



Open Very Carefully: A Book with Bite

Nick Bromley , Nicola O'Byrne (Illustrations)

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What would you do if you were settling down for a quiet bedtime story and you realized that a crocodile had fallen into your storybook and was — not to put too fine a point on it — wreaking havoc? Would you slam that book shut and cram it back onto the bookshelf? Or would you be brave enough to peek?

Open Very Carefully: A Book with Bite Details

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Author : Nick Bromley , Nicola O'Byrne (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Open Very Carefully: A Book with Bite for online ebook

Arminzerella says

The narrator of this book is trying to tell the story of the "Ugly Duckling," when they suddenly notice something that shouldn't be there. It's a CROCODILE! And the crocodile is rampaging through the book, eating letters and then whole words and sentences. Readers are encouraged to interact with it - first to get it to sleep, then to draw things on it to make it less scary, then to help get it out of the book. Funny and silly with bright illustrations that make the crocodile experience not *too* scary for little ones.

Sarah says

My 5-year-old very much liked the hole in the back of the book where the crocodile had munched his way out!

Theresa Love says

Are you looking for some laugh out-loud fun? What starts out as a sweet retelling of The Ugly Duckling, turns into a story hijacked by an annoying crocodile. The Ugly Duckling does not have time to be concerned that his siblings are beautiful; he has to get rid of a pesky crocodile.

“Watch out! He’s on the move. What is he doing? He’s eating the letters! He must be hungry!”

Get ready for an interactive adventure with each page turn. Can you help the Ugly Duckling?

“Now he’s gobbling up....whole words and sentences! We can’t have a book without words! What will we read...if there aren’t any sentences? We’ve got to make him stop...”

Young readers will have to rock the book side to side on one page and shake it on another. Armed with a crayon, the Ugly Duckling adds his own artistic touch. Make sure your little ones know that the Ugly Duckling’s crayon is part of the story. You don’t want to start finding surprises in all of your books.

Teachers, parents, and children will enjoy this fun story-time adventure. The playful font is big and the placement of words on the page is creative. Bold illustrations are lively and the oversize book enhances the reading experience. Similar to a sturdy board book, the stiff pages scream that this story is ready for some action! The author does a great job with the narrative text that speaks directly to the audience. Young readers will enjoy anticipating what will happen next as they help the Ugly Duckling throughout the story.

Bryce says

Thanks again Aunt Janet! The kids have loved this, especially Ethan. I don't think we've been able to read this just once in a sitting. We usually have to read this at least 3 times before moving on.

Donalyn says

Fun, interactive book that kids will love.

One more, please! says

Such a fun and interactive book to start the year with! The book starts out like a story about a duckling but then there is a very big, very green, very toothy intruder that starts eating up the words and sentences! Oh my. With the children's help we managed to not only rock the scary crocodile to sleep, but to also help chase him right out of the book. My kids thoroughly enjoyed this book, we reread it several times before they were satisfied and ready for bed. After reading the *Bath Monster* a few days ago I was worried that this would frighten them but this was **100% entertainment** with 0% of the fear.

Dolly says

This is a humorous tale that includes the reader in the storyline, encouraging the reader to interact with the book. The narrative is conversational and entertaining and the illustrations are colorful and cartoonish.

The crocodile isn't too scary and might add some laughter to storytime. I'm afraid this isn't likely to be the best book to get a child to settle down for sleep, but it is fun to read aloud. We enjoyed reading this book together.

After reading some of the reviews here, I noticed the repetition of the phrase meta picture book. Not really knowing what that was, I did some research online and discovered a fascinating video here.

I learned a lot about metafiction and I can certaiinly say that this book fits squarely in the category. Philip Nel offers a list of other metafiction books for children here and I thought it was a great list.

Andréa says

I'm not sure how I feel about a tutu and bow being used as an insult / device to make the male crocodile less scary...

Paula says

Three stars for Nicolas O'Byrne's sharp, soft, endearing illustrations. Her crocodile has the sass and tubby swagger of a toddler. The story is a bit of a bore, though.

Chelsea says

A wonderful, interactive read for younger kiddos! This crocodile isn't supposed to be in the book, but he's made himself at home anyway! The next question is... will the crocodile stay in the story that isn't his or will he leave? AND! If he does try to leave, how will he do it?! Kids listening to the story shall be able to guess what will happen and even help in trying to get the crocodile to leave the story! Short, fun and (most importantly) entertaining.

Cindy Mitchell *Kiss the Book* says

Bromley, Nick Open Very Carefully: A Book with Bite, illustrated by Nicola O'Byrne. BOARD BOOK Nosy Crow, 2013. \$9. 9780763696306

While the author tries to tell the story of The Ugly Duckling, he is interrupted by a crocodile who is loose in the book. A little duckling tries different ways of getting the angry crocodile to calm down, including rocking the book back and forth, but nothing works. Eventually the crocodile breaks out of the back of the book.

This is similar to The Monster at the End of this Book from Sesame Street or Press Here by Herve Tulett. The little duckling tries to tell the reader how to handle the angry crocodile, and has the reader doing different actions throughout the reading to try and make the reader laugh. At one point the duckling says let's find a crayon and draw on the crocodile, which isn't a great suggestion for little kids. The illustrations are not anything great in this book, even if the actions make for a fun read.

PRE-K – OPTIONAL. Reviewer, C. Peterson.
<https://kissthebook.blogspot.com/2018...>

Brenda Lower says

Great, fun story about a crocodile taking over a fairy tale! Very interactive- would be great for a group! Reminds me of "Press Here"

KC says

Charming, funny, delightful, and well crafted interactive tale of a crocodile surprising the storyteller.

Kathryn (Nine Pages) says

There is something a little reminiscent of David Ezra Stein's Interrupting Chicken in Bromley's Open Very Carefully. As in Stein's book where the young chicken keeps interrupting the stories that her father is reading and changing their endings, here an alien character interrupts a popular, well-known tale. Here "The Ugly Duckling" is interrupted by a foreign crocodile, and the Ugly Duckling interacts with that crocodile. The Duckling also recognizes the reader, complaining, "He's eating all the letters! What will we read?" It is Interrupting Chicken meets Jon Stone's The Monster at the End of This Book.

Ordinarily I really enjoy picture books that play with the fourth wall. I like the interaction of character and reader. Maybe that was where this book fell a little flat for me. The Ugly Duckling, while recognizing his audience and his existence within a book, does not much interact with the audience because he is so focused on ridding his tale of the crocodile.

Open Very Carefully also lacked the interaction of two characters such as is in the longer and more mature The Stinky Cheese and Other Fairly Stupid Tales (Jon Scieszka). The crocodile is all but mute and is dumb besides. He is a trapped animal in an Animal's world it seems. He only wants to escape this foreign world, and he has no interest in the Ugly Duckling so long as the Duckling does not interact with him.

I do appreciate the ways with which Bromley plays with the placement of the text, however, though at times it did make it a tad difficult to trace, and I appreciate to his use of the space between the pages.

The ending leaves open sequels, opens the possibility of a crocodile interrupting other books too.

UPDATED!!

Originally published on my blog, *Nine Pages* .

I first read this book in March 2013. I had complaints then: It reminded me of other books, it didn't interact with the reader as fully as it could have done, nor did the characters interact with each other as much as they could have done. Those complaints are still valid, but I had a lot more fun with it this past month when I read it for story time. The book begins as an adaptation of "The Ugly Duckling," but the s distracted by the sight of a green tail on one of the pages, which the duckling chases out of his book, discovering it to be a crocodile in the following pages. The crocodile starts to eat up the text, letter by letter, then whole sentences at a time while the duckling begs him to leave off as best he can without a few letters: "St p! Mr. Cr c dile!" To stop him, the duckling suggests the reader rock the crocodile to sleep and while the crocodile is asleep the duckling draws a pink tutu, ballet slippers, and bow on him to make him less scary, but this only, understandably, makes the crocodile angrier, and I don't like the implication that it's okay to mess with someone who's asleep. The duckling is given the power of speech, but the crocodile remains silent and menacing, an animal stuck in an Animal's world, as I put it in 2013. In the end, the crocodile chews his way out of the book, leaving a hole in the last pages and back cover. There's no knowing where this loose crocodile could turn up again, and I'm a bit surprised that there hasn't been a sequel. This book plays with space and format well, but while I understand that a rational discussion between two Animals would have made for a very different story, the taunting and harassment of the animal by an Animal does not sit well with me. I appreciate this book more than I did for its interactive elements and it's creative illustrations, so I'm giving it three stars instead of the two I did in 2013.

Mel Jannard says

Comment chasser un crocodile qui take over l'heure du conte? C'est un peu comme ça que je décrirais cet album, qui propose quelque chose de vraiment éclaté.

Alors que les premières lignes annoncent la lecture du Vilain petit canard, un crocodile apparaît pour manger les lettres, les phrases, etc. Bref, le conte traditionnel ne sera jamais lu, on devra plutôt trouver comment se débarrasser du vilain reptile. Un livre qui sollicite la participation des enfants (par exemple pour « bercer » le livre afin que le croco s'endorme; ou pour le shaker afin qu'il en tombe) et, surtout, qui sort du cadre, carrément.

Ernesto Alvarado says

Very funny book, the crocodile is sooo cool and the duckling melted my heart. What a pair!

Sylvia says

A great, fun book to read with 3 and up. With the very young you have to explain the little ugly duckling's presence.

Sylvia says

Fun.

Rhian Mills says

We read this as a big group outside and acted out the actions in the book, very interactive book and the kids loved it!

Amy says

A little duckling is trying to tell you a story when a very scary crocodile appears and begins eating letters out of words, leading to a frantic attempt to rid the book of the beast. Very interactive and lots of fun.

For a storytime, pair this one with The Monster At The End of This Book by Jon Stone (the Sesame Street classic) and We Are In A Book by Mo Willems. Also try Harold and the Purple Crayon for drawing a world into reality or Again! by Emily Gravett for the surprising last page. Another fun book to read with this one is Press Here by Herve Tullet, which involves the physical manipulation of the book, inviting kids to shake or rock the book.

