Review: Spikey and the Caterpillar Sausage Cat

4th October 2023

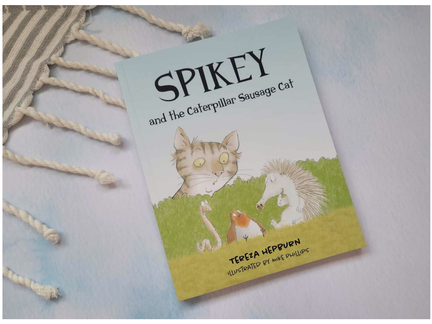
Review (gifted)! If you're looking for a new book to read with your children this autumn, this is the one! We've been eagerly anticipating the sequel to Spikey since we reviewed it two years ago. Spikey and the Caterpillar Sausage cat is the second book from Tereza Hepburn. Aimed at 2-8 year olds, we quite possibly enjoyed this heartwarming story about Spikey the hedgehog's adventures even more than the first!

The Story

In the first book, we meet Spikey leaving the nest and making his way into the world alone. He has a slightly deformed hind leg, but that doesn't stop him from having some big adventures where he lives in Regent's Park, London. Spikey and the Caterpillar Sausage Cat feels like reuniting with an old friend. It's wonderful to see Spikey is still doing well and it's lovely to be reacquainted with his friends White Tip and Stripey from the first book, as well as meeting some new friends. My personal favourite was Dave the worm, who has a strong London accent!

In this book, Spikey's new friend Reggie is a young robin who can't yet fly and has hurt himself trying to do so. Spikey and his friends decide to help him to learn. However, it doesn't exactly go to plan and Spikey and Dave end up in danger, before Reggie ends up in even more danger with none other than the park ranger's cat, Tiny! It is clear that Reggie needs to learn to fly to keep himself safe. Unfortunately, something is holding him back. Spikey and his friends help Reggie to work through it and achieve his goal.

Tereza is brilliant at weaving twists and turns into her stories, building up suspense for young readers. In one final twist, Tiny the cat needs Reggie's help. Reggie must act fast – and so must Spikey and his friends!



Important Lessons

The author creates characters that are easily relatable for children and adults alike. Important lessons are peppered throughout the storyline and through the characters' behaviour and dialogue. As in the original Spikey book, this story also champions friendship and kindness. In fact, it even shows the importance of being kind even when someone has not been kind to you. By the end of the story, everyone is a winner as the result of each other's kindness.

The storyline also shows how important it is to persevere to reach your goals! Poor Reggie keeps trying and trying to fly. He understandably becomes quite frustrated when he can't do it. Yet he doesn't ever truly give up – and neither do his friends! With their help and a new positive mindset, he manages to fly. Children can relate to this, as they struggle to learn new skills. It helps to teach them, or support the idea, that through perseverance they can learn and achieve new things too!

Additionally, it teaches readers a little bit about each of the animals in the book and what their strengths are.

How it's written

Once again, the font and size as well as how the story is written are perfect for 2-8 year olds. It includes words that may be a little challenging. These aren't so frequent that you're constantly having to stop to explain, but are sporadically placed. They're a great opportunity to help expand childrens' vocabulary! There is a good balance of pictures to help keep little ones interested, as well as those who are just starting to enter the world of books that are more text than pictures.

There are also a variety of questions at the bottom of each page, some easier and some a little more challenging. These have been written with guidance from Emeritus Professor Irvine Girsch. They invite children to really think about what is happening between the lines and why.

What Autumn Thought

I can see this book is going to be just as beloved as the original Spikey book, which Autumn and I have read around 5 or 6 times. We received the first book when she was 4. Now she has freshly turned 7 and it still captured her attention just as much. The questions were still more than challenging enough for her too.

She is now able to read, unlike the first time I read Spikey to her. She could read most of it with ease, although there was the occasional word she couldn't work out. I also had to help her with reading how Dave the worm's London accent was written. This in itself is a good reading challenge as it relies on a child relying more on diagraphs they've learnt rather than guessing words they're already familiar with.

Nonetheless, Autumn loved Dave the worm and his accent. She loved the humour throughout the book and many giggles were elicited by Dave in particular! She found it hilarious that Tiny got called a caterpillar sausage cat and clearly enjoyed all the twists and turns the story took.

What Reuben Thought

I tried reading this book with Reuben too. Although he's at the younger end of the children it's targeted at, I wondered if he would engage with it. He did start off by listening and looking at the pictures. However, it wasn't long before he wandered off! I think Autumn would have listened at his age, but they are very different children. That said, he has taken a liking to walking around the house with it so I think we may have another Spikey fan yet!

You can find out more about Spikey and how to support hedgehogs at www.thelittlehedgehog.com. The paperback of Spikey and the Caterpillar Sausage Cat by Tereza Hepburn is available now for £9.99 at all good retailers. If you have Amazon Prime, it's available for next day delivery so you don't have to wait long at all!

Disclosure: We were gifted this book in return for this review. As always, all views and opinions are honest and my own.

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Me In a Nutshell

Welcome to my blog! I'm Laura, a mum of two. I live in Kent with my teenage sweetheart husband Dave, our 6-year-old daughter Autumn and 2-year-old son Reuben.

I write about my experiences of parenting, as well as the local area and my plethora of interests. These include fashion, beauty, cars, weddings, mental health and the home.

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