggle.
We are warthogs, and we like to...
...blow enormous bubbles.

Blow enormous bubbles?
Stop! Stop!
That's not in my song."

Jess says

August 2017 - a funny story (although it would have been even better had I thought of a tune to sing it to).

Margaret Chind says

Originally posted on Creative Madness Mama. Really quite a fun book. Lots of rhymes meshed with silliness.

Could easily open conversations for kiddos into literal animals and their lives as well as their own personal hobbies and activities. Neat way for the beginning and end of the book to open to four full pages to present a stage.

A fun silly picture book.

Fiona Robinson is the author-illustrator of *The Useful Moose: A Truthful, Moose-full Tale* and *The 3-2-3 Detective Agency*. She has been praised by *Publishers Weekly* for her "humor tinged with heart," and her work has been honored by the Royal Academy of Arts. She lives with her family in Brooklyn.

This review was originally posted on Creative Madness Mama.

Betsy says

I'm sitting in a room with a group of other children's librarians. Together, we are attempting to determine what the best children's books of a given year are. It's late in the publishing season and we haven't a lot of time left when one of us walks in with Fiona Robinson's *What Animals Really Like*. None of us are familiar with Ms. Robinson's work (though we've heard nice things about *The 323 Detective Agency*) so our expectations are pretty low. The librarian who has the book, though, informs us in no uncertain terms that this is one of the best of the year. She then proceeds to read it aloud. Ladies and gentlemen, there are few finer pleasures than being read a picture book that works. I don't care if you're 5 or 55 or 555. Everyone likes storytime and many people like learning about great new picture books through readalouds. By the time the librarian was done it was unanimous. We were in love with *What Animals Really Like* and ready to join Fiona Robinson's fan club, should someone ever feel the urge to start one. And trust me, after this book gains a bit of a following, folks are going to be lining up around the block to start organizations in honor of its author/illustrator. You want a surefire storytime gem? Baby, I got your back.

Maestro Herbert Timberteeth has written a brand new song going by the name of "What Animals Really Like". For this one time performance he has assembled a chorus of some twelve different groups of animals. At the start, all goes according to plan. The lions reluctantly sing, "We are lions, and we like to prowl." Next a tepid, "We are wolves, and we like to howl." "We are pigeons, and we like to coo." Finally, "We are cows, and we like to . . . dig." There stand the cows holding various digging accoutrements and looking very pleased. Herbert, suffice to say, is not amused. He's even less amused when the warthogs suddenly declare mid-song that they like to blow enormous bubbles. As the book continues, more and more animals start to sing what they really like to do, rather than what society expects them to. And though it causes him some serious stress, Herbert eventually lets everyone sing what it is that they really like, even though it doesn't rhyme or, sometimes, make a lot of sense.

I'm a sucker for any book that upsets expectations. Kids are so used to picture books that allow them to guess the rhyme that when they encounter a book that turns that idea on its head they're initially flummoxed, and then soon delighted. Not many picture books have the guts to do this. The best known, to my mind, is Mac Barnett's *Guess Again*, which takes the idea to its logical extreme. What's nice about Robinson's book is that while it's not as downright goofy as Barnett's, the upset expectations serve the story. In a way, all readers are automatically placed in the shoes of Herbert Timberteeth. We may not identify with his rage, but we at least can see where he's coming from. Readers who use this book with big groups of kids should consider encouraging the kids to finish the animals' rhymes so that when the sentences goes in odd new directions they can inadvertently become little raging Timberteeths of their own.

Now Robinson's a sneaky one. Her preferred style in this book utilizes plain old marker pens alongside pen and inks. No fancy dancy paints or styles for her. You might think then that what you see is what you get, but look a little closer and you're bound to be delighted by what you find. Robinson, it appears, has an addiction to hidden details. And as a child raised on Richard Scarry, I took a distinct and crazy pleasure in sussing out everything she's hidden. From Herbert's rapidly disintegrating tuxedo (sometimes involving a missing button and a slithering creature that has fun with that accessory) to the shrimp ski lodge to the wolf hypnotizing the pizza delivery guy, there is so much to discover with every read that I wouldn't be surprised if in some household it's the parents begging their kids over and over to read this book one more time.

By the way, how many authors take the time to incorporate their book covers into their story's plot? After a second reading I closed the book and found that the cover is a joy in and of itself. If you look at it, you'll realize that the animal performers are actually prepping for the show that's about to occur. Some are shrugging into dresses or combing down their free flowing locks. Others are taking care of basic hygiene requirements like flossing, tooth brushing, and surreptitious sniffs to the old armpits. Still others are helping one another into their bow ties or polishing their horns. Looking at it, you realize that the cover is meant to be one of those old fashioned backstage mirrors, surrounded by light bulbs and that if that's the case then YOU the reader are with all those animals, getting ready as well. It's a fun idea. A bit of fun with the old fourth wall without taking it too far.

If the book has any kind of a flaw at all it may be that in an effort to give you the grand feel of a performance, one of the book's structural choices actually inhibits reading this book to a group. At the very beginning the first two pages open up in a fancy dancy gatefold to reveal the entire stage and all the performers standing there. This happens at the end as well. It's a cool effect but a little difficult to pull off if you're reading the book to more than just the child seated on your lap. Librarians and teachers would do well to practice opening these pages before presenting it in front of an audience. And while you're at it, you may as well decide right now whether or not you want to sing it. I bet it would be easy enough to find a fun tune for it, but if you decide to just read it straight, that doesn't hurt the performance any.

It actually wouldn't pair too terribly with *The Philharmonic Gets Dressed*, y'know. In both cases you've a large group of performers giving readers a brief glimpse into their personal lives. It's closest kin in terms of tone and silliness has got to be the aforementioned *Guess Again!* though. Robinson has penned a book that is bound to become a storytime staple, and puts some serious work into amusing the small fry. If you want a book that can make a seven-year-old laugh out loud, brother have I got a book for you. Fun. Original. Consider this one of those books you'll be recommending to all your friends, both big and small. We are humans and we like this book.

For ages 4-8.

Tasha says

Mr. Herbert Timberteeth is happy to present his new song that he composed, "What Animals Like Most." He will also be conducting it, just open the red curtains and... There are groups of animals on stage who flatly deliver, "We are lions, and we like to prowl. We are wolves, and we like to howl. We are pigeons, and we like to coo. We are cows and we like to..." Turn the page to have the chaos begin as the cows change the obvious rhyme into something else entirely. Best of all, you can tell from the animals' faces that they are up to something. They are the only ones on stage grinning. The same is true of the next grouping. Children will get the joke immediately when the first rhyme is missed. Finally, Herbert, now bedraggled, allows them to sing the new and non-rhyming version of the song. He hates it, but the audience has a very different reaction.

Check out the rest of the review at [Waking Brain Cells](#)

Michelle says

Very clever and funny!
