



The Sock Thief: A Soccer Story

Ana Crespo , Nana Gonzales (Illustrations)

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Brazilian boy Felipe doesn't have a soccer ball. So, when it's his turn to take one to school, he uses a little bit of creativity and a few socks. Felipe is the sock thief, but finding socks is not that easy and the neighborhood pets make it even harder. "Au, au, au!" a dog barks in Portuguese. Felipe wonders if he'll play soccer with his friends today or if he will be caught by a tattle-tale parrot? Along the way, Felipe leaves delicious mangoes in exchange for the socks he steals. After he swipes each pair, he twists and turns them into an ever-growing soccer ball. At the end of the day, he returns each pair of socks with a note to say "thank you."

THE SOCK THIEF: A SOCCER STORY received the 2016 International Latino Book Award for Best Latino Focused Children's Book, Bilingual category, and was listed in the 2016 CCBC Choices list, featuring the best books of 2015.

The Sock Thief: A Soccer Story Details

Date : Published March 1st 2015 by Albert Whitman Company

ISBN : 9780807575383

Author : Ana Crespo , Nana Gonzales (Illustrations)

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Cultural, Sports and Games, Sports

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Heather Wright says

This books genre is a picture book for children in elementary school. The book is about a little boy who is growing up in Brazil and has to bring a soccer ball to class and cant afford one. So he goes around the neighborhood and "borrows" socks from peoples clothes lines and makes a soccer ball out of it. However, every time he takes someone's sock he leaves a mango behind. I rated this book the way I did because I love how the book was written in the English language however, it did have some Portuguese language in it. The colors of the book was so vibrant and very good illustrated. The plot of the book was wonderful. All the neighbors knew what the little boy was doing and they still let him doing it regardless if he was dropping off a mango every time. It really shows how the community can pull together and how they care about each other.

Natalie Williams says

This is a really lovely book that the children I read it too really enjoyed. It is a simple story about boy who can't afford a football and so steals socks to make one and puts them back at the end of the day. The book incorporates Portuguese words and I have noted that young children love to learn words in other languages, it's a fantastic way of incorporating new words at a young age.

The illustrations in the book are colourful and really add to the vibrancy of a story set in a country so far away. The book opened up lots of conversation about other cultures and Brazil as a country and children were keen to hear more about the setting.

The story provided lots of opportunities for questions about what might happen next and is a delightful read.

Niah Rae says

I thought this book was very cute. I loved the incorporation of Portuguese words. It's always fun to learn new words in other languages! The illustrations were very lively and colorful which is always a joy. I really liked the author's note at the end that explained the premise of the book. I can't wait to be able to share it with my future children!

RLL22017 Flora Zayas says

Taking place in Brazil, this story follows Felipe as he exchanges socks for mangoes with his unknowing neighbors. The socks are folded and twisted together to create a soccer ball for all the children to play with. Crespo keeps the authenticity of the culture with subtle details like "only shoes he owns is a pair of worn-out flip-flops?," how citizens air dry their clothes, the frequency of animals, and the different types of friends Felipe has. Concluding with Felipe returning all the socks, it is evident that all the neighbors willingly allow Felipe to use their socks.

The book portrays themes of friendship, compassion, passion, and depicts life in another country. I enjoyed

it!

This book won the International Latino Book Awards for Best Latino Focused Children's Picture Book – Bilingual (2016).

Betsy Myers says

I won this book as a Goodreads First Read.

This was a fantastic story!

I read it to my children the day that it arrived. As soon as I finished, they asked me if I would read it again!

We practiced the Portuguese words in the back and talked about making our own sock soccer balls.

As an Early Childhood Education Administrator and as a parent, I love that this story allowed for predictions all throughout, as well as an introduction to the Portuguese language and culture and a project to try. This was most definitely a good read. :)

Jordan Cobb says

This is a very cute story. It is about a boy in Brazil that takes socks from different houses on his way to school. He leaves a mango at each of the houses. He doesn't wear socks though because he only has a pair of flip flops. Throughout the book, you see what Felipe does with the socks. Then you realize he was making a soccer ball for him and his classmates to play soccer at school. He then returns the socks and the neighborhood shows that they are happy to help.

Activity: This would be a great class discussion. First, we would talk about borrowing and that Felipe should have asked first. Then we would talk about how willing the neighborhood was to help Felipe out. The students will then be given a pair of socks and they will create something new out of them.

Crespo, A., & Gonzalez, N. (2015). The sock thief. Albert Whitman & Company.

Stacy Jensen says

This is a delightful book. I like that Felipe is a bit naughty in his efforts to make a soccer ball. Of course, this sock thief leaves mangoes and even returns the socks. You'll see at the end, the sock owners know what's happening to their socks too. It makes me think this could happen in any neighborhood where everyone is willing to play along and help a child. The book is also a great introduction to another culture. Felipe is in Brazil and the author's note page includes Portuguese. We enjoyed reading this and are happy to add this to our picture book collection.

Tandie says

I seriously need to get this for my daughter. My 13 yo daughter. She's well practiced in the art of sock thievery, possibly going to be a career criminal. :-)

Becky says

First sentence: In a small Brazilian town, Felipe leaves home earlier than usual. He walks a long way to school. Still sleepy, he stops by his family's mango tree. He picks the pinkest mangoes he sees. The sweet fruit wakes him up. Felipe has a secret.

Premise/plot: Once a week, Felipe becomes a SOCK THIEF. On his way to school, he steals socks from the clothes' lines that he passes. In place of the socks he steals, he leaves a mango behind. Why is he a sock thief? Once a week it is his turn to bring a "soccer" ball for the kids to play with. He makes his soccer ball each week with old newspapers and socks.

My thoughts: I liked this one. It is written in English with a few Portuguese words added in. (These are defined in the glossary at the end of the book.) I am not a soccer fan, but, I do like seeing creativity and enthusiasm at work.

Text: 3.5 out of 5

Illustrations: 3.5 out of 5

Total: 7 out of 10

Josianne Fitzgerald says

A Brazilian boy steals socks to turn them into a soccer ball.

Chris says

A little boy growing up in Brazil needs a soccer ball, but he doesn't have the money for one, so he steals socks and makes a soccer ball of his own. Every time he takes a sock, he leaves a mango in its place. And at the end of the day, he returns all of the socks. Little does he know, everyone in town knows his secret and there is no problem with him taking the socks. It gives the book a nice sense of community.

At the back there is an author's note talking about the practice of making balls in this fashion. A Portuguese glossary is also included. I wish the glossary would have had a pronunciation guide, as well, but most of the words look pretty easy to say.

I love the illustrations which are playful and sweet - and quite colorful.

Melanie Coombes says

This was a beautifully written and illustrated book. The story takes place in Brazil. Felipe is a young boy who "borrows" socks from his neighbors clotheslines. However, he always leaves a nice, tasty mango in its place. As they reader gets closer to the end of the story, they discover exactly what Felipe does with all those stolen socks.

I am a teacher in an international school in Thailand and this will be perfect to read to my first grade class. I love the line that said, "Why own socks when the only shoes you wear are flip-flops?" We can definitely relate to that here. What a cute and appropriate story for children of all ages. It is also a great way for young children to read and see some beautiful drawings of another country.

I highly recommend this picture book. Even my third grader read it and enjoyed it. I received a complimentary copy of this book as part of the Goodreads Giveaway program. I also appreciated the note from the author included in the book, along with her signature and the beautiful ribbon around the book. What a nice personal touch!

Venus says

Review originally posted on Children's Atheneum

Felipe is a sock thief, pilfering the brightly colored foot covers as he makes his way through the neighborhood on his way to school. In exchange he leaves behind little presents for those who are now missing a sock. What could a boy want with so many socks though? Then, with a few knots and some rolling, Felipe turns the socks into a soccer ball. In the end, the neighbors don't seem to mind so much. In fact, some may be leaving their socks out on purpose, either in hopes of a treat or to simply help a group of kids play their games.

As a former poor kid, I have to say, poverty helps children come up with some pretty unique ways of playing. Here is one boy's story of ingenuity when faced with the absence of something they need. I have heard of kids around the world playing soccer with everything from rag balls to tin cans. It is truly a sport that doesn't require much, but seems to open up a world of fun and athleticism to kids like Felipe.

I also loved the international setting (Brazil) as well as the Portuguese language, as a way to show how children play and create all around the world. The illustrations with their bright color palate are perfect for the book, with plenty to look at.

Juliana Lee says

Set in a small town in Brazil, this lovely picture book introduces children to a culture in some ways different from their own and in other ways universal. Felipe takes socks from his neighbors to make a soccer ball. He leaves mangos in exchange for the socks. After a day of playing soccer, he returns the socks with thank you notes.

Amy says

I liked the idea of the resourcefulness to make what you don't have. Could be a great talking point with a child on what others might not have. Love that it's a Brazilian main character!
