



## What Do You Say, Dear?

*Sesyle Joslin , Maurice Sendak (Illustrator)*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

# What Do You Say, Dear?

*Sesyle Joslin , Maurice Sendak (Illustrator)*

**What Do You Say, Dear?** Sesyle Joslin , Maurice Sendak (Illustrator)

What do you say when:

- you bump into a crocodile on a crowded city street?
- a nice gentleman introduces you to a baby elephant?
- the Queen feeds you so much spaghetti that you don't fit in your chair anymore?

This is the funniest book of manners you'll ever read!

## What Do You Say, Dear? Details

Date : Published September 25th 1986 by HarperCollins (first published 1958)

ISBN : 9780064431125

Author : Sesyle Joslin , Maurice Sendak (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 48 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Humor, Fiction, Young Readers, Kids, Young Adult, Animals, Parenting, Classics

 [Download What Do You Say, Dear? ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online What Do You Say, Dear? ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online What Do You Say, Dear? Sesyle Joslin , Maurice Sendak (Illustrator)**

---

## From Reader Review What Do You Say, Dear? for online ebook

### Bethany says

...And goodreads reunites me with yet another forgotten book from my childhood!

(I love you, goodreads.)

---

### Cassandra Gelvin says

#### **I have changed my mind on this.**

Upon a second look:

I remembered really liking this book when I read it almost a year ago. But now that I look at it again, I'm frankly disappointed by the gender breakdown of the situations. The boy character gets to receive a pet baby elephant, rescue a princess from a dragon, portray a cowboy, be bitten by a dinosaur, be the groom at a wedding, attend the princess's ball, visit London to dine with the Queen, fly an airplane to visit the Duchess, and invite all his friends over for a party. The girl character gets to pick flowers, be rescued, be a nurse, go shopping, be the bride in a wedding, be a Princess, be a Queen, be a Duchess, and be captured.

This is such a pity, because it's genuinely funny, and that's what I remembered about it. And Maurice Sendak's illustrations are so charming. I'd like to give Sendak the benefit of the doubt and say that if he had illustrated this today, he would have been more inclusive, but I can't in good conscience read this to my kids or let other adults read it to them and reinforce these stereotypes.

Such a waste of potential.

*Original review:*

#### **Okay, *please* stop gnawing on my face.**

Some of the illustrations are a little gender-normative, as it is from the late 1950s. There are a lot of manners books out there. I'm guessing there were even more back when this one was written. This one is a lighthearted satire of these types of books, with silly situations that kids are never going to get into, like being a cowboy, or being menaced by a dragon. It puts "please" and "thank you" and similar phrases into weird situations.

It's very silly. I think that children will definitely understand because it's always being drilled into young children how they should be polite at every turn. These ridiculous situations will entertain the children as well as teach them actual manners. People are always wanting you to be polite even when you bump into a crocodile in the middle of the road or when you crash your airplane into somebody's roof.

Message: Be polite.

For more children's book reviews, see my website at <http://www.drmtmk.com>.

### **Miriam says**

It peeved me a bit that the girl has to be the shopper, nurse, and rescued princess while the boy gets to fly a plane, fight a dragon, and make a pet of an elephant, but otherwise this is a super cute little book and a painless way to get the basics phrased of politeness instilled in kid's memories.

---

### **Courtney says**

I couldn't find the French edition listed, which is what I read in attempts to practice my French literacy. It was a cute read. Wish I had picked it up in time to have read it with my French first grader, dommage.

---

### **Märta Palmér says**

Growing up, I truly loved this book. And of course my big sister hated it. It's a book about manners, how you always have to be polite no matter the situation and apologize when screwing up or doing something wrong. I have no idea whether this had any impact on me, or my manners, but I obviously still remember it two decades later. It is silly and fun in an adorable way. I noticed a couple of people dismissing it because of the gender normative illustrations and descriptions, and that is of course problematic, but I have to say that as a child I really did not notice this aspect. My focus was totally the silliness and craziness of the book rather than if it was a boy or a girl depicted in the different scenarios.

---

### **Heather says**

33 months - O sits very still and listens intently but I don't know if she's really getting anything from this read or if she's in awe of the bizarre scenarios. Still a good read and lots of good manners displayed.

---

### **Kathryn says**

Full of delicious fantastical imagination and, of course, the very best manners! Charming! :-)

---

### **Roger says**

What a great fun way to teach children good manners. With drawings by Maurice Sendak. For example, what do you say if you get bit by a dinosaur and a nurse comes and saves your life? Also I wish I could give copies to some of my clients.

---

## **Lala says**

The only manners I've ever learned were from this book.

---

## **Ruth says**

I enjoyed this one a lot more than the kid I happened to be reading it to.

She is 4 (or, as she will tell you, 4 and 3/4) and seemed to regard this book as practical advice for dealing with basic everyday interactions.

---

## **Cheryl says**

I didn't like this when I was kid. I can't imagine that my kids would have liked it when they were young, either. And I don't care for it much now, though at least I can imagine, this time, how some folks would love it. But the sexism still dates it, and makes it problematic.

We just learned manners from practice in the real world, you see!

---

## **Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says**

This was one of my favorite books as a child. The format, where the question is asked on one page and you turn the page for the answer, is very appealing to kids who like surprises. The illustrations add humor and deserved the Caldecott Honor.

---

## **Connie says**

This book tries to teach manners (no idea if it's successful), and avoids being totally condescending and didactic by putting them all in the case of bizarre, childish make-believe scenarios. What do you say when you're walking backwards to town (because you like to do that) and bump into an alligator? What do you say when you're flying your plane and remember the Duchess asked you to drop in, so you do and break her roof?

It's silliness incarnate, and you have to love it!

There are three scenarios in particular that reviewers have commented on, so let's tackle those.

The first is the "decapitation". In this case you're asked what you say when you're out picking flowers in front of your castle, a dragon appears and breathes smoke at you, and then a knight saves you by chopping off its head. (You say thank you.)

There's no blood or anything gory shown, and as far as I'm concerned the princess being saved from the

dragon by the knight is a common fairy tale set-up. I don't have a problem with this. There are more violent scenes in both classic and recent Disney animated films, nobody is claiming the dragon was talking and friendly and just violently attacked - I have no problem with this scene for this age group. Let's move on.

The next one is where you are a cowboy. Suddenly the bad guy shows up and holds a gun to your head and asks "Would you like me to shoot a hole in your head?" (You say "no thank you", which strikes me as perfectly sensible.)

This one is a bit trickier. I'll be honest and skip ahead a bit by saying I, personally have no problem with ANY of this book - but in this case I can really see why some people do. The scene is a bit explicit, and the Western is no longer a popular form of drama anyway so it's not like this situation is likely to have come up in your child's play.

However, as nobody actually gets hurt, I'd say most kids won't even notice to be upset. There's more violent scenes on cartoons in the morning.

And the last one that people have complained about is the one where you're a pirate and have captured a lady and tied her up. Every morning when you untie her to eat breakfast she says "Good morning, how are you?" and you are supposed to say the same.

As far as this goes... meh. Clearly nobody is being particularly ill-treated.

Now, overall, I don't mind any of these scenes because I know quite a few children. This sort of thing and more is exactly what they come up with when they're playing pretend. If you think children do not play-act violence you are very much mistaken. They do. They do it because it's exciting. They do it because it's fun to practice being really bad in a safe way that doesn't actually harm anyone, when in real life they work so hard to be GOOD. They do it because these things scare them and playing them makes them less scary. They do because the stories they are exposed to have violence there, explicit or implied, and they want to understand that. They do because you can't have a good story without a villain.

And children have been doing this for as long as there have been children to play pretend at all. I do not believe that this is in any way linked to actual violence when these children grow up.

Obviously if your child is bothered by this sort of pretend violence, don't read them this book. Or if you are. However, truthfully, I don't think it's that big a deal in this context.

---

## **Matt says**

There are any number of books about manners aimed at young children. At one time, that was about all children were encouraged to read. Some of them are pretty good - for example Richard Scarry's famous work. Many times though they are as wretched as only something didactic and condescending can be.

But how many teach you what to say when you've crashed your plane through the roof of the duchess's house, or been bitten by a dinosaur, or bumped into a crocodile?

Just one - this marvelous little manual by Sesyle Joslin and illustrated by the incomparable Maurice Sendak. Charming and whimsical, this book of manners is sure to delight with its mixture of propriety with untamable imagination.

My girls, I'm proud to say were able to recite or correctly guess nearly everything you should say in such situations on the first try, except I'd forgotten to tell them the proper thing to say to an orchestra of bears when it tries to eat you. But, now that that's been covered, I think we are ready for anything.

I'm not usually sensitive to this sort of thing, but I'm dropping a star because for all its whimsy it ends up with games that are a little too conventional in their gender roles for me. Since I'm not generally sensitive to this sort of thing (and often sensitive to its opposite), I suspect people who are will be too much distracted by questions like, "Why doesn't the girl slay the dragon?" However, I can avow that my wife absolutely loved the book, perhaps more than I did, so don't let this slight misgiving keep you or your children away from this joyful little book.

---