



Lousy Rotten Stinkin' Grapes

Margie Palatini , Barry Moser (Illustrator)

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Fox wants the grapes, but they're too high for him to reach. He's nothing if not crafty, and in this humorous new spin on the well-known fable, fox's scheme is taken to new heights.

Lousy Rotten Stinkin' Grapes Details

Date : Published August 11th 2009 by Simon Schuster Books for Young Readers

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Author : Margie Palatini , Barry Moser (Illustrator)

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

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From Reader Review Lousy Rotten Stinkin' Grapes for online ebook

Maggi Rohde says

I do love Barry Moser's animal faces. Palatini writes really fun folktale retellings.

Erica says

Fox devises a plan to get some grapes hanging from a tree. With the help of bear, then beaver, then porcupine, then possum Fox isn't able to reach the grapes. Finally possum ends up tossing the grapes down from the tree after many failed attempts.

Jamie Reynolds Spellerberg says

Great read, entertaining.

Cheryl says

Funny satire inspired by one of my favorite fables. Beautifully illustrated. The only flaw is the implication that porcupines throw their quills, which they don't. Fox gets what he deserves....

Alissa Parker says

Title: *Lousy Rotten, Stinkin' Grapes*

Author: Margie Palatini

Illustrator: Barry Moser

Genre: Fable

Theme(s): Teamwork, Listening to others

Opening line/sentence: Fox eyed a bunch of tantalizing grapes hanging from a vine growing high on a tree.

Brief Book Summary: A clever and sly fox wanted the grapes hanging from the tree but couldn't reach them. He recruited a variety of animals to lift him to the grapes but he still could not reach them; eventually he gave up. The other animals used the ideas that they created that the fox had ignored and enjoyed eating grapes as the fox walked away.

Professional Recommendation/Review #1: Jena Piazza (Kutztown University Book Review, Spring 2010) This fable-like story is about a fox who feasts his eyes on a delicious bundle of grapes dangling overhead in a high tree. Being the sly animal that he is he devises many plans in order to acquire these grapes. Fox involves many animals to carry out his plans, each of which do not give Fox the outcome he is anticipating. Each animal has their own idea of how to get the grapes, but Fox doesn't seem interested in hearing what they have to say. This charming story teaches a lovely moral of teamwork and also encourages others to

listen to one another in order to get a job done. Category: Picture Book.. 2009, Simon & Schuster, \$15.99. Ages 3 to 8. (PUBLISHER: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (New York:), PUBLISHED: c2009.)

Professional Recommendation/Review #2: Leta Tillman (The Lorgnette - Heart of Texas Reviews (Vol. 22, No. 4)) The fox is sly, clever, and smart, and he enlists the aid of bear, beaver, porcupine, and possum to help him get a bunch of grapes in the upper limb of the tree. In this revised version of Aesop's Fox and the Grapes, Fox continues to have elaborate plans to get to the grapes. One stands on another, and another stands on that one, etc. Once they are all standing and jumping and propelling through the air, there are still no grapes. All the while, Fox is explaining to his assistants that they are there to help and to leave the thinking to him. They all agree that whatever he plans is alright with them. When all plans fail, Fox leaves in disgust saying that they are lousy, rotten, stinkin grapes. The others agree with Fox, but they go ahead and feast on the grapes that Possum has thrown down to them, which turn out to be delicious. Moser's magnificent watercolor illustrations of the animals are loaded with humor. Students can almost see the other animals roll their eyes at Fox as he expounds about how smart he is. This emphasizes even more the ridiculousness of Fox's arrogance. The vast grapevines and tree dominate the pages, but there is still plenty of white space to emphasize the big task that they need to accomplish. Young readers will enjoy laughing their way through this book. It will also be a great book to use with class discussion about the moral to the story as well as the idea of fables as a whole. It will make a great addition to any collection of fables. Nonfiction. Grades PreK-3. 2009, Simon & Schuster, Unpaged., \$15.99. Ages 3 to 9. (PUBLISHER: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (New York:), PUBLISHED: c2009.)

Response to Two Professional Reviews: The reviews provide a very detailed summary of the events that occur throughout the text. Surprisingly only one review mentions the large illustrations that are very humorous and attractive for young readers. I like how the first review discusses the moral of the story because I believe teamwork is an important take home message for students of all ages.

Evaluation of Literary Elements: The humorous plot of this story can be seen not only in the text, but also in the large, full page illustrations. The illustrations express the feelings of each character; the bear rolling his eyes is my personal favorite. On certain pages there are sentences in large, purple letters expressing that there is a change in pitch and mood, which adds to the style of the story.

Consideration of Instructional Application: I think this book opens the door to a variety of fun instructional activities. One activity could be done is having children think of a time that they used teamwork to accomplish a goal. With their teamwork memory in mind, each child could create a comic strip to retell their story.

Matthew says

This was a funny rework of the Aesop fable "Fox and the Grapes". Even though Fox views himself as a great strategist, he's unable to come up with a successful plan to get the grapes that are hanging in a tree. He also is unable to recognize good advise when he hears it, because every animal that he asks has an alternate solution that he won't listen to despite it being a good idea. I'm going to assume that the grapes are growing in the tree, not from the tree. Anyway, when he finally runs out of ideas he declares that the grapes must be sour rather than let someone else solve the problem. He storms off and all the other animals get some grapes their own way. Very funny story.

The Transmuted Tree says

3rd that day

Steph says

The ISD students quickly figure out that Fox isn't very nice or very smart. He doesn't speak well to bear and beaver, and if he would just listen to the other animals, he would figure out that there can be several ways to solve a problem, particularly with team work.

Hαα???? ?ι???? says

I had a lot of fun with this book. Definitely a good one for read-aloud time.

Alexandra Duca says

Title: *Lousy Rotten, Stinkin' Grapes*

Author: Margie Palatini

Illustrator: Barry Moser

Genre: Fable

Theme(s): Being over confident can lead to your own failure, there is never one solution to a problem

Opening line/sentence: "Fox eyed a bunch of tantalizing grapes hanging from a vine growing high on a tree"

Brief Book Summary: Lousy Rotten, Stinkin' Grapes is the story of a fox who very desperately wants to reach the grapes at the top of the tree but cannot do so alone. He enlists bear, beaver, porcupine and possum into his scheming plan to get the grapes, but continues to ignore all of the animals suggestions to help reach the goal. Frustrated at his failures, fox claims the grapes cannot be reached, but the animals all finally speak up and state how they can all reach the grapes with their own plan of action as they turn the tables against fox and use his own thoughts against him in a witty ending.

Professional Recommendation/Review #1: Children's Literature - Debra Lampert-Rudman. It is easy to despise what you cannot get is the moral behind Aesop's Fable "The Fox and the Grapes". Margie Palatini's witty retelling makes it anything but easy for her fox. He's sly, clever, smart, and enlists the aid of bear, beaver, porcupine, possum and still voila! No grapes. If they would just be "scooches" and listen, all would be well! The author brings a bit of The Bremen Town Musicians to her rhythmic retelling as the animals pile one atop the other in various formations while attempting to reach the elusive ripe, juicy, purple grapes.

Barry Moser's lushly illustrated animals are wonderfully expressive as they attempt to work with fox and his convoluted plan diagrams. Moser's tree limbs and grape clusters bleed off the pages giving the feeling of height. Young readers will reach along with fox while listening to this future classic. Reviewer: Debra Lampert-Rudman

Professional Recommendation/Review #2: Publishers Weekly. While this variant of Aesop's "The Fox and the Grapes" is decidedly more entertaining than the original, the moral of the fable is less clear. Palatini's distinctive characters are all amiable, except for the condescending Fox, who prides himself on being "Sly. Clever. Smart." With expert watercolors, Moser (who collaborated with Palatini on *The Three Silly Billies*) subtly retains the lifelike appearances of the animals without sacrificing individualistic expression. Fox's enthusiastic plans to get the grapes are filled with convoluted equations and graphs: "Bear stands—here. Beaver stands on Bear's head—there. Porcupine stands on Beaver's tail. I stand on Porcupine.... Etcetera,

etcetera, etcetera.... and—voila! Grapes!" When the other characters explain their infinitely simpler plans to get the grapes, Fox turns "with a huff and a sniff" and says, "I, for one, wouldn't think of eating those lousy, rotten, stinkin' grapes now." The traditional sour grapes ending feels tacked on, given the "Pride goeth before a fall" theme Palatini effectively develops throughout the story. Ages 4–8. (Aug.)

Response to Two Professional Reviews: Both professional reviews touch on the large success of Moser's illustrations and how he very nicely captures the animals individual expressions, as well as importance of the grapes and their color. Publisher's weekly writes about Palatini's incorporation of the theme of "pride goeth before a fall." I like how they touched on the moral of the story because it's extremely important to recognize especially with fables.

Evaluation of Literary Elements: In this fable, Palatini characterizes fox as over confident and condescending towards the other animals which sets the stage for his undesirable, unfriendly character that the animals eventually outsmart. The theme of this book, if you are overly confident it will potentially lead to your own failure, is represented throughout the whole story and enhanced at the story's end. Palatini chooses to characterize the other animals as easy going and helpful, and in the end reveals their witty and strong personalities as they turn on fox for his condescending attitude towards them. Revealing their true personalities at the ends leaves the book with a powerful ending.

Consideration of Instructional Application: This story is a classic fable that all children should be exposed to. It can be applied to ideas of teaching children to work properly in groups, as they need to be respectful and listen to everyone's ideas. Teaching children how to work together is a very powerful technique that they are required to learn. Teachers can focus on what fox did wrong and have children come up with alternative ways he could have behaved.

Lindsey says

Nothing can top Margie Palatini's own reading of this funny story, but I'm sure I'll have fun playing with voices in a read aloud.

Faith says

On the long side for reading aloud to kids, but has a good number of characters if you are into using character voices. My boys like the parts that get repeated multiple times like, "voilà, grapes." and, "no grapes." They like it well enough to sit and go through the story by themselves.

Amber Griesmer says

This amusing picture book tells the story of a fox who really wants get his hands on a bunch of grapes hanging from a vine growing high on a tree. The fox enlists the help of his friends: bear, beaver, porcupine and possum to get to the grapes. He decideds they will stack themselves one on top of the other in order to gain enough height to reach the grapes. As each friend comes along, Fox adds them to the tower to make it higher but to no avail, he is still not able to reach the grapes. Fox has convinced himself and his friends that he is the smartest of them all so he will come up with the plan even though possum could run up the tree and toss the grapes down, porcupine could aim and shoot them down, beaver can cut them down and bear can

give the tree a shake to get them down. Finally, Fox's friends are able to tell him all the ways they could help him, and fox gets upset. He storms off, realizing he has made a fool of himself, all the while trying to convince everyone he was brilliant. His friends enjoy the grapes and while fox huffs and puffs away.

This picture book is beautifully illustrated, and I really enjoyed looking at the pictures. I think what I liked the most was that the background was plain white, so the main focus of the pictures was the tree and the animals. It is also a good book to use if you are trying to teach repetition and/or inferencing. The illustrations span both pages of the book flowing seamlessly and there is such excellent attention to detail that if you were to look at the pictures from several feet away, you might think it was one continuous page. I also really enjoyed the wording of the book, the author was able build the characters, especially fox, throughly without an excess of words that may deter some younger readers. The author also highlights some of the action words on certain pages with the same color purple that the grapes are painted in. This color is an ongoing theme throughout the book, with the text and the grapes and also the end pages of the book. This color, contrasted with the yellow cover makes the book really appealing to look at. Overall, I really enjoyed every aspect of the book and I would recommend it to any teacher or parent as a worthwhile read for their children.

Carol Royce Owen says

A funny twist on the Aesop's Fable of the Fox and the grapes. Fox has found a tree from which a vine of beautiful clusters of grapes hang, and using his brains, he is determined to get them down to eat. Finding that he can't reach them with his best jump, he enlists the help of some forest friends. He builds a tower of animals to try to launch off of, but to no avail. Each starts to offer better advice, but each time the fox explains that he is the one with the brains, and that they ought to listen to him.

Elizabeth S says

Pretty darn funny. Goes to show that the fox isn't always the smartest marble in the bag. And that it is important to listen to others.
