

October 2012

Review: Mary Englebreit's Nursery Tales

Janice A. DeLong

Liberty University, jadelong@liberty.edu

Rachel Schwedt

Liberty University, reschwed@liberty.edu

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Recommended Citation

DeLong, Janice A. and Schwedt, Rachel, "Review: Mary Englebreit's Nursery Tales" (2012). *Ages 3-6*. 1. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/ages3-6/1>

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Englebreit, Mary (compiler and illustrator). *Mary Englebreit's Nursery Tales.* HarperCollins Publishers, 2008. ISBN: 9780060731687.

Description:

With the gentleness and humor tailor-made for the preschooler and the beginning reader, accomplished artist and storyteller, Mary Englebreit, shares twelve of her favorite nursery rhymes. On pages large enough to share with a group or just right for an adult and a child to hold together, characters like Goldilocks, Puss in Boots, the Emperor with or without his clothes, and others come to life in tales that will not frighten, but will engage the youngest audience. Vibrant, rollicking illustrations bearing the illustrator's signature style decorate each page. Stories of courage, ingenuity, diligence, and creativity provide the perfect introduction to literature for the very young. From the opening pages of Goldilocks' escape from the three bears to the concluding graceful flight of The Ugly Duckling, these timeless tales entertain while teaching life lessons.

Critique:

In a letter to her readers, Englebreit presents her collection of stories as “dear friends” from her childhood. Introducing well-known characters from the literary heritage to her youthful audience, but avoiding the traditional violence, Englebreit creates wolves that run far, far away, giants who die on impact with the ground, smart gingerbread boys that outwit foxes, and a Hansel and Gretel who find their way back home to a loving mother. Both stories and illustrations will charm the young audience, and the tales will be called for over and over again.

Related Subjects: Animals, Easy Reading, Fables, Family, Fantasy, Folktales, Literacy, Pre-reading
Character Themes: Creativity, **Knowledge**, Diligence, Spunk