



# EIEIO: How Old MacDonald Got His Farm with a Little Help From a Hen

*Judy Sierra , Matthew Myers (Illustrations)*

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**The Little Red Hen gives old MacDonald some pointers on composting — and a legendary farm is born — in this rhyming, rollicking read-aloud.**

Once upon a time, Old MacDonald didn't have a farm. He just had a yard — a yard he didn't want to mow. But under the direction of the wise (and ecologically sensitive) Little Red Hen, Mac learns to look at the environment in a very different way, and whole new worlds start to bloom with the help of some mud, garbage, horse poop, and worms! Judy Sierra's spirited verse, paired with Matthew Myers's exuberant illustrations, yields a fresh take on a children's classic, complete with raised-bed gardens and an organic farmers' market—making this a perfect story for armchair gardeners and devoted locavores of all sizes.

## EIEIO: How Old MacDonald Got His Farm with a Little Help From a Hen Details

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Author : Judy Sierra , Matthew Myers (Illustrations)

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## From Reader Review EIEIO: How Old MacDonald Got His Farm with a Little Help From a Hen for online ebook

### N. Smith says

Check this out if the library on a whim since my 4y old has been obsessed with singing Old MacDonald and it was a huge hit. I loved the illustrations and the humour used in the story. Would 10 out of 10 recommend and check out from the library again.

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### Nikki says

loved the illustrations!

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### Cheryl says

Interesting that the farmer works harder now than he did on his lawn, but it's worth it, feels better, because he's productive, growing produce instead of boring grass. And the neighbors realistically first protested, and then, perhaps less realistically, learned that a farm in the neighborhood is a good thing despite a little mud and a little stink.

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### Susan says

Judy Sierra has done it again. She is a master of the marriage of quality content and good fun. If I were a teacher on a deserted island and could only have one author's books with me, it would be Judy Sierra. In fact, this book could save our deserted-island lives because it has complete instructions on how to create a working farm in your own backyard.

I can't wait to teach with EIEIO How Old MacDonald Got his Farm. One of my obsessions is making sure kids know where food comes from. Another is making sure they know about the cycle of life. This book covers seed germination, manure, vermiculture, animal husbandry...with a blend of colorful art, adorable animals and a splash of mud-spattered humor on every page. When we are done reading and teaching this book, we will never think of the song as just a song again. We'll think of Old MacDonald cultivating fun in his back yard every time we sing it.

I'm seriously motivated to buy a vacant lot and start digging.

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### Danielle Ferro says

1. None
2. K-2
3. This is a newer version of the classic Old MacDonald song, but instead it is telling us about how the farm

got started. The man is tired of mowing his lawn and tries to bring in animals to make it easier. Old MacDonald is trying to turn his backyard into a garden and by doing so is bringing in different animals based on what the one prior to them did to the lawn.

4. This book is very cute and have nice illustrations. I liked the idea of transforming the old song into a newer one that we can relate to as well. I think it shows the kids creativity and to not be afraid to try new things even if they are out of the ordinary.

5. I would use this in my future classroom. I think it would make a great lesson on thinking outside of the box and trying new ways of doing things. Also, it ties into the environment and using what you have to build up.

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## Sylvester says

2\* art

2\* story

An odd one. Squirt was totally impressed by the horse poo, though. That's all he cared about. "Where's the poo?" Oh, and he loves lawnmowers, so he was sad when the book wasn't about mowing the lawn anymore. Obviously I'm not raising him right. He also loves to pretend to saw trees down. \*cringes\*

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## Miss Sarah says

A silly story about how Old Macdonald built his farm mishap by mishap. Elementary and up for humor. nice take on a classic

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## Karla Winick-Ford says

over their heads

good message

great illustrations

story was a bit long

and a bit less meaningful to young children

didn't quite hit the target

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## Barbara says

Fed up with mowing his large backyard lawn, Old MacDonald decides to make some changes and is able to do so with the help of a very smart hen. As the neighbors look on with disdain, he turns that green space into a productive garden, complete with goat, horse, and yummy vegetables. The rhyming text and acrylic and oil illustrations add considerably to the pleasures of reading this one. My favorite illustration is the last one featuring a proud farmer and his red hen surveying the well-tended plots of fruits, flowers, and vegetables that surround them. if this is how Old MacDonald got his farm, several of us might want to consider following his lead.

## Bookishrealm says

This was an interesting tale about how old McDonald got his farm! I loved like absolutely loved the artwork. I just wish I could follow the rhythmic pattern because it was kind of difficult.

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## Catherine says

Hippies of the world, rejoice! Judy Sierra (an Oregon native, of course) has written a book about getting rid of the lawn and putting in an urban farm! And it's set to a familiar song! And it has a sense of humor!

Old MacDonald did not actually buy a farm, folks! He actually started out in the 'burbs.

But mowing is so boring, so he he got a goat to do that job for him.

Then, he got on the internets and bought a chicken.

Now, there's not any real explanation for why he got a chicken, other than "the plot began to thicken," but really, who doesn't want a chicken? Or three?

Also, most people start with chicks, but apparently, Old MacDonald didn't want to wait a couple of months for her to grow up. And I see this chicken, with her qualifications and resources, as a bit of a Mary Poppins figure.

Of course, haters gotta hate and all that, so the neighbors aren't exactly happy about these changes at Old MacDonald's (except that cute little girl in front, who's very progressive for this 'hood).

But if they thought MUD was bad, the compost and horse manure that Old MacDonald introduces next is really going to get their goat. I'll let you discover those wonderful illustrations for yourself.

Then, look, super-cute worms for the compost pile!

I'll also skip the bit where Old MacDonald and his growing band of supporters installs raised bed and plants

a lovely variety of fruits, vegetables, etc. Let's go straight to the pay-off where all the neighbors are happy to buy organic produce from Old MacDonald's horse-drawn food cart.

This book is so delightfully earthy-crunchy west coast, I can hardly stand it.

By the way, this is my front yard, about 9 months after buying a house that had a beautiful, immaculate lawn:

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## **Nikole Benfield says**

Title: E-I-E-I-O

Author: Judy Sierra

Illustrator: Matthew Myers

Genre:Nursery Rhyme/ Mother Goose

Theme(s): Animals, Rhyming, Nursery Rhyme, Gardening

Opening line/sentence:

Old Macdonald had a house,

E-I-E-I-O!

Around the house there was a yard....

Brief Book Summary:

The story follows Old MacDonald as he decides to build a farm in his yard because he is tired of mowing his lawn. He begins by getting a goat to eat the grass, but he just ends up eating his hedges. Then he decides to get a chicken, who ends up being brilliant and helps him build his farm.

Professional Recommendation/Review #1:

Connie Fletcher (Booklist)

A sustainability take on the old nursery rhyme, this humorous go-round places the Little Red Hen in the role of consultant to Old MacDonald. Sierra quickly veers from the original situation here, MacDonald only has a suburban yard. And he is sick of mowing it. So he gets a goat, but the goat just grazes. He goes online to get a chicken and ends up with the world's smartest chicken, the Little Red Hen, who tells him he'll never have to mow again if he just follows her instructions. The yard is covered in cardboard, paper, and dirt and gets extremely muddy, which leads to a neighborhood protest. When the hen and MacDonald bring in manure to build a worm farm, the protests escalate. At last, though, the once-useless plot of grass has been transformed into a local farm, everyone rejoices, and MacDonald has become a true farmer. Myers acrylic-and-oil illustrations are eye-popping, with wildly exaggerated faces and bodies. A fun twist on an old favorite.

<http://www.clcd.com.ezaccess.librarie...>

Professional Recommendation/Review #2:

CCBC (Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices)

At the beginning of this story, told in the familiar pattern of the song, Old MacDonald isn't a farmer; he's just tired of mowing grass. He gets a goat, then a chicken when the goat proves a failure. Not the average bird was she, but the smartest hen in history. The chicken soon oversees a transformation. Food scraps tossed into the yard combined with poop from the horse Old MacDonald purchases, along with the effort of worms, create rich composted soil. Soon skeptical neighbors who'd been holding protest signs ( This Stinks, Grass Smells Better ) join in on the creation of a huge garden. Well, all but one of them (This Is Still Weird ). But even he is ready to concede as he enjoys some of the garden bounty by story's end. Illustrations playfully extend the humor in this entertaining offering.

<http://www.clcd.com.ezaccess.librarie...>

Response to Two Professional Reviews:

Both basically summarize the book. They also both agree on the humor and entertaining aspect of the book.

Evaluation of Literary Elements:

This book is perfect for young readers because of its constant repetition and bright colorful pages. The book is great to read along to the original Old Macdonald rhythm and beat. The plot is simple and easy for kids to follow as they probably already know the Old Macdonald nursery rhyme.

Consideration of Instructional Application:

You can make a lesson plan related on crops and planting. Maybe allow the kids to plant seeds and watch them grow. Also have them sing along and clap to the rhythm of Old Macdonald.

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## Heidi-Marie says

I didn't know what to expect, but this was really good. Too bad I didn't know about it during the Summer Reading science theme. This is a great way to teach a bit about fertilizing, growing stuff. Lots of humorous things throughout, most in tiny details that are best in a lap-read or read-alone. I think the school-age crowd will get that humor the most. But still worth a try for preschool ST. One whole star is for the humor alone.

4/29/15 I knew that some of the concepts might be over their heads, but I don't think it was too early to introduce concepts of growing things. Used this in my Farm theme and led into my Old MacDonald Literacy Moment pretty well. They seemed to like the pictures. Lots to feast from there. :-)

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## Jessica Haider says

Another cute new kid's picture book for 2014, this one tells the tale of how Old MacDonald came to be a farmer in the first place. The story rhymes and tells of how Old MacDonald was just a guy with a house...and a lawn that he was tired of mowing. The tale includes the word "poo", which was a big hit with my 4 year old. My son did comment on the illustrations though that he thought that Old MacDonald didn't look human.

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## Sunah Chung says

Old MacDonald didn't have a farm but a yard, and he did not want to mow. He came up with an idea to purchase a goat to eat grass. He also hired a hen who had a diploma and certificates in agricultural disciplines. The hen ordered Old MacDonald around and told him what he had to do to transform his yard into a farm. However, the neighbors protested and claimed that Old MacDonald ruined the environment of the neighbors with the construction and composting which causes lots of rotten smells. At the end of the smelly compost and farming, organic vegetables and fruits were harvested, and the community enjoyed the outcomes.

The author must come up with the idea of this storyline from the nursery rhyme, "Old MacDonald had a farm EIEIO." In this book, Old MacDonald did not have a farm at first. But he finally has a farm and it gives the nursery rhyme context. However, regarding the story, I disagree with the attitudes of Old MacDonald and the hen who ignore the protest of the neighbors. Growing organic food is an excellent idea for the community, but before that, they should consider their neighbors' discomfort. They should show some actions to persuade them. The story ends with the satisfaction of the neighbors enjoying organic ingredients, but young readers could misunderstand that it would be forgiven if you meet a goal regardless of the justice

of the means. The illustrations are well done, but not exquisite.

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