



## The Icky Bug Alphabet Book

*Jerry Pallotta , Ralph Masiello*

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For many children, "icky" bugs are endlessly fascinating. This book helps children discover why farmers like the praying mantis, how the water spider breathes underwater, and other intriguing facts about the world of bugs and insects.

Jerry Pallotta's lighthearted text and Ralph Masiello's vivid illustrations make this alphabetic exploration of small animal life both fun and informative.

## **The Icky Bug Alphabet Book Details**

Date : Published February 1st 1989 by Charlesbridge (first published January 1st 1986)

ISBN : 9780881064568

Author : Jerry Pallotta , Ralph Masiello

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Nonfiction, Science

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## **From Reader Review The Icky Bug Alphabet Book for online ebook**

### **Heather says**

First of all I have to say that I didn't think the bugs were "icky" enough. For example, cricket is the bug for C. What happened to the super disgusting cockroach? How about lice instead of Ladybird Beetle? Or maggots? We did enjoy all of the bugs listed, but still I sort of wanted a higher gross factor!

As with all of Pallotta's books the illustrations are fantastic. We learned a little bit about each bug, insect, spider, etc. This is not an in-depth book by any means, but you could use it as a springboard for learning more about the bugs or you could just enjoy a few brief snippets of new information.

All of the boys enjoy the humor of these books and laugh outloud. They ask for them frequently. In reading it this last time I thought 'hm, these could be used by beginning readers who have moved past Cat in the Hat'. The language is fairly simple although a few of the names might be hard.

Highly recommended.

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### **Suzanne says**

Jerry Pallota made learning letters and numbers fun again. This was the first of his many books we have bought over the years. For icky bug lovers...

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### **Yusra Faridi says**

This book introduces readers to 'icky' bugs that start with each letter of the alphabet, for example C for cricket and L for ladybug. The bug touches on a few basic details about each bug but does not go too in depth about the individual insects; this is why I think the book is perfect for a younger audience. The illustrations are also eye catching and very engaging (again, another reason why I would recommend it for lower elementary age students). The book can help teach or review the alphabets for the younger students as well as teach them about some bugs that they were not already familiar with.

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### **Amanda says**

My son and I love this book. The illustrations are simply stunning, bright, and clear. The authors have a sense of humor (see "U is for unfinished painting.") We enjoy this one even though we are long past learning A, B, C's.

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### **Natalie Harding says**

One of Kathleen's favorites!

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### **Dolly says**

A nicely illustrated alphabet book featuring insects, arachnids and other bugs. Our girls didn't like that it was titled "Icky," though. They love bugs and felt they were being maligned. As I was reading this, I thought that it was similar to the Beetle Alphabet book, duh!, not realizing that it was by the same author. I preferred the beetle book, perhaps because it's a more refined, polished effort.

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### **Peyton says**

This is a great book to use when teaching children the alphabet.

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### **Jessica Riben says**

**Title:** *The ICKY BUG Alphabet Book*

**Author:** Jerry Pallotta

**Illustrator:** Ralph Masiello

**Genre:** Alphabet Book

**Theme(s):** Alphabet, Bugs, Nature

**Opening line/sentence:**

- A is for Alphabet book.

**Brief Book Summary:** (2-3 sentences in your own words)

**Professional Recommendation/Review #1:**

- Meredith Kiger, Ph.D. (Children's Literature)

• If you are keen on alphabet books, this is a nice variation. The author uses many unknown spiders, bugs and butterflies to fulfill his goal of illustrating the alphabet. The brilliant, true to life paintings and numerous insect facts make the book worthwhile in itself. An interesting angle on the world of insects. 1989, Charlesbridge, \$14.95, \$15.88 and \$6.95. Ages 3 to 6.

- (PUBLISHER: Charlesbridge ;Zero to Ten] [distributor] (Watertown Mass.:) ([Slough:), PUBLISHED: c1986.)

**Professional Recommendation/Review #2:** (cut & paste)

- Julie it was amazing

- Shelves: all-time-favs, books-i-own

• This is a really fun alphabet book about bugs. My son received this as a gift from his favorite Aunt Ali. He loves it and so does my daughter. It has become the "bedtime book" here recently. I have learned some names of bugs I didn't know and I just knew that people who were talking about "no seeums" were out of their mind and "seeing things"! Come to find out, it's really an insect!! Very fun, educational book!

**Response to Two Professional Reviews:** (3-4 sentences in your own words)

- Both of these reviews talk about the many different types of bugs, ones that many people have never heard of. They both talk about the educational factor and how it is worthwhile to read. They agree that the book is entertaining because there are great pictures to go along with the crazy bugs and insects.

**Evaluation of Literary Elements:** (3-4 sentences in your own words)

- This book is great for learning the alphabet as well as many new types of bugs and insects. There are great

detailed pictures to go along with each animal and its environment. In addition, the book gives some information on the bug, no just the name. It gives a sentence or two about the creature and captures the students attention.

**Consideration of Instructional Application:** (3-4 sentences in your own words)

- This book is a great book for learning the alphabet because the students can remember the letters by the first letter of the crazy bugs. This would be a fun coloring activity for the students to get outlines of these bugs, each day getting a new letter. They would be able to write the name of the animal as well as color in the picture of the insect.

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### **Gemma Treacy says**

While I think this book is a good educational book for children, my star rating merely reflects my own personal interests and feelings towards the book as an adult. I have just finished reading the book with my 2 and half year old niece, she was fascinated by it. The book teaches children about different insects and bugs, using each letter of the alphabet. It would fantastic to use in a Foundation Stage Science lesson, as it can be used to discuss what an insect is and possible habitats for the mentioned insets. My niece found the illustrations most amusing and asked a lot of questions based on them, so the pictures could definitely be used to extend children's understanding of the natural environment. While my niece loved the illustrations, personally I found them to be too dark and not colourful enough. Although, I think this could just be due to my age. I would definitely recommend this book to teachers and parents with children in the EYFS.

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### **Manybooks says**

The Icky Bug Alphabet Book is definitely fun, detailed and informative (both as an alphabet book and as a general introduction to insects, to bugs), but I have to say that I personally find the title rather (no, quite) misleading (as in my opinion, none of the insects featured and presented by Jerry Pallotta are what I would consider in any way "icky"). The title actually thus does manage to majorly rub me the wrong proverbial way, as in my opinion, we should be teaching children that bugs and insects are an important part of the animal kingdom, of the cycle of life, and not "icky" and/or potentially disgusting (one of the main reasons so many of us often desire and strive to squish and squash bugs on sight is likely because we have simply been taught and tend to believe that all bugs, that all insects are horrible, vile creatures). And while the information, the details presented in and by The Icky Bug Alphabet Book certainly does NOT do or show the latter (in fact, rather the opposite is the case, as the featured insects are generally depicted in a more than balanced and positive manner), the title does have the tendency to assume disgustingness, to assume that insects are by nature uncanny, strange and offence inducing (well, that is at least my personal opinion, and I still find this to be the case). And this factoid, this sad truth, is very much frustrating and unfortunate, as it undermines the many positives, or rather, it it has the potential to undermine the many positives that Jerry Pallotta and his The Icky Bug Alphabet Book attempt to present and teach (and for children who already might have an aversion to insects, or even mild squeamishness, seeing a book title that supposedly and prominently features so-called icky, read loathsome, vile bugs, could perhaps prevent them from even wanting to consider this book, and thus miss out on a fun, educational and really in no way creepy and crawly reading and letter/biology learning experience). Three stars!

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## **Garrett says**

"The Icky Bug Alphabet Book" struck me as a great book to introduce children to the natural sciences, especially in relation to insects and arachnids. It has a good mixture of illustration, information, and wittiness that it makes for a good read for both parent/teacher and child. Though the parents may know most of the information (such as the eye-spots on the Io Moth being for scaring away predators and praying mantis being seen as helpful for eating harmful bugs) it is probably novel for children, and the facts can spark constructive conversation. The book even contains some facts that surprised me (such as the water spider weaving its own air sack to go swimming underwater). On each page the book provides enough information to be interesting, yet also leaves the reader wanting more. If you want to interest your child in nature (especially insects) this book should probably be on your list.

Something I found rather interesting were the metafictive properties contained in the book. In fact the very first page of the book acknowledges its existence as a book by stating "A is for Alphabet Book" before getting on with things by stating "A is also for ant". These inclusions by the author ensure that the reader is entertained throughout the reading, and can be useful if one wants to introduce some properties of metafictive literature to students. Other examples are the "Unfinished Painting" on page 21, and the "X is for the marking on the back of this bug". In the first case, we see the half-painted sketch of the Unicorn beetle with the commentary "On this page the illustrator forgot to finish painting the picture". In the latter case, we get a laugh by seeing the authors acknowledge that "[h]e could not find a bug whose name began with the letter X". These little winks and nods are great in making both old and younger readers laugh, and make the book unique among more linear non-fiction science books or alphabet books.

Now, one quality that stood out to me was the Jerry Pallotta's word choice. Being an alphabet book, one might expect to find simple easy words for teaching starting readers their A, B, C's, yet Pallotta decides to include far more advanced words such as "pincher", "greenheaded", "miserable", and "climate". What this tells us is that Pallotta's goal is not teaching the alphabet, but using the alphabet to teach about nature. Parents or teachers who read the book to younger children may have to explain the words (helping with vocabulary) and will most likely also need to explain certain concepts expressed, such as why the earwig is called such if it has nothing to do with ears, and how or why the water spider can go underwater. These explanations will have to come to the naturally curious audience, and will probably excite young children into wanting to find out more. As for older children (probably ages 8-10), they will naturally be curious, and probably even a little bit proud about the knowledge they acquire from the text. Personally, I would suggest having older readers (maybe ages 12-14) read the book to the younger readers, and have them explain the contents. Interesting conversation and development would be bound to happen. Therefore, it is strongly urged not to use the book in a vacuum, but to also utilize class or family discussion, as well as other outside sources, to obtain the full value of reading this book.

In short, "The Icky Bug Book" is a wonderful, slightly metafictive text that urges readers to go out and explore, or discover more about the world. Just be ready to help them do so.

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## **Jennifer Heise says**

The only 'icky' bug in this picture book is probably the earwig. It's a hit with budding entomologists, though; more of a bug book than an alphabet book. The illustrations are very accurate and clear, and while the bugs in question are mostly not too unusual, there is a good variety of types! The text is informative, and there are

some places where it is funny (as when the author frankly admits they couldn't find a bug that begins with X, or when U is originally represented by an Unfinished illustration), I would not say it is humorous throughout-- more like didactic with a few humorous entries. A bit dry for my taste. Some of the words are a big long, but my early reader plowed through them.

Still, if you have a bug-lover in the house-- as I do, with my six year old son-- this will be interesting. Follow up with something like Ranger Rick Jr. or some of the full color bug oddities books.

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### **Mo says**

This is how you write an alphabet book! Great writing and illustrations!

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### **Julia says**

I remember when I first came upon this author and it was since of my elementary school. We had an assembly where the author was invited and ever since he told me there was a Julia butterfly I have been hooked with him.

The book writing is simple, large letters and easy for any child to read, especially with very young beginners. Furthermore each letter is covered even if the author has to be creative such as in this case where he uses Cotton Stainer for the X on the back of its carapace.

The other thing that will catch the reader's attention is the beautiful detailed artwork and the interactive reading style that asks the reader to answer a question, what they should do and/or mentioning something basic such as unfinished letter so you don't know that you are learning as you read.

What gave an extra bonus to me is that the author uses the last page to mention the little known fact that the book isn't really about bugs but insects and arachnids while describing the actual term of bug plus which of the ones mentioned were true bugs.

Definitely a literary gem!

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### **Olivia says**

I liked this book because it is interchangeable with subjects. I chose Icky Bug as one of my informational books because I thought it was witty and clever. It not only expressed the different types of bugs in ABC form, but he also gave fun facts about the bugs as well! For example, blister beetles are used for medicine and honey ants are delicious. Icky Bugs could be used in multiple lessons, one lesson could be formed by having the students research other bugs that start with each letter of the alphabet and create sentences of facts about each bug. Also, we could use this in a Science lesson by analyzing the differences and similarities between insects. The nonfiction conventions of this book are the facts used within the story. This book is appropriate for K-1st graders.

