

# *Reading Horizons*

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## Professional Materials

Marti Wegner\*

\*Ring Lardner Junior High, Niles MI

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# Professional Materials

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## **Abstract**

Learning About Biographies: A Reading and Writing Approach for Children. Myra Zarnowski. 1990; Children's Books: Henry's Happy Birthday. Holly Keller. 1990; The New Illustrated Dinosaur Dictionary. Helen Roney Sattler. 1990; Mr. Hacker. James Stevenson. 1990; It Happens to Everyone. Bernice Myers. 1990. Children's Books Marketing. Reviewed by: Sherry Myers, Jeanne M. Jacobson, and Nancy Hood



able to pick and choose the portions of the lesson plans they feel are best suited to their own students. In addition, Zarnowski suggests methods for integrating the material into the life of the student, a process requiring higher level thought.

*Learning About Biographies* is well written with clear, fast moving, understandable language that can be read easily in an hour or two. While reading you may frequently find yourself saying, "Oh! Of course. That makes perfect sense."

## Books for Children

*Henry's Happy Birthday* by Holly Keller. Greenwillow Books, 105 Madison Ave., New York NY 10016. 32 pp. ISBN 0-688-09450-3. US\$12.95.

Reviewed by Sherry R. Myers  
Western Michigan University

It is Henry's birthday, and nothing is going right. The cake is the wrong flavor, he doesn't appear to be getting the gift he had been promised, and he doesn't win the party games. When the time comes to blow out his candles, the only wish Henry can think to make is to wish it were somebody else's birthday instead of his. Then good things start happening, and Henry learns that appearances can be deceiving, in more ways than one.

Henry learns that some days things just don't seem to go the way he'd wish, but Henry learns that wishing those bad days away could be a big mistake. Things that aren't what one imagines can be just as good – in a different way. A gentle lesson in adjusting expectations to meet reality, *Henry's Happy Birthday* lets the young listener chuckle through Henry's misfortunes and be delighted with him when everything turns out better than just okay. Keller manages, with a simple story line and colorful, heart-warming illustrations, to touch on a generation-spanning truth: real life is seldom what we expected it to be. The story's upbeat ending subtly counsels young and old readers alike to be patient with reality.

*The New Illustrated Dinosaur Dictionary.* Written by Helen Roney Sattler; illustrated by Joyce Powzyk. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 105 Madison Ave., New York NY 10016. ISBN: 0-688-08462-1. 352 pp. US\$24.95.

Billed as "the indispensable handbook for dinosaur lovers," this carefully prepared, 362-page compendium amply fulfills its promise. More than 350 dinosaurs are described in detail, while other entries discuss aspects of the study of dinosaurs, e.g., "naming dinosaurs," and present information about related terminology, e.g., "carnivore" and "Cretaceous Period," and the parts of a dinosaur. Variations in print style and form give helpful signals about cross-references; large print and careful writing make complex information easy to understand:

SALTOPUS (Sahl--o-pus) "Leaping Foot" (Latin *saltus* = leaping + Greek *pous* = foot, because the finder thought it was a leaper, but it was really a runner.)

A small COELUROSAUR of Triassic Europe. This BIPEDAL dinosaur was similar to PODOKESAURUS but was smaller. It was an agile little meat eater about the size of a house cat. It stood only 8 inches (20 cm) high at the hips and weighed about 2 pounds (1 kg). Its HANDS had five fingers and were capable of grasping prey. *Saltopus* was a swift runner with sharp TEETH, and it probably ate small lizards and other small animals. It had a long, swanlike neck and large eyes. It is known from partial skeletons found in Scotland.

Classification: Coelurosauria, Theropoda, Saurischia.

A marvelous book — truly filled with information to marvel at — which would be a welcome addition to any classroom or home. (JMJ)

*Mr. Hacker.* Written by James Stevenson; illustrated by Frank Modell. Greenwillow Books, William Morrow & Company, 105 Madison Ave., New York NY 10016. ISBN: 0-688-09216-0. Hardcover. 32 pp. US\$12.95.

For reading, and being read to, children will relish the story of a lonely man who finds occupation and pleasure in feeding animals, and an ongoing challenge in making sure no

one eats food designated for some other species. The illustrations are appealing, good-humored and informative — from the first page on which Mr. Hacker walks sadly toward us, down a bleak, littered city street, to the last page where, carrying "cat food, dog food, dog bones, bird seed, and — for the squirrels — a bag of nuts," with a large dog trotting companionably by his side, he strides purposefully away from us, down a snowy country lane. (JMJ)

*It Happens to Everyone*. Written and illustrated by Bernice Myers. 1990. Children's Books Marketing, William Morrow and Company, 105 Madison Ave., New York NY 10016. ISBN 0-688-09081-8, 0-688-09082-6. Hardcover. 32 pp. US\$12.95.

Reviewed by Nancy Hood  
Western Michigan University

*It Happens to Everyone* is about the very first day of school. Michael, the little boy in the story, and Mrs. Daniel, the teacher, are both nervous. In a new way, this book tells the story about a grown-up getting the first day jitters, too.

The illustrations are colorful and humorous and very realistic. They will capture the eye of every eager kindergarten student. *It Happens to Everyone* is a valuable addition to the "beginning school" collection. Both children and adults can relate to this story of the teacher and student and the anxieties they feel about the opening day of school.

Materials reviewed are not endorsed by *Reading Horizons* or Western Michigan University. The content of the reviews reflects the opinion of the reviewers whose names or initials appear with the reviews.

To submit an item for potential review, send to Kathryn A. Welsch, Reviews Editor, *Reading Horizons*, Reading Center and Clinic, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008.