



## There's Going to Be a Baby

*John Burningham , Helen Oxenbury (Illustrator)*

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**In a first-time creative pairing, two of the world's most treasured picture book creators offer a truly delightful book for new-siblings-to-be. (Ages 2 and up)**

When is the new baby coming? What will we call it? What will he do? We don't really need a baby, do we? With sensitivity and wit, John Burningham follows the swirl of questions in the mind of a young child anticipating a baby sibling with excitement, curiosity, and just a bit of trepidation. In perfect tandem, Helen Oxenbury captures the child's loving interactions with his mother--along with the fanciful future scenarios he imagines for the new family member he has yet to meet. Combining a warm, timeless story with illustrations both freshly enchanting and wonderfully nostalgic, this gorgeous book has all the hallmarks of a classic.

## There's Going to Be a Baby Details

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Author : John Burningham , Helen Oxenbury (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review There's Going to Be a Baby for online ebook

### E.S. says

There's Going to be a Baby is a humorous concept book written by John Burningham and illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. The book is set up as a conversation between mother and child, where the child asks questions about his new brother or sister. The mother's text is in light blue and the child's is in black so readers can differentiate who is speaking. After the introduction, the book flips between the conversation between mother and child and a wordless future sequence (e.g. 'Maybe when the baby grows up, it will be a chef and work in a restaurant.' 'I don't think I'd eat anything that was made by the baby.' Then there is a six panel page spread of the future baby trying to make pancakes.).

The illustrations go back and forth between being very detailed (like the illustration of mother and child going through the snow) to very simple (like some of the wordless page sequences). Familiar objects are used throughout the book, the human features are very simple, but the coloring is very realistic and neat, not as explosive as some of the books for younger children.

The sentences run anywhere from 2-6 per page, so overall that would make it inappropriate for a younger child. The dialogue is overall very simple, so a younger child could understand it, but they might not get some of the references (such as Peter Parker). There is little rhyming or repetition other than with the word 'baby,' but the format of the book itself is very repetitious (e.g. mother and child talking, then wordless sequences).

Because of these factors, the book isn't entirely appropriate for those under the age of 4. This concept might be hard to explain to anyone younger than 4, but this book does do a good job of talking an older preschooler through what this change will be like and what some of the concerns the child might be having about it.

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### Rachel Masters says

This is a sweet book about a young boy whose mother is expecting a baby. This book would be useful for younger readers who will soon have a new brother or sister and may have lots of questions or not know what to expect.

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### Kathryn says

This story follows the seasons as a mother tells her little boy in late winter that "There's going to be a baby" in the fall. We watch her baby bump grow through spring showers, summer-time at the beach, and the first fallen leaves of autumn. Throughout daily errands and special outings, the little boy asks questions about what the new brother or sister will be like, and the mother proposes some ideas, maybe the baby will be a banker, or a baker, or work at a zoo, or become a doctor... The little boy imagines all sort of funny scenarios of a baby doing those things. And, in the end, he is both comfortable and excited that "there's going to be a baby."

Helen Oxenbury's illustrations are marvelous here! I love everything from the color choices to the subtle changes in the mother's baby belly, to the humor in the spreads with the baby doing silly things.

Just an FYI: There is no daddy in this story. No mention of him at al. While this could work well for some

families, I could also see it being a problem for others. There are certainly ways that a mother-and-father family could try to incorporate a dad into the story if children ask about him (i.e., he's already waiting at the hospital for mommy) but for such a special and family-based occasion I think it's clear that the author and illustrator chose this to be a mom-only scenario. (Though it's definitely cute when the grandpa shows up!)

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### **Meredith says**

A little boy ponders what the new baby will be like while engaging in a series of activities with his mother.

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### **Brittany says**

Got this one because I was looking for a different title by this author and saw the illustrator on this book. Turned out to be a fun book for anyone preparing a young child for a sibling - imagining what the baby will be like in some sometimes silly ways.

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### **Sarah says**

Totally turned off by the page that says "Then the baby might get eaten by a tiger." We all know older siblings need to adjust to a new baby, but this was just overlooked, nothing was ever said by the mother to comfort the older child or ease his fears about being a big brother.

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### **Candice says**

I've seen this advertised in several journals and was immediately enchanted by the cover illustration of a pregnant mother telling her little boy that a new baby is on the way. This is a beautiful book to read to a child who is about to become a big brother or sister. Both the happy anticipation of a new baby's arrival, and the insecurities are portrayed. The mother and boy wonder about what the baby might do - be a cook, work in a zoo, be a gardener, play with its big brother? At one point the little boy tells his mother that they don't really need a new baby, and at another point muses that maybe if the baby works in a zoo it will get eaten by a tiger. But as mom gets bigger and the baby's arrival becomes more imminent, the little boy becomes more excited about welcoming his little sibling into the world.

The story itself is sweet and realistic. The illustrations are absolutely wonderful. This is on my list as a gift for children who are about to welcome a new baby into their family.

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### **Cara Byrne says**

In the genre of going-to-be-a-big brother/sister genre, this is one of the more artistically tasteful, longer narratives about a little boy who wonders what the baby entering their family will be like. I would

recommend/buy this for a growing family. There is also a small instance of little boy full frontal nudity - which my 2-year-old asked about - and it's one of the few examples in children's picture books I can think of with this (Sendak's *Night Kitchen* being the other).

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## T. says

There's Going to Be a Baby

By John Burningham

2010

Grades Preschool- Kindergarten

Summary: This simple picture book is told in minimal text with illustrations that capture the imaginings of a young boy who has just learned that his mother is going to have a baby. From the winter of the announcement to the fall of the sibling's birth, the book follows the changing of the mother's body and the child's feelings from anger to acceptance of a sibling he will love and cherish.

Discussion Questions:

How does the little boy feel when his mother tells him there's going to be a baby? How does he feel at the restaurant, the museum, the zoo, the park, and the doctor? How can you tell?

Does the little boy change his mind sometimes about the baby? How can you tell at the garden, the lake, and the bank?

A young boy imagines what life will be like when his new sibling arrives.

In a first-time creative pairing, two of the world's most treasured picture book creators offer a truly delightful book for new-siblings-to-be. When is the new baby coming? What will we call it? What will he do? We don't really need a baby, do we? With sensitivity and wit, John Burningham follows the swirl of questions in the mind of a young child anticipating a baby sibling with excitement, curiosity, and just a bit of trepidation. In perfect tandem, Helen Oxenbury captures the child's loving interactions with his mother -- along with the fanciful future scenarios he imagines for the new family member he has yet to meet. Combining a warm, timeless story with illustrations both freshly enchanting and wonderfully nostalgic, this gorgeous book has all the hallmarks of a classic.

In the end, the little boy is anxious for the baby to come and when it does, he is excited to meet him or her. Did you ever have a baby come into your family? Was it a brother or a sister? Was it a cousin? How did you feel as you waited for the baby to arrive?

Activities:

The little boy in the story imagines the things the baby might do when he or she grows up, but he often imagines the baby doing grown-up jobs. Brainstorm with the class other grown-up jobs the baby might do. Depending on the developmental level of your students, ask them to select, either as a group or individually, one job from the list and make a series of silly pictures of the baby doing that job. Once the pictures are complete, add an introductory dialogue exchange similar to the ones in *There's Going to Be a Baby*. Re-read the story, stopping to look at each dialogue exchange between the mother and the child. Ask students to help you complete a chart that includes the location of the exchange, what the boy imagines, and how he feels:

Location Situation Imagined Child's Feelings

Restaurant Baby chef cooking negative

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### **Molly Cluff (Library!) says**

The illustrations in this were really detailed! I feel like the audience of new older siblings won't even be able to fully appreciate it--but the adults sure will! Older brother and mom imagine all the different things a baby could be: a sailor, chef, banker, gardener. The ending where they're going to the hospital to meet the new baby is really cute.

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### **Gwen the Librarian says**

Taking a different tack on the new baby subject, Burningham's mother and child wonder what the new baby might be when he or she grows up - big brother imagines whole scenarios with a baby as zookeeper, baker, or sailor. Interspersed in the text are the regular sorts of questions like, "We don't really need a baby, do we?" that show the unease with the idea of a new sibling. The author leaves lots of room for readers to answer questions for themselves and explore their own feelings. The book ends on the positive note, "We're going to love the baby, aren't we?"

Helen Oxenbury's illustrations are gorgeous, with colors and design that remind one of Japanese woodblock.

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### **Claudia G-D says**

The little boy in the story finds out that his mum is going to have a baby. The story goes through the seasons as the child accepts that there will soon be a baby and thinks of lots of different things the baby will do when it's older. The child seems unsure of the baby, but in the end says that they will love the baby, which makes it seem as though the child has got excited and accepts that having a new baby will be a good thing. I think this book would be nice to share with children who will be having a new baby in their family to prepare them at to think of different questions that they may have about their new baby.

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### **Irma Fernandez says**

Loved the book, great concept of introducing a child to a sibling.

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### **Susan says**

love. I can't tell y'all how much I love this book./

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### **Donna Mork says**

Mom reveals to son that there is a baby on the way. She answers a lot of interesting questions from the boy,

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who has to decide whether he wants the baby to come or not...and finally accepts that it is coming and he is going to love being a big brother.

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