



Barb's BookSpot: Episode 15
Nonfiction for the Very Young.
March, 2017

PENGUIN DAY: A FAMILY STORY. Copyright © 2017 by Nic Bishop. Reproduced by permission of the publisher, Scholastic Press, New York. This is a wonderful work of narrative nonfiction which tells the story of a family of Rockhopper penguins. Children will relate to the familiar roles characters play; Mama penguin fishes for food, Papa stays home to watch Baby, and Baby, tired of waiting, almost gets into to trouble. The photographs are clear and brilliant, and capture the personality of the penguins. This book follows a sequence of events in one day, but it also provides examples of simultaneous action. Words like “Meanwhile...” and “Far away...” signal to the reader that a change of setting has occurred but that things are happening at the same time. This might be a mentor text for teaching about sequence, and elements of time in stories.

MY AWESOME SUMMER MANTIS BY P. MANTIS. Copyright © 2017 by Paul Meisel. Reproduced by permission of the publisher, Holiday House, New York. P. Mantis tells us his own story, teaching all about the life cycle and behavior of a Praying Mantis in this wonderful book. It provides a nice example of autobiography and sequential ordering of events. Illustrations are detailed and colorful, and we can always identify our narrator in the picture by his very, tiny “aside” comments. For a small insect, he has a big personality! The inside front and back covers contain many more details and facts about this insect, with labeled body parts, a glossary and websites for further information.



FEATHERS AND HAIR: WHAT ANIMALS WEAR. Copyright © 2017 by Jennifer Ward. Illustrations copyright © 2017 by Jing Jing Tsong. Reproduced by permission of the publisher, Beach Lane Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, New York. This title is a great selection for inspiring wonder and visible thinking. Why do some animals have hair and other feathers? Why are some animal dull and other colorful? We meet a cast of all sorts of animals and creatures, with all different types of body covering. The text is rhymed and patterned, which will help early readers decode the book and predict what might come next. In the end, we see a small child, who is the only animal that wears clothes. Another wonder question might be inspired here, as we think about how humans and other animals are alike/different. Back pages include more specific information about each of the creatures.

BILLIONS OF BRICKS: A COUNTING BOOK ABOUT BUILDING. Copyright © 2016 by Kurt Cyrus. Reproduced by permission of the publisher, Christy Ottaviano Books, an imprint of Henry Holt and Company, New York. This book is just plain fun to read, and listeners will be chanting along in no time. As the action progresses, we see many ways that bricks are used to build things. The text is rhymed and very rhythmic and includes repeated words and fun adjectives such as “gloppy”. There are repeated patterns in the illustrations as well as in the text. On various pages, we count by 2’s, 5’s or 10’s and the illustrations depict sets or stacks of bricks to match. The diverse cast of characters, all doing building jobs, contains several recurring individuals whose path can be traced in the story from beginning to the surprise ending.

