



# The Three Pigs

*David Wiesner*

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## **The Three Pigs** David Wiesner

This Caldecott Medal-winning picture book begins placidly (and familiarly) enough, with three pigs collecting materials and going off to build houses of straw, sticks, and bricks. But the wolf's huffing and puffing blows the first pig right out of the story . . . and into the realm of pure imagination. The transition signals the start of a freewheeling adventure with characteristic David Wiesner effects—cinematic flow, astonishing shifts of perspective, and sly humor, as well as episodes of flight.

Satisfying both as a story and as an exploration of the nature of story, *The Three Pigs* takes visual narrative to a new level. Dialogue balloons, text excerpts, and a wide variety of illustration styles guide the reader through a dazzling fantasy universe to the surprising and happy ending. Fans of Tuesday's frogs and Sector 7's clouds will be captivated by old friends—the Three Pigs of nursery fame and their companions—in a new guise.

## **The Three Pigs Details**

Date : Published April 23rd 2001 by Clarion Books (first published January 1st 2001)

ISBN : 9780618007011

Author : David Wiesner

Format : Hardcover 38 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Animals, Fiction

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# From Reader Review The Three Pigs for online ebook

## Charly says

I was very reserved to engage with this book to begin with - wouldn't have chosen to read it if I wasn't made to! But so glad I did; it has changed my entire view on picturebooks as I have experienced how the pictures can tell a different story to the text. I love the alternative world of the pigs stepping out of the story and changing things.

{Session notes whilst reading:}

Front cover image:

- different coloured eyes, different skin colours
- direct eye contact and smiles - creepy, makes you feel uncomfortable
- ultra realistic

The Three Pigs - changed from 'Three Little Pigs', altered traditional familiar story

Post-modernism, challenging tradition and assumptions.

We start the story sat with the wolf.

Pig breaks out of the frame, realistic outside the frame - no longer bound by the confines of the original story.

Frames tilted, physical objects which can be moved around. Playing around with the story format.

White space makes 3D and depth.

Direct addressing the reader - distraction from action in the background.

Rules change with new frame - different genre.

Pigs and cat leaving the picture frame.

Saving the dragon - breaking the stereotypes.

In order to get back they have to put the frames back together. Can control the narrative.

Intertextuality: implied reader needs knowledge of 3 Little Pigs, Dish and The Spoon (Hey Diddle Diddle, dragon character stereotypes.

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## Noelle Jensen, Age 6 says

What the heck? WHAT THE HECK! Oh, my goodness.

I WILL NOT WEAR CLOTHES UNTIL YOU READ IT AGAIN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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## Christina Taylor says

Wiesner's postmodern picturebook is a metafictional reimagining of the classic fairytale which employs water color, gouache, colored inks, pencil, and colored pencil on Fabriano hot press paper to raucously depict the three little pigs in a cartoon style while they remain in their own story. However, in the course of eluding the big bad wolf's attacks they manage to not only survive but also break the frames of their own story, explore

its gutters, and break into the frames that encase the stories of other fables. As the pigs tromp from tale to tale they collect new friends and find themselves rendered in varying styles of illustration running the gamut from highly representational to high realistic; moreover, they are quite photorealistic in their existence in the gutters outside the frames, in “the real world.” Suddenly remembering the truth of Dorothy Gale’s words, they decide to return home and—much to the dismay of the big bad wolf—take their new friends with them. Although young children will adore the pigs’ violations of the implicit rules of storytelling, Wiesner’s wit is ideal for introducing irony to high school students. This text couples beautifully with the concepts of Saturnalia and the inversion social mores such as the donkey’s eulogy in Zora Neal Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

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## **Ronyell says**

“The Three Pigs” is a children’s book written by David Wiesner, author of the famous book “Tuesday.” “The Three Pigs” is about how the three pigs basically come out of the story and their adventures in the real world. This book is the winner of the Caldecott Medal and is surely to send kids rolling over with laughter.

David Wiesner’s writing is smart and creative, but it is his illustrations that take center stage here. At first, the three pigs are drawn in regular two-dimensional storybook characters, but when the first pig gets blown out of the story, he is suddenly a three-dimensional and realistic looking character indicating that the pig has broken the line between fantasy, which is the story he was in and reality, where he is blown out of the page. This goes on throughout most of the book where the cat playing the fiddle and the dragon turn three-dimensional also when they came out of their stories until the end of the book where all the characters are two-dimensional again when they come back to the three pigs’ story. My favorite image in this book would have to be when the first pig is looking straight at the audience and exclaims:

*“I think... someone’s out there.”*

And you could see his face close up and he is squinting at the audience to see who is out there which indicates that he knows that the audience is watching, which is something that most illustrated characters do not notice while they are in a story. David Wiesner’s writing is creative, especially when the book starts out with the story of the three pigs and then once the first pig is blown out of the page, the writing takes form of a comic book as the characters are speaking through the bubbles you would normally see in comic books.

“The Three Pigs” is a wonderfully surreal story from the creative mind of David Wiesner and is certainly a story that will stand out from the rest of the fractured fairy tales other than “The Stinky Cheese Man.” I would recommend this book for children ages five and up since children younger than five would not understand the complicated plot.

**Review is also on: [Rabbit Ears Book Blog](#)**

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## **David Schaafsma says**

An inventive picture book that reminds me just a bit of *The True Story of The Big Bad Wolf* by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith, in that it assumes you know the traditional tale and then departs from it. In Wiesner's version we begin with the conventional story with a kind of retro illustration style, then one pig gets blown into an alternative universe where the pages of the original story appear on the page in a kind of meta-fictional way. The pigs escape in this reinvention.

I have five Wiesner books in front of me, in part because I have a big book to read about the wordless storytelling he may be best known for, and I would say that the reinvented part would have been better served by no words. But the artwork here (2001) is a leap forward in his work from *Free Fall* (1988) and *Hurricane* (1990). Visually and narratively edgier stuff.

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### **Dolly says**

We just love David Wiesner's books and though this one actually has some words, it still has the same crazy, mind-blowing illustrations we've come to expect from his wordless books.

It's a fun take on the well-told tale of "The Three Little Pigs." We really enjoyed reading this book together and I think it was certainly worthy of it's Caldecott Medal.

This book was selected as one of the books for the January 2017- Caldecott Medal Winners 1998-2002 discussion at the Picture-Book Club in the Children's Books Group here at Goodreads.

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### **Anna Laskownicka says**

This is definitely a fresh viewpoint on the story of the classical 'Three Little Pigs'. What makes this book unique is the deconstruction of the plot, and the bravery of pigs who decided to take matters into their own hands.

I really like the idea of pigs flying away on the paper airplane made of the pages of their own story. In this way they outwitted the wolf, who needed to put more effort in finding them. The double spread white pages with pigs sitting on the airplane give the impression of freedom - they can fly wherever they want to. Subsequently, the wolf's chase after the pigs through different deconstructed pages arranged in a nonstandard way is something I have never seen in any other books that I had read before.

I also liked the happy ending of the story - when the pigs along with the dragon frightened the wolf away.

Lastly, I really like the fact that every, even very well-known story, can obtain a new life in a way that the readers would have never expected. I definitely recommend 'The Three Pigs' by Wiesner!

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### **Lisa Vegan says**

This was my sixth Wiesner book and given that I assigned 5 stars to 4 and 3 stars to 1 of the previous five books, I guess I can say that this isn't one of my favorite books by him.

As I was reading, I missed the originality of his other books. Yes, this is a humorous and vastly changed version of the Three Little Pigs fairy tale. I liked it but wasn't that impressed until I got to the last several pages and then I decided that I did really like this. It's a very creative and imaginative way to rewrite the story, and it's fun to read, although I think it will be most enjoyed by people who know all the tales that end up populating this book. Otherwise, the humor isn't likely to seem all that funny.

The illustrations were all terrific, especially the one where there's a wonder wall with a mural with waves and fish and other things painted on it and a pig is going from that page onto another, and all the ones where book pages become playthings, and the expressions on all the animals' faces on almost every page. The pictures in this book are not Wiesner's best work though, in my opinion.

Any adult, and some children, will guess the twist ending; it is cute. I've liked a few other twisted/fractured fairy tales, though generally they're not my favorite books to read. However, this one eventually won me over.

I would like to read all this author-illustrator's picture books. So, I'll see what I've missed and I'll try to remember to keep track of him and occasionally check for any new books.

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### **Janice says**

On the front cover of this Caldecott winner, the suggestions are made that the story of the Three Little Pigs is told over and over, but always with the same outcomes. And then the questions are asked, who's in charge of the story, who gets to decide what happens, and has anyone asked the pigs? And so the author proceeds to give us a story that might portray just what the pigs would want to see happen. This delightful story is creative, and the illustrations are wonderful. I especially liked the line "O brave and noble swine".

I am tentatively using this for the group read challenge in A Book for All Seasons, Topic #5, a Spoof on a Classic. That is unless I am told it doesn't qualify as a classic, but I ask you, what could be more a classic than "The Three Little Pigs"?

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### **Jessica says**

The Three Pigs is a twist on the longtime childhood story, The Three Little Pigs. I admit, I expected the book to be a similar version of the tale that I remember hearing as a child. This story completely took me by surprise when the wolf "...huffed, and he puffed, and he blew the house in...and ate the pig up." Soon after, the pigs were wandering around on the page, separate from the framed illustrations. Before I knew it, the pigs were flying on a paper airplane they made from the pages of the original story! The illustrations are well-deserving of a Caldecott Medal. The lines are thin with extreme detail right down to the pigs' hair. Colors are vivid as they make the illustrations come to life. The reader is engaged throughout the whole book, while reading the pigs' dialogue bubbles as they make their way through the torn out pages of the original book. This is a must-read for students of any age! A read aloud is a great way to introduce this to younger readers. Perhaps reading the original Three Little Pigs will help students to compare the two stories. One drawback of reading this with younger readers (K-1) is that the students may not have been exposed to the original story enough to gain a sense of the humor and unexpectedness of this book. Older readers will benefit from the unique arrangement of the text and how the illustrations show the pages of the old story as

the pigs take it over and make it their own. The benefits of reading this book with older students (grades 3 and up) are that it allows students to visualize a twist on an old story; after reading the story, the students could create their own twist while weaving the story elements of the old story into their new one. This book could be part of a unit on fairy tales where the students describe the story elements and then are asked to change some of the story to show another character's perspective. An exciting and unexpected storyline and is one students will appreciate!

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### **Cheryl says**

Shame on me for never reading this before! I suppose I may not have appreciated it when my kids were small, because it doesn't really work as a sharing or read-aloud book. But for what it is, it's wonderful. And pioneering, I believe.

I love the use of white space. I love the self-promotional gallery walls showing scenes from Wiesner's other books. I love the dragon. But... I do feel sorry for the wolf.

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### **Emma Hamilton says**

Post modern book which challenges the idea of the traditional three little pigs. Really interesting to look at with children in relation to picture book codes as the little pigs take the story apart including the picture frames and then reconstruct it to suit them. They even take away the words and reconstruct them to create an ending which they want.

Really interesting and would create a good discussion with children.

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### **Calista says**

Wow! Fantastic book! Last night we read the Stinky Cheese Man and other stupid tales and it was trying to turn fairy tales on their head and it was different, but not great the way this book was. This is how you turn a story on its head.

The art is fantastic and fairly easy to understand what is going on. This is the story of taking your own fate into your hands. Stepping back from the story we are stuck in and finding a new way forward. I mean this little work is a work of brilliance in my opinion. Being the fate of your own story. The kids know the story of the 3 little pigs and so they knew that the story had changed. I also think this is a fantastic story for adults to read and absorb the meaning. One level is pure fun and fluff and another level is telling us to stop living the same inner stories we tell ourselves and find a new better way after examining our lives.

David Wiesner is put on my list for this. It's fantastic.

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## **Kwtay Calvin says**

The book, *The Three Pigs*, begins as the classic tale we all have grown to know with three Pigs that set off to build houses of their own. The first Pig made his house of straw, and the next Pig made his house sticks, and the last Pig made his house of brick. The Wolf came and blew the straw house down and ate the pig, then he blew the stick house down and ate the pig. Just when you think you know what's going to happen next the story takes a surprising turn. The Pigs leave the story! They find themselves on an adventure into other classic tales. The illustrations bring the plot of the story to life. The illustrations almost look three dimensional when the pigs leave the pages of their tale and stumble upon the pages of other tales. The illustrator's style is postmodernism which is mixed styles, unlike the traditional style. I love how the text and illustrations change with each tale. Many pages are just illustrations with little to no words. The detailed illustrations tell the story of a classic tale with a twist.

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## **Mischenko says**

*The Three Pigs* by David Weisner is a cute story that starts out like the traditional Three Pigs story, but then unexpectedly changes into something much different. The pigs are able to jump in and out of other fairy tales. It's such a unique twist on the original.

The illustrations are cute, detailed, and the story has a great ending. We really enjoyed it.

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## **Erin says**

David Wiesner's edition of *The Three Pigs* is clever and unexpected. It begins by following the traditional fairy tale, with the wolf knocking on each pig's door and threatening to blow their house in. However, each pig cleverly escapes the wrath of the wolf by exiting the story itself. Structured like a graphic novel in some ways, the traditional tale is interrupted with speech bubbles and side conversations in which the pigs manipulate the pages of the story.

The three pigs find their way into other stories, making and rescuing new friends along the way. As they explore what can only be described as the "writer's world," the characters devise a plan to return to the text to live unexpectedly happily ever after.

I love the way in which traditional and abstract storytelling are woven together in this book. The illustrations and story can both be used as springboards for discussing author/illustrator's craft, fractured fairy tales, and nontraditional storytelling. With these topics in mind, this book could be used across a variety of primary and intermediate elementary classrooms to inspire discussions about both reading and writing.

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## **Miriam says**

In this highly imaginative and artistic twist on the Three Little Pigs, the pigs flee the wolf and escape off the



edge of the illustrations into other stories.

I thought this book was awesome, but the little kids I read it to (ages 3-4) didn't really get the concept.

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### **Manybooks says**

David Wiesner's The Three Pigs is very much fun and in many ways appears as simply and utterly brilliant (I just so much love the both sly and in your face cultural and literary intertextuality and that the three pigs basically manage to escape from their adversary, the eponymous big bad wolf, by means of meta-fiction, by being blown right out of their story into other tales, and different types of accompanying illustrations). But all that being said, and even though I know that this is basically a loose retelling of the traditional *The Three Little Pigs* type of folktale, I do happen to feel rather sorry for the poor wolf, who is not really evil, but simply a carnivore hunting for food, hunting for a meal (and this salient fact is also the main and probably even the only reason why The Three Pigs is rated with four and not five stars, a personal pet peeve perhaps and even a bit pernickety, but I stand by and with my feelings here, as big bad wolf type of tales have always left me uncomfortable and with sadness for the wolves).

Like always, and yes, like usual, David Wiesner's illustrations are simply spectacular, whimsical, descriptive, and I especially appreciate the many visual allusions to some of the author/illustrator's previous picture book offerings (the featured dragon is definitely reminiscent of the dragon found in Wiesner's Free Fall and there are also allusions to Tuesday, but interestingly enough, this time, there are flying fish and not flying frogs presented). Very highly recommended, and one can easily and with considerable appreciation understand why and how David Wiesner has won so many Caldecott accolades (and for me personally, Wiesner's The Three Pigs is actually also much much more lastingly appealing than the majority of his wordless picture book offerings, as I do seem to have constant and recurring issues easily understanding and appreciating illustrations sans any type of written narrative, sans printed text).

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### **Phoebe Ledster says**

Wiesner's alternative take on the traditional fairy tale of 'The Three Little Pigs' is incredibly entertaining. The relationship between the illustrations and written word on the page is extremely unique and would allow for a wonderful discussion with children about how stories can be represented. As a teacher, it could be used to model the traditional ways of storytelling and alternative ways, which the children prefer, why it might be different and would allow children the opportunity to explore their own ideas helping them flourish as writers.

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### **Doree Burt says**

2002 Caldecott Medal. Ummmm. What the!?! The art is coolish, but the lame story (or lack of story)...Are you kidding me? This reminds me of one of those Saturday Night Live skits where you sit there puzzled while those who created it are high-fiving themselves and chuckling.

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