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The Circus Ship



Synopsis

With stunning artwork and a rhyming text, the illustrator of the Mercy Watson books tells a tale of human-animal connection full of humor and heart. When a circus ship runs aground off the coast of Maine, the poor animals are left on their own to swim the chilly waters. Staggering onto a nearby island, they soon win over the wary townspeople with their kind, courageous ways. So well do the critters blend in that when the greedy circus owner returns to claim them, villagers of all species conspire to outsmart the bloated blowhard. With buoyant rhymes and brilliantly caricatured illustrations evoking the early nineteenth century, Chris Van Dusen presents a hugely entertaining tale about the bonds of community and a rare hidden-pictures spread for eagle-eyed readers of all ages.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 660L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 10.1 x 0.4 x 10.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars See all reviews (214 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #5,676 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in Books > Children's Books > Cars, Trains & Things That Go > Boats & Ships #14 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s #29 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

The fictional story, written in verse, will captivate young readers. It's about a ship full of circus animals that runs into thick fog and crashes off the coast of Maine. The animals find their way to nearby island; much to the dismay of the people who live there. They wake to find elephants walking around, monkeys hanging from their clotheslines, hippos bathing in the streams, and exotic snakes peeking in their pantries. At first the people are worried and annoyed at the chaos the new arrivals

have created. Then a brave rescue of one of the children changes their minds. Just as they all begin to live happily together, the circus boss returns to bring his animals back to work. Will the people be able to rescue them? You'll have to find out. *The Circus Ship* by Chris Van Dusen is intended for children ages 4-8 years old and makes a great book for beginner readers. My daughter loved the story for its rhyming lines and the animals. I really enjoyed that this book was based on a historical event. It encouraged me to learn more about The Royal Tar. Any book that inspires actions after reading is sure to be a big hit with kids, parents, and teachers.

Others have summarized this book, but I'd like to add that as an elementary school librarian, this book was a big hit with my 1st-3rd graders. They were totally engrossed in the story, cheering the townspeople who took care of the courageous animals and protected them from the circus boss who callously left them behind when the ship sank. They loved finding the "hidden" animals. After hearing the original story that inspired this book, they looked forward to a happy ending. I'll have to get multiple copies for the library and would love to see this made into a movie! It's a roller coaster of a read!

This was a favorite book of the buyer at a local children's store - and we have to agree that it was fun, had a compelling story that rolled off the tongue and wonderful illustrations. All three children (2, 5 and 8) like it - but it's a favorite of the 5 year who especially loves the pages where you have to find all the silly places the animals are hiding from the ridiculously bad circus master. Recommend!

I love Chris van Dusen's illustrations. I am an artist myself and i so appreciate a well illustrated child's book. I grew up with some really special, old and beautifully illustrated books myself and I would spend hours looking at the pictures. Van Dusen doesn't fail to include special details and lots of depth to his work. I like his rhymes and flow of his books, this one is no exception. Though it isn't about Mr. Magee, my children and I really loved the circus ship because of his special attention to every inch of a page and his colorful arrangements. I have 7 of the books he has illustrated, six he also wrote. I am an addict. I would love some of his original artwork, it's so fanciful and appealing. I started with "a camping spree with Mr. Magee." When I was 20, I bought it thinking I would one day have kids...which I did, and then we got a vintage trailer too. It was truly an inspiration. We read Van Dusen's books on every vacation we take in our trailer or when we fly, our children look forward to story time when we travel thanks to his work. The books are light weight and the Mr. Magee books are very compact, so these make for excellent travel books. R reading these weekly will not get

old. The circus ship book, I have read three times, I make sure to not keep the book open to the same page long so I can see new things each time I read. There are a lot of things to see in this book in particular. It's almost an I spy book. My four year old is just getting to be able to point out all the animals in the final pictures, some are so well disguised. We look forward to more from Van Dusen and applaud his skill both in story telling and illustration.

This book was a lot of fun to read with my 6 year old. The rhymes are perfect for reading with a young child who is learning to read. I would read a page and then she would read the same page independently using the rhyme as a guide to 'remember'. A great help in learning how to read and learning how to predict the words to come. Rhyming books are great exercises for that. The story is also a lot of fun to read. There was a page where all of the animals are 'hidden' by the townspeople who are trying to prevent the abusive circus owner from finding the animals and taking them away. It was fun searching for all of the hidden animals. I highly recommend this book.

I can't tell you how much I love Chris Van Dusen's books! The rhyming doesn't get in the way of the story - it just flows naturally, like you're speaking, but it just happens to rhyme. Fun stories, beautiful illustrations. His books are the ones my kids and I both look forward to reading over and over again!

Chris Van Dusen's books tell excellent stories that keep the kids VERY interested, they use a number of "stretch" vocabulary words, and the artwork is bar none the best I've ever seen in kids books. Highly, highly recommend all of Chris Van Dusen's books. And no I am not related to Chris V.D., nor do I write professional reviews for money/reward, nor do I have any other interest in writing this review other than giving credit where it is due. I simply like to recognize excellence when I see it since we don't see it too often these days. By this book and enjoy it with your kids! :-)

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