



## Clay Boy

*Mirra Ginsburg , Jos. A. Smith (Illustrator)*

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An insatiable boy made of clay devours everything in sight until a fiesty goat ruins his appetite. Vibrant paintings invigorate this retelling of a Russian folktale.

## Clay Boy Details

Date : Published 1997 by Greenwillow Books (first published May 1st 1993)

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Author : Mirra Ginsburg , Jos. A. Smith (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review Clay Boy for online ebook

### Michael Prier says

A Russian folktale about being careful about what you wish for or you will get eaten by a clay boy and a ram will save you.

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### KarenMLISt says

The illustrations are charming except for the clay boy. He kind of gave me the heebiejeebees. But the story would be fine for a K-1 readaloud, as long as the pictures of the clay son eating his sweet parents didn't disturb them too much. Probably better for upper elementary grades as part of a folktale/lore genre study.

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### Ronyell says

“Clay Boy” is an ancient Russian folktale retold by Mirra Ginsburg and vividly illustrated by Jos. A. Smith. Even though “Clay Boy” has an interesting plot and beautiful pictures, the story and some of the images may be too scary for kids to handle.

Mirra Ginsburg creates the perfect horror/adventurous story about a greedy clay boy’s attempts to eat everything in its path until he meets a clever goat who puts an end to him. Jos. A. Smith’s illustrations are somewhat disturbing yet beautiful at the same time as the couple’s appearances are portrayed as innocent and fun-loving people who just wanted a child, while Clay Boy’s appearance is grotesque and disturbing.

Parents should know that this book is extremely disturbing. The clay boy is more like a scary version of “The Gingerbread Man” as he greedily eats everyone he meets without any cause. Also, the images might be too much for younger children as they vividly display the Clay Boy eating up all the village people and his facial expressions immediately disappear as he scrunches up his face looking like clay covering up someone. The image that would most likely scare off children would be the image where the Clay Boy is eating up the peasant and his horse as he gobbles up the peasant and the horse tries to run away in terror from the now monstrous clay boy.

For children who love scary books, “Clay Boy” is definitely for them. But, because the pictures tend to be too vivid and the clay boy too grotesque, children younger than seven would definitely have nightmares about “Clay Boy.” I would strongly suggest reading “The Gingerbread Man” to your child rather than this book.

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### Sheniqua says

A lonely grandma and grandpa decide to make themselves a clay boy. They feed him and he just won't stop eating. He's get so huge he begins eating everything in site, including grandma and grandpa both. This story

could be used to discuss adaptations and in math to talk about measurement and the instruments used to measure with.

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### **Corey Myers says**

This was a very interesting/morbid Russian Folk-tale that I would feel would captivate many elementary students. However, this book would disturb many other students with the use of paintings of the Clay Boy and from most of the choices the Clay Boy. Clay Boy is a decent folk tale to implement into the classroom because it spices up this genre and provides something different for most of the classroom to enjoy.

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### **Khalid says**

I think it was great. When the old grandpa made the clay. The clay always wanted to eat food and basically everything. When the white hero goat leaped on the fat belly of the clay. The clay started to break into pieces and everybody danced around the little goat.

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### **Jason Gossard says**

My favorite children's book by far. The Gingerbread Man gone wrong- horribly wrong. Instead of coming to life and running away, Clay Boy turns the tables and eats the entire village. Illustrations crack me up every time. Simple yet perfect.

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### **Nikki says**

I didn't like this one. I thought it would be a cute book to read to my daughter but a clay boy created by a grandma and grandpa who eats the whole town including them then rescued by a goat...uh, NO!

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### **Melki says**

#### **FEED ME MORE!**

A lonely old couple constructs a boy out of clay. He turns out to be very HUNGRY, and swallows all humans and livestock who cross his path . . . all but one that is.

This is a nicely illustrated take on an old folktale. I really liked that the humble goat was the hero of the story. True, it's a slightly darker fairy tale, but if your kids can handle Little Red Riding Hood and There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly, they should be fine with this story of overindulgence.

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### **Emily says**

Dramatic and vivid paintings enliven this tale of a clay boy created by some lonely grandparents, who then becomes a ravenous creature who ends up eating them and everything in the village. The paintings have interesting perspectives, and the fonts used for the story itself help to tell the story. Luckily, a clever goat breaks the clay monster and the spell, and is celebrated by all the grateful survivors who come out alive from his stomach. If only we could shatter the hideous monsters who threaten our culture and world as we know it, and restore the order! Here is a little explanation of the origins of this tale -- handed down in the oral tradition, from grandparents to children and to your children....

"A Yiddish and Slavic folktale is the Clay Boy, which combines elements of the Golem and The Gingerbread Man, in which a lonely couple make a child out of clay, with disastrous or comical consequences.[33] In one common Russian version, an older couple whose children have left home make a boy out of clay, and dry him by their hearth. The Clay Boy comes to life; at first the couple are delighted and treat him like a real child, but the Clay Boy does not stop growing, and eats all their food, then all their livestock, and then the Clay Boy eats his parents. The Clay Boy rampages through the village until he is smashed by a quick-thinking goat.[34]

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### **Hxα???? ?ι???? says**

Holy cow! I joked that he would eat the people that made him. Funny thing.... Silly story.

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### **CK says**

4-year-old found it pretty scary...

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### **Angie says**

Grandma and Grandpa are lonely so they create a little clay boy. After he is put into the oven to dry, he comes out alive and hungry. The Clay Boy eats all the food in the house, he then eats Grandma and Grandpa, all the animals and all the villagers. It isn't until a goat with golden eyes appears that everyone is rescued.

This book is disturbing. I would definitely not recommend it for very young children. The Clay Boy is never redeemed even though all the villagers and animals are saved. The expressions on the Clay Boy's face while he is eating everyone are not for the faint of heart. Clay Boy is definitely a villain and this book could be a little scary for some kids.

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### **Joyce Munzwandi says**

This is a kind of weird story but quite hilarious. I think the students will not stop laughing at the level of greed displayed by the clay boy. Students can talk about quantities and measurement. Students can use this to expand their imagination by suggesting what they would have done if they were the parents of the clay boy.

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### **George says**

I was attracted to this book based upon the cute pictures. Unfortunately it has a touch of scary Grimm fairy tales to it. (The clay boy eats the Grandpa and Grandma who created him.) This book may be no big deal to some, but could be frightening for other children. References to greed and handing stories down through the family are minimally made at the end that I don't see much value in reading this one. Not enough positive to outweigh the negative, in my opinion.

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