



Tick-Tock ! What's Under the Bed? ! The World is Full of Babies!

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Fans of that spirited Glasgow-based daily, the **Herald**, will need no introduction to the Manning-Granström partnership, which for a long time contributed the excellent 'Naturespotter' on the weekend Extra's back page. This was distinguished by its friendly clarity, which has flowered anew in their two 'Wonderwise' titles here. In a 'dramatised documentary' approach not dissimilar to that used in Walker's 'Read and Wonder' series to which Manning was a signal contributor, the two deliver their message in a mixture of clear print and Manning's even clearer autograph.

In **Babies** the message is the diversity of babydom - from elephants to newts - comparing speed of gestation, birthplace, language development, diet, travel and much more, all illustrated by characterful examples on spreads so designed as to have the text weaving in and out of the pictures. Granström does the human animals, Manning the others in this delightful, integrated volume.

What's Under the Bed? lifts up the floorboards, thereby raising the roof of a whole new world of lagged pipes, mouse-nests, centipedes, buried artefacts (it's a groundfloor bedroom), roots, 'underground trains, coal and, finally, magma. For this is a journey to the centre of the earth - 3000 leagues away from Verne but well worth taking for five weeks in a balloon or on an 80-day global circumnavigation, the passing of which time could, suggests James Dunbar in

Tick-Tock, be measured in heartbeats. **Tick-Tock** is all about time and its measurement. A difficult subject this, but Dunbar gives us lots of help by relating it all to the rhythm of our own tickers; particularly well expressed is the idea of differing timescales for different creatures and activities and the fact that, as time exists only by passing, it never stands still.

This looks like the beginning of a really good new departure for Watts - definitely non-fiction but touched with the

humanity that has made the better members of 'Read and Wonder' and 'Let's Read and Find Out' well worth reading aloud and for fun.

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