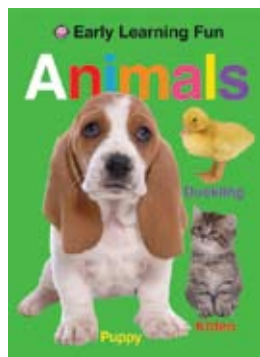


The Reading Chair



Illustration by Diane Greenseid

Animals, by Roger Priddy. 2010. New York: St. Martin's Press. 18 pp. ISBN 9780312508494. Ages birth to 2.



Things That Go, by Roger Priddy. 2010. New York: St. Martin's Press. 18 pp. ISBN 9780312508524. Ages birth to 2.

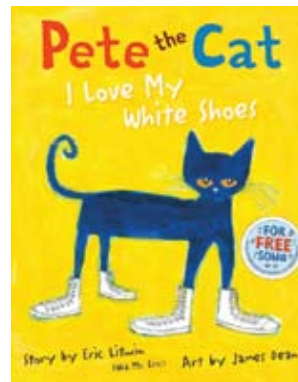
These board books are chock-full of quality color photographs of animals and things that go, without being cluttered or busy. Indulge babies and toddlers in point-and-name play (printed text helps adults properly identify each object or animal), or let them browse on their own. Animals are grouped by category, with a few pictures per spread (cute pets, wild animals, in the forest, in the cold, animal babies, sea life, on the farm, and farm babies). "Things that go" fall into categories as well (on the farm, busy trucks, tough trucks, in the air, trains, emergency vehicles, city cars, fast machines, and on the sea). Excellent for expanding vocabulary on subjects of natural interest to children.



Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes, by Eric Litwin. Illus. by James Dean. New York: HarperCollins. 32 pp. ISBN 9780061906220. Ages 2 to 5.

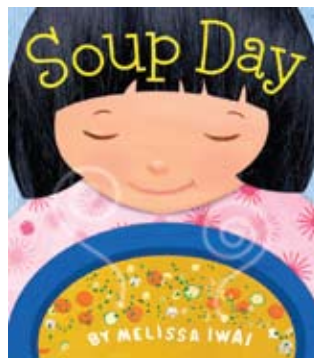
Have you ever met a cat whose life philosophy is "Everything is cool"? Well, meet Pete the Cat! Pete is a banjo-playing, street-strolling, coffee-sipping, groovy cat who loves his new white shoes. "I love my white shoes, I love my white shoes, I love my white shoes," he sings. And when he steps in a pile of strawberries that turns them red, rather than dismay, he keeps "walking along and singing his song. 'I love my red shoes, I love my red shoes, I love my red shoes.'" Well, good thing he's flexible, because he stumbles into a

pile of blueberries (shoes turn blue), then a mud puddle (brown), and a bucket of water (back to white, but wet), and he keeps "walking along and singing his song. 'I love my wet shoes, I love my wet shoes, I love my wet shoes, I love my wet shoes.'" The story is deceptively simple. Eric Litwin's lyrical text (free download of an accompanying song is included) and James Dean's colorful and smooth-moving illustrations perfectly capture Pete's "It's all good" vibe and leave readers with the feeling that life is all good when we accept the bumps along the way.



Soup Day, by Melissa Iwai. 2010. New York: Henry Holt. 32 pp. ISBN 9780805090048. Ages 3 to 6.

From the pleasure of picking fresh produce at the store and prepping the ingredients to the wafting aromas of the finished product, this how-to about cooking soup from scratch really satisfies. Set in the context of a family's daily routine, mother and daughter put the pot on the stove, play and clean while it cooks, and then share it with Daddy when he comes home for dinner. The young girl helps along the way. Her mother holds her hands, and together they chop the softer vegetables with a plastic knife. She picks the type of pasta they'll add to the soup (there's farfalle, fettuccine, rotini, and more).



Iwai's clear-cut illustrations depict whole vegetables and the appearance of each one as it is diced, sliced, or

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.

Miriam Baker Schiffer, MFA, is a writer.

This column is available in an online archive at www.naeyc.org/yc/columns.

chopped, as well as the various kinds of pasta. Iwai scores by marrying themes of routine, healthy eating, and family time, all of which add up to a story that's as comforting as a warm bowl of soup on a cold day. Recipe included.

***Even Monsters Need Haircuts*, by Matthew McElligott. 2010. New York: Walker and Company. 32 pp. ISBN 9780802788191. Ages 4 to 8.**

There are young monster fanatics in every classroom, and it's important that they have good monster-related titles like this standout original story to help them work through fears and practice bravery. The setting begins simply enough: a young boy helps close up his father's barber shop for the day. But in the middle of the night of the full moon, the boy slips out of the house to open up shop again, this time serving the night-roaming monsters, who need



their monthly haircuts just as much as anyone else.

In this tale, strange is the new normal, and the boy barber contends with all sorts of customers, from the bald to the furry. (This book also serves as a nice daily-routine title about haircuts.) A Frankenstein look-alike always gets the same hairdo, and others request something new. Tension develops when a human appears for a late-night trim. These

monsters are as afraid of humans as children are of them.

This well-crafted story is conveyed with relatively little text, and the humor ranges from basic to sophisticated, giving adult readers as much pleasure as the children to whom they are reading. The illustrations are rich with color and bring out the warmth in the monsters' personalities. The reassuring presence of the boy's father, who comes back to the shop in the morning to find everything just where he left it, bookends the tale.

***Big Red Lollipop*, by Rukhsana Khan. Illus. by Sophie Blackall. 2010. New York: Viking. 32 pp. ISBN 9780670062874. Ages 4 to 8.**

Rubina is thrilled to be invited to a classmate's birthday party, but things head downhill when her mother, who doesn't know about Western birthday parties, insists that Rubina



take younger sister Sana along. Based on a true story from Khan's childhood as an immigrant from Pakistan, this is the story of a family that struggles to adapt to the ways of their new country while upholding family values from their home country. The transition can be awkward, especially for Rubina, whose plight in this tale aptly highlights issues surround-

ing both acculturation and sibling rivalry. Not only must Rubina endure the scorn of her classmates, all of whom knew that the invitation didn't include siblings, but to top it off, greedy Sana eats the candy from her sister's goody bag.

Their mother's main concern is that the sisters be generous with each other, and Rubina feels misunderstood. But when Sana is invited to a party and the littlest sister, Maryam, wants to attend, Rubina experiences a stroke of compassion and counsels their mother to let Sana go alone. Sana returns the favor by saving a goody bag treat for her big sister. The story is brought to life by illustrator Sophie Blackall's (*Ivy & Bean*, *Wombat Walkabout*) detailed and delicate illustrations, which helped this title win a spot on the *New York Times* list of Best Illustrated Children's Books of 2010. Great read!

Copyright © 2011 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. See Permissions and Reprints online at www.naeyc.org/yc/permissions.

Dedicated to Delivery! It's no joke... Nasco has what you need, when you need it at the guaranteed lowest prices!

S-T-R-E-T-C-H your classroom budget with **FREE Shipping** on orders of \$199 or more.

To take advantage of this special offer, you must mention coupon #9800487.

Contact Nasco for your FREE 2011 catalog!

1.800.558.9595 • www.eNasco.com

Nasco Early Learning

1-800-558-9595

Shop 24/7 online at www.eNasco.com/earlylearning

Box: 1-800-372-1234

70th Anniversary

YCI103