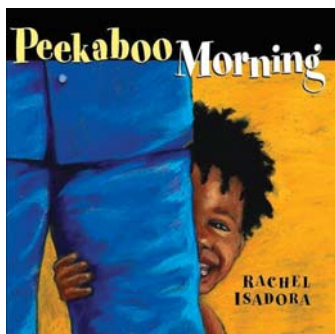




# The Reading Chair

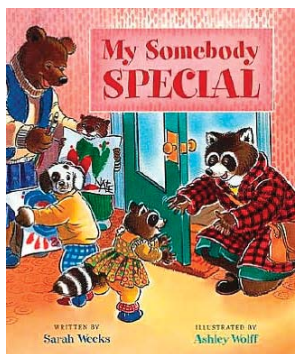
***Peekaboo Morning*, by Rachel Isadora. 2002. New York: Putnam Juvenile. 28 pp. ISBN 0-399-23602-3. Ages Birth to 5.**

Who doesn't love a good game of peekaboo with a toddler? Isadora has treated us to an African American child's day of peekaboo with different members of his family, one at a time, all around the house and the garden. The text is sparse, the pastel illustrations are rich, and the toddler is irresistible.



***My Somebody Special*, by Sarah Weeks. Illus. by Ashley Wolff. 2002. New York: Gulliver Books. 32 pp. ISBN 0-15-202561-8. Ages 2 to 6.**

Just as every parent fears being the last breathless person to pick up their child at school or child care, many children worry they might be left alone and their "somebody special" will not show up at all.



At the end of a day, a puppy looks on as a mom raccoon, dressed in her smart plaid coat and carrying a shoulder bag, finds her daughter raccoon painting at the easel. The beaver dad in his flannel shirt and work overalls finds his son on a tricycle. The very snazzy fox, with his leather briefcase in one hand and a

bunch of roses in the other, finds his daughter reading a book about a fox. Finally the puppy's parent arrives too.

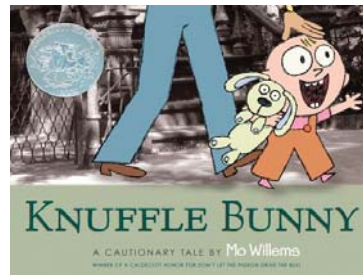
The rhyming text is very appropriate for young children, and readers will enjoy matching each of the characters with their somebody special. The teacher, a bear sporting very smart clogs, leads the reassuring celebration about this important end-of-the-day routine.

***Knuffle Bunny*, by Mo Willems. 2004. New York: Hyperion Books. 36 pp. ISBN 0-7868-1870-0. Ages 3 to 6.**

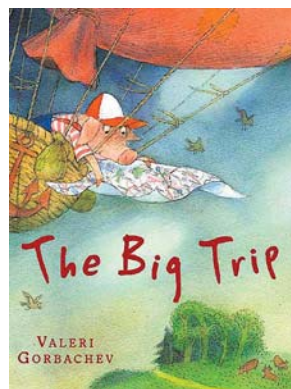
Trixie, her dad, and her favorite stuffed bunny take a trip to the local Laundromat.

The drama begins on the way home, when Trixie realizes she has left something behind. Her frustration mounts as she tries to explain—"Aggle flaggle, klabble"—that she has left her bunny behind. Both children and adults will appreciate her earnest attempts to tell her father what readers have already realized.

Willems has taken a dramatic turn from his style in *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*. This time he uses wonderful black-and-white photographs of his Brooklyn neighborhood as the background and melds them with hand-drawn ink and color sketches of the family. The artistic results won him a 2005 Caldecott Honor.



***The Big Trip*, by Valeri Gorbachev. 2004. New York: Philomel Books. 32 pp. ISBN 0-399-23965-0. Ages 3 to 7.**

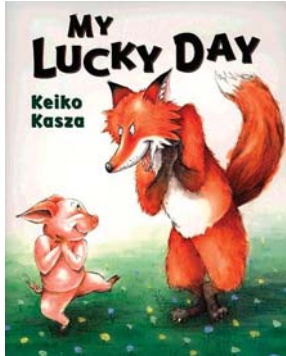


Pig is planning a big trip far away and wants to share his excitement with his friend Goat. Goat, however, sees the danger—extreme danger—in every mode of transportation that Pig might take. A car could break down. A train could get caught in a tunnel. Pig might fall off a bike. A ship could get caught on a reef, and Pig could be eaten by sharks. Out of fear and frustration, Pig throws away the map and decides to stay home. Goat then asserts that travel is too dangerous *unless*, of course, you go with a friend.

**Isabel Baker, MAT, MLS, is president of The Book Vine for Children, a national company dedicated to getting good books into the hands of preschool children and their teachers. Isabel has worked as a children's librarian and is currently a presenter on early literacy and book selection.**

**Chair illustration by Diane Greenseid.**

This is a lovely predictable story of friendship, fear, and risk taking. Nobody draws facial expressions better than Gorbachev, and the map illustrations on every page are intriguing. I particularly like the last page, with a view of the two friends from behind, looking over one big map and, yes, it is upside down.



***My Lucky Day*, by Keiko Kasza. 2003. New York: Putnam Juvenile. 32 pp. ISBN 0-399-23874-3. Ages 4 to 8.**

When a piglet mistakenly knocks on Mr. Fox's door, Mr. Fox knows it is his lucky day—dinner has arrived. The unassuming piglet is quick to point out that he is small and it would be better to fatten him up. He points out that he is also dirty and perhaps

should have a bath before he is eaten. Finally, he mentions that his muscles are tough and perhaps need a massage to provide a more tender roast for the feast. Preparing this piglet for the oven turns out to be exhausting work for the fox, who passes out, and a very satisfying experience for the “cleanest, fattest, and softest piglet in the county.”

Kasza tells a compelling and well-paced story. Her gouache illustrations are expressive and provide lots of the humor in this wonderful read-aloud. An empowering tale for anyone who finds himself in a tight spot.

---

Copyright © 2005 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. See Permissions and Reprints online at [www.journal.naeyc.org/about/permissions.asp](http://www.journal.naeyc.org/about/permissions.asp).