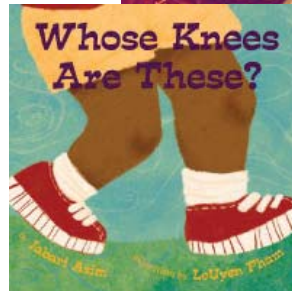




# The Reading Chair

***Whose Knees Are These?* (Board book); *Whose Toes Are Those?* (Board book), by Jabari Asim. Illus. by LeUyen Pham. 2006. New York: Little Brown. 10 pp. ISBN 0-316-73576-0 (Knees), ISBN 0-316-73609-0 (Toes). Ages birth to 3.**

With a hide-and-go-seek playfulness, these board books encourage physical activity while celebrating the beauty and fun of brown knees and toes. An energetic, rhyming text and warm illustrations incorporate traditional chants and concepts—a couple of lines from “This Little Piggy Went to Market,” a mention of left and right, and talk of traveling the seven seas. Good multicultural additions to any infant/toddler library.

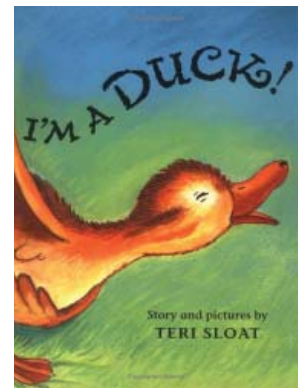


them!) is an interesting survey of egg science. From the ways in which babies grow inside an egg to the clever camouflage some species’ eggshells exhibit, readers learn lots. Large text on each page provides a simple narrative for young ones, while additional smaller text offers rich information for older children.

Long’s use of color is exquisite, as is her attention to composition. Eggs are not just a simple stop on the food chain in this book; from the Southern Cassowary’s avocado-like exterior to the Bronze-winged Jacana’s black-veined shell, these eggs are fine art. The emergence of noisy hatchlings at the end of the book is a fitting turn in this quiet celebration of eggs and the new life that they hold.

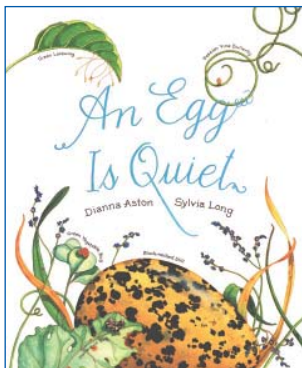
***I’m a Duck!* by Teri Sloat. 2006. New York: Penguin Young Readers Group. 32 pp. ISBN 0-399-24274-0. Ages 3 to 7.**

This young mallard’s glass is half full. By “some magnificent stroke of good luck,” he discovers that he’s a duck. Of all his new finds—that he can quack, make tracks, flap and fly—it’s making a nest for his new wife that really puts a strut in his waddle. And what’s in those eggs she has laid? Are those beaks breaking through? “Of all the magnificent luck that [he’s] had, nothing beats being a duck and a...DAD!” This mallard’s devotion to fatherhood is reassuring, and his optimism is infectious. Well-paced and upbeat rhyme will inspire readers to appreciate the wonder of life.



***An Egg Is Quiet*, by Dianna Aston. Illus. by Sylvia Long. 2006. San Francisco: Chronicle. 32 pp. ISBN 0-8118-4428-5. Ages 3 to 8.**

*An Egg Is Quiet* is like a fine timepiece: a scientific achievement underlying a visual masterpiece, unique in its success at both. Between this book’s speckled-egg blue endpapers (you’ll want to paper your walls with

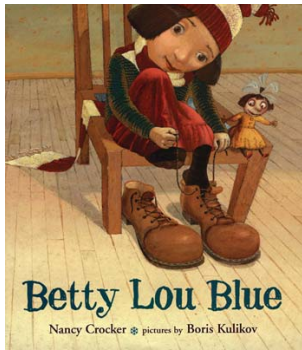


**Isabel Baker**, MAT, MLS, is president of The Book Vine for Children, a national company dedicated to getting good books into the hands of preschool children and their teachers. Isabel has worked as a children’s librarian and is currently a presenter on early literacy and book selection.

Chair illustration by Diane Greenseid.

***Betty Lou Blue*, by Nancy Crocker. Illus. by Boris Kulikov. 2006. New York: Penguin Young Readers Group. 32 pp. ISBN 0-8037-2937-5. Ages 4 to 7.**

This smooth-flowing story from a first-time author recalls last year’s *Eddie Longpants*, in which the unusual characteristic for which a child is at first teased enables the child to save the day and win the respect of peers. In Eddie’s story, it’s his long legs. For Betty Lou Blue, it’s her large feet.



When Betty Lou Blue sees her mean classmates stuck in a snowdrift, she knows she can use her oft-mocked “whackety, thwackety, flap-pety feet” to help save them. But first she must struggle with her desire to leave those mocking students in the lurch. Crocker’s rhyming text and Russian-influenced illustrator Boris Kulikov’s artwork stir compassion.

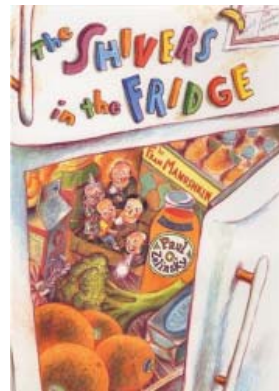
This wonderful story is well suited to reading aloud.

***The Shivers in the Fridge*, by Fran Manushkin. Illus. by Paul Zelinsky. 2006. New York: Dutton Children’s Books. 44 pp. ISBN 0-525-46943-5. Ages 5 and up.**

It’s hard for the Shivers to make do in their new home—a refrigerator—what with all the cold weather and commotion. Earthquakes rumble, light flashes on and off, enormous hands reach in, and pieces of the land-

scape, including the buttery cliff and the gelatin bath, get snatched up along with family members, one by one.

Fran Manushkin’s fresh writing turns this far-fetched tale into something believable. As the youngest of the Shivers struggles to save his kin, readers will be engaged



in their own struggle to find out exactly who these tiny people are. Paul Zelinsky’s brilliant artwork makes this story immensely rewarding. His illustrations capture both the life one would expect to find in a refrigerator—from whipped cream to asparagus—and the chilliness of a big “city” on a winter’s night. The surprise ending will satisfy curious minds.

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