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News Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

'Storyboards' is a new series of jumbo sized board books, designed, I assume, for younger children who want a book to look at by themselves, but find standard picture books too awkward or fragile just yet. Each title promises 'a real story', which, within the seven spreads available, presents a real challenge to their creators.

Pudding Face is the least appealing, Pudding Face is a small elephant who asks, whenever he eats, whether breakfast or supper, 'What's for pudding?' There is the germ of a good idea here, but the elephants are largely inanimate and barely distinguishable from one another. It is often not clear what is being eaten at the different meals which are shown at each opening, which may reflect Pudding Face's perception of everything being inadequate beside pudding, but will fail to excite the reader. Nor are children likely to empathise with a main character who has a playground insult for a name.

Racing Bears is better. Big Bear and Small Bear clearly have a relationship with one another and with Big Bear's shiny blue car. Small Bear's disappointment at being passed by Hare on a bicycle and Tortoise on his little scooter is soon forgotten as they finally speed down the hill. The change of pace is cleverly indicated by a change of point of view, as the car turns to face the reader on the brink of its descent. The bold pictures and strong colours, with no extraneous detail, make the most of the simple story.

Sharratt's **Ness the Nurse** is in rhyme and brilliant colour. There is a gallery of patients with childhood scrapes who need plasters: 'One for Rose, who's bashed her nose,' and 'One for Fl who's stubbed her toe.' Eye catching design, plenty of humour, and the chance to count down the plasters as they are claimed by each of the patients, makes this the best of the three - a lesson in how it should be done.

Running Order:

40

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