



## My Rhinoceros

*Jon Agee*

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Watch Jon Agee win over a new flock of fans--the toddler set

If you should ever get a rhinoceros for a pet, you're in for a surprise. It won't chase a ball. Or a stick. Or a frisbie. In fact, according to the experts, a rhinoceros does only two things: pop balloons and poke holes in kites.

But don't be discouraged. As you'll discover in Jon Agee's hilarious picture book, rhinoceroses can do more--so much more--than that!

## My Rhinoceros Details

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Author : Jon Agee

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## **From Reader Review My Rhinoceros for online ebook**

### **Tara Schloetter says**

A boy goes to an exotic pets store and decides to buy a rhinoceros. The boy does not know much about rhinoceroses, and he is disappointed when the rhinoceros does not chase a ball, a stick, or a frisbee. The boy even calls a rhinoceros expert, who tells him, “Rhinoceroses only do two things. Pop balloons and poke holes in kites.” The pet rhinoceros wouldn’t even do these two activities, until the little boy and the rhinoceros saw a robbery happening, and the robbers were getting away by flying away in a balloon and a kite—this is when the rhinoceros comes to the rescue. This would be a fun book to use as a read aloud for young children, and it has simple and colorful illustrations. However, this plot was not the most interesting to me, and the ending seemed somewhat abrupt and did not have a great conclusion. I would use this book with very young readers, however, it might not hold much interest for older elementary children.

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### **Barbara says**

When a boy buys a rhinoceros as a pet, he is disappointed because it doesn't do anything. It won't fetch a ball, a stick, or a frisbee, or do anything of the cool things most pets do. When an animal expert tells him that it's normal for a rhinoceros to avoid all those activities since all rhinos do is pop balloons and poke holes in kites, the boy grows excited by the possibilities. But still, nothing happens. That is, until the day two robbers use a kite and a balloon to escape the crime scene. The rhinoceros leaps into the air at the boy's urging, popping, poking, and flying, to the boy's amazement. It turns out the rhino is exactly the kind of animal companion for which he's been looking. The soft illustrations show the placid rhinoceros as he waits until the boy realizes just what he has in his new friend. It's all great fun, but the story also has a worthy message concerning not going by first impressions.

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### **Paula says**

A rhinoceros might seem like an awesome pet. Until you learn that a rhinoceros will not fetch a stick nor a ball, will not catch a Frisbee or roll over. If one had purchased a rhinoceros as a pet, one might in fact become a bit disappointed at one's rhinoceros's lack of verve. That is, until your rhinoceros employs the two skills native to all rhinoceroses in an unexpected way - and then demonstrates a third skill not at all common.

Full review at Pink Me: <http://pinkme.typepad.com/pink-me/201...>

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### **Cheryl says**

Can't rate - I'm not feeling it, but I do believe the fault is in me, not the book. I can do absurd sometimes, but not here.

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## **Tyler Jones says**

The children's books of John Agee are simultaneously familiar and strange; comforting and off-putting. As such, they are perfect for the hungry mind. They are safe but they are also kind of exciting.

How does Agee accomplish this remarkable feat? For one thing he employs a narrative voice that implies that the reader already understands what the book is trying to say - he speaks to us like he's our friend. He gets us on his side, then once we give him our trust he shows us something remarkable; a flight of imagination wrapped up in the trappings of the every day (the old-school illustration anchor us in the world of the familiar). In short, he uses magic.

My two favourite Agee books are this one and *Lion Lessons*. Both are suitable for story times, but have enough little in-jokes in the illustrations that kids will also want to pour over them on their own.

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## **Sharni says**

magical realism in the form of a flying elephant who foils bank robberies.  
unexpected!

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## **Rebekah says**

"Rhinoceroses only do two things. Pop balloons and poke holes in kites." At first these traits are seen as negative, but become positive by the end of the book. Great illustrations!

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## **Mary Ann says**

OK, at first I thought this book was just average, not very interesting. But when I got to the ending I was chuckling and then laughing out loud. I do think it will tickle little kids who like the absurd ending.

It also may be fun for a new reader to try, with its simple, large text. I want to see how our 1st graders react.

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## **Melissa says**

OK, this had me until the very last reveal, at which point it lost me completely! A Poking/Popping Rhinoceros is totally special enough. Did NOT need it to fly as well!

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## **Edward Sullivan says**

Holy flying rhinoceroses!

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### **Elizabeth says**

This was supper weird, but I liked it.

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### **The Library Lady says**

I was appalled to see a quote by Maurice Sendak on the back saying "every kid will love it".  
Has Sendak forgotten what he said in an interview years ago, what I've quoted to many a parent?  
**Not every book is right for every child.**  
Some kids will like this. Some will hate it. It's nice enough, but a "masterpiece"?

Or, as they'd have said in Sendak's Brooklyn neighborhood and my Bronx one:  
"It's good. But it's not THAT good."

P.S. Sendak also pointed out that kids don't care how many awards a book has won. If they like it they like it, if they don't they don't. A good rule of thumb before picking your kid's books based on Caldecott Medals or such.....

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### **David says**

My Rhinoceros by Jon Agee is a hilarious look at pets, expectations, first impressions, and surprises.

A young boy buys a rhinoceros with expectations of exciting times. His rhinoceros was a nice, quiet, shy animal who wouldn't fetch a ball, stick, or frisbee. He wouldn't roll over or do anything. Calling in a rhinoceros expert, the boy learns that rhinos only do two things: pop balloons and poke holes in kites. But when he takes his pet to the park, his rhino ignores the balloons and kites. The boy begins to have buyer's remorse - is his pet a clunker?

On the way home, the boy observes a bank robbery with two robbers escaping, in a hot air balloon and a kite. The boy gives the commands to pop and poke, and his rhino leaps into action to foil the robbery! Congratulated on his rhino's abilities, the boy takes advantage of his rhino's other surprising skill: he can **FLY!**

The text is printed in large bold type making this a good beginning or transitional reader. There is a lot of word repetition. The outrageous story flows well. The last sentence summarizes the story perfectly.

The illustrations lift this story to the next level. Agee's bold, outlined pictures are appealing. Agee, like Mo Willems, can really evoke emotion with a few lines, especially in the eyes of the rhinoceros. The pictures really bring out the wry humor of the text. The picture of the rhino in the park smelling the flowers made me think of my childhood favorite The Story of Ferdinand. Among my favorite images are those of the boy imagining his rhino attacking the balloon man's balloons, and the kite of a girl. I also enjoyed the rhino in action, the rhino smelling flowers in the park among active dogs, and the crowd watching the boy and his

rhinoeros from below.

I really love this book and its wry and ridiculous humor. Agee is able to really focus the reader on the action. He also addresses, in a fun way, expectations, first impressions, and the pleasant surprises of pet ownership. I think this would be a great read-aloud and a hit at storytime. I highly recommend this for school and public library collections.

For ages 3 to 8, pets, rhinoceros, expectations, first impressions, humor, fantasy, and fans of Jon Agee.

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### **Talia Smart says**

A boy gets a rhinoceros from the exotic pet store only to discover that it doesn't really DO anything...or does it?

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### **Jenny says**

What would it be like to have a rhinoceros as a pet? As it turns out, it might be pretty boring. The rhino just stands there...he doesn't chase balls or play fetch or roll over. But then again, maybe it won't be so boring after all...

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