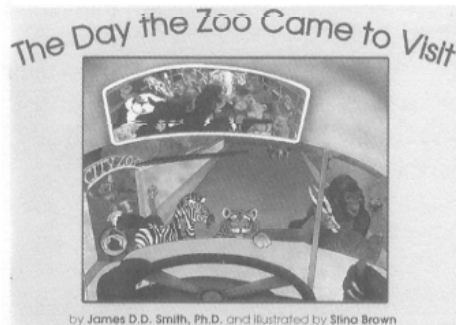


The Day the Zoo Came to Visit

as reviewed February, 2003 in



by James D.D. Smith, Ph.D. and illustrated by Stina Brown

SMITH, James D. D.

The Day the Zoo Came to Visit

Illustrated by Stina Brown.

Xenopus Books, 1997, 2002. 34 p. Illus.
Gr. K-3. 0-9731142-0-7.

E

E Excellent, enduring, everyone should see it!

G Good, even great at times, generally useful!

A Average, all right, has its applications

P Problematic, puzzling, poorly presented

The Day the Zoo Came to Visit is a delightful book that plays out the story of what happened when the zoo animals decided to come visit Janey and Jamie in their home. Quite naturally, the story begins with the two children bored at home with a baby-sitter. A knock on the door reveals zoo animals, big and a small, who have come to visit the two children. The animals proceed to invite themselves in and create mayhem in the children's home. The two children try as they may, cannot get the animals to leave and are beginning to get worried about the mess being made in their home. Although the children try many tactics, the animals do not leave until they hear the magic word...*please*.

Although I have read stories with a similar premise, what is unique about this book is that the story is written in a rhyming pattern and the animals are referred to in alphabetical order. The author has also used alliteration in each stanza. An example of this is, "And so they smiled as the Snakes sipped sodas with the skunks, And laughed at tiny Toucans tickling tigers in their bunks". In reading this book, I appreciated that the author created an alphabet

book with an enjoyable plot. When I read this book to my class it was exciting for the students to try and predict the animals on the next page. They were able to apply their knowledge of the alphabet and apply their sound-symbol correspondence to generate possible ideas for each letter. Because of the rhyming, it was a great read aloud.

Further, at the beginning of the book there are some ideas offered to the adult for how to extend children's learning as they read this book with them. The illustrator has also included a hidden lemming on several pages, which is fun for children to search for.

I would certainly recommend this book for a variety of situations. This book would be great to have in the library, classroom and in personal collections at home.

Thematic Links: Alphabet, Animals, Zoo

Jennifer Batycky