



Ol' Mama Squirrel

David Ezra Stein

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Caldecott Honor winner David Ezra Stein's lively tale is a fantastic read-aloud, and feisty Mama Squirrel will have fierce mamas everywhere applauding!

Ol' Mama Squirrel has raised lots of babies, and she knows just how to protect them. Whenever trouble comes nosing around, she springs into action with a determined "Chook, chook, chook!" and scares trouble away. Her bravery is put to the test, however, when a *really* big threat wanders into town and onto her tree. But no matter what, Mama's not about to back down!

Ol' Mama Squirrel Details

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Spencer Jones says

I like this book because it's a little different than what David Ezra Stein usually writes like and the illustrations are a little more futuristic looking. I love how the mamma is so dedicated to keeping her babies safe and the illustrations show her intensity throughout the book. This book is animal fantasy and in the 1st-4th grade range

Shawn says

"Chook, chook, chook" I can totally relate to this over protective momma squirrel protecting her young :D This was a cute book and it has piqued my interest in reading more of David Ezra Stein's books.

Anthony says

Ever protective of her babies, Ol' Mama Squirrel ensures that everyone keeps a distance from her tree. With her vigilante watch, and verbal warnings of chook , ckook, chook, she keeps a watchful eye on all who comes near the tree. A serious threat comes too close, and Ol' Mama Squirrel summons all the other mama squirrels and removes the threat. The city elders awards her with a plaque to show her their gratitude. It hangs on her tree, but beware of your approach when you try to view it.

JoAnna Studer says

Mama squirrel is intent on protecting her babies from predators such as people, kites, and bears. When my husband first read the part where Mama squirrel scolds, " CHOOK CHOOK CHOOK," our eight-month-old son giggled and giggled. This is a perfect story time book.

Melki says

What a gal! Nothing will stop Mama Squirrel from protecting her babies.

Samantha says

What a fun read aloud! Mama Squirrel is super protective of her baby squirrels and she scares off every type of predator you can imagine with her warning call of "Chook! Chook! Chook!" Her biggest match is a grizzly bear, but she enlists the help of nearby squirrels to put him in his place.

Illustrations were rendered using ink, watercolor and crayon.

The repetition of "Chook! Chook! Chook!" is an invitation for audience participation and the refrain "And that takes care of that" gives the story the pacing of a fairytale. Well done, well done!

Phyllis says

Love this book for storytime! Pair this with "Owl Babies" and you have a great start to a storytime about moms

Amy says

The fear of mama squirrel's scolding makes everyone act right. Even a big old bear and all the townsfolk. Cute story, cute illustrations. But does the sound a squirrel makes really translate into "chook"? I always thought it was more of a "tisk".

Tess Upchurch says

Mama squirrel has perfected a method for keeping her babies safe. She shoos away any sign of danger with some especially stern "chook chook chook(s)." She effectively protects her children from kites, pruners, and other intruders but meets her match when a bear comes to town.

This book was a quick and fun read. The plot was interesting, and I liked that the mama squirrel ended up calling on friends and using teamwork to shoo the bear away. This is a great way to show the power of teamwork to young readers. Although I liked the book I thought that the illustrations weren't all too great. They got the job done but there was nothing particularly interesting about them. I wish that there had been more detail or even color in the illustrations. This book although not very well rounded would make a fun addition to my future classroom library.

Kristen says

There's something so reassuring about Ol' Mama Squirrel. She's feisty and stubborn, and she always protects her babies, scaring away any threat (real or imagined) with a "Chook! Chook! Chook!" Not even a grizzly bear can compete with Ol' Mama Squirrel, especially when she calls in the other mama squirrels who are determined to protect the babies.

I think this would be the best Mother's Day read-aloud, instead of an overly-sweet ode to mommy dearest. Kids will cheer for Ol' Mama Squirrel and feel secure in knowing that their mama is fiercely protecting them, too. Plus, it's so fun to have a group of kids saying "Chook! Chook! Chook!"

Kelly says

The kids liked this one with a fierce Mama Squirrel protecting her babies. Spoiler alert: beware, big bear, Ol' Mama Squirrel has many friends!

We talked about how to meet challenges.

Stein's books are usually hits with our bunch. Interrupting Chicken and especially Dinosaur Kisses are favourites with them.

Destiny Dawn Long says

A fun story of a tough mama who fearlessly defends her babies from threats real and imagined--and shows that the small can conquer the mighty with a little diligence and imagination.

It's a funny book with good narrative structure. The repetition of story elements is perfect for children and helps them to understand the determination of Ol' Mama Squirrel. There were a few moments where I chuckled to myself. I also loved the call of "chook chook chook" that Mama makes whenever she's scolding a possible intruder.

The artwork is lively. Stein uses primarily greens, browns, and grays to color his images, giving the book a real sense of the natural world that squirrels inhabit. I enjoyed his artistic style which uses heavy lines, watercolors, and crayons.

The one thing I didn't like was the ending. It took me out of the story a bit--with the squirrel being awarded a plaque by the humans of the town. It felt a bit jarring. If it weren't for the strange ending, I might have gone with a four star rating. But endings are important--and this one didn't work for me.

Sarah Wyatt says

This book is a little long for preschool storytime, but I have made it work before. Ol' Mama Squirrel protects her babies for dogs, owls, etc. and even a bear. Very cute and funny. Would be good for K-3 read-aloud.

Emily Love says

This is a great read-aloud book. I think this would be enjoyable to several different age groups; my son enjoyed it because of the many opportunities for sound effects, but I think older kids would enjoy the story itself.

Tasha says

Stein's latest picture book is an uproarious read aloud and will be a welcome addition to any storytime. Mama Squirrel knows that all sorts of creatures want to eat her baby squirrels, but she won't let that happen. She scolds all sorts of creatures away with her fierce "Chook, chook, chook!" Cats, dogs, owls, even humans scatter at her determination to protect her babies. Until one day when a bear comes to her tree. Mama Squirrel tries scolding, she tries throwing nuts, but the bear stays and then says that he will eat her entire tree! Mama Squirrel has one last trick though, and it's an amazing one!

This book is one amazing read aloud. It is designed specifically to be shared aloud and I think will shine with a good sized group in particular. The scolding noise of the mother squirrel will have everyone "chook, chook chooking" along with her. The result will be one of my favorite sorts of story times: loud shared love of a story.

Stein's art will work well with a group too. Her fierce defense of her babies projects straight from the page from her lowered brows and the set of her entire body. The illustrations have a rough edge to them that adds to their appeal.

Get this into your pile of books to share at your next story time, or keep it stored like fall nuts for the next time you need a great read aloud. Appropriate for ages 3-5.
