



Fox Tricks | Penny and the Piglets | Dennis and the Flying Saucer | Nicki

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The colourful covers and the lively pictures in these Heineman Easy-to-Read books immediately attracted the children to these; they still enjoy picture books and expect plenty of illustrations, preferably in colour in all they read. Here there's a picture on each page with an average of six lines of text in large clear type. All my class, including the more able readers gobbled up these books and many made a point of reading all four titles. They were unimpressed when I pointed out that they had just gone through £11.80 worth of books; but on that ground I had some reservations. Although attractive, instant reads, three of the four books had little more to offer than many cheaper books in reading schemes. I felt the children would not return to them.

I also tried them out with infants who were equally enthusiastic. **Fox Tricks** which was least popular with the juniors was liked by the younger children although their teacher felt that the over-simplified language tended to diminish the subtlety of the fables with the result that the book turned out to be too much like many others for this age range. The idea of a granny with a pet pig called Otto (**Penny and the Piglets**) also amused them. **Dennis and the Flying Saucer** was pronounced 'funny' by infants and juniors alike; but it was Nicki that was loved by all who read it. The title was obviously instantly inviting and many readers became hooked on this story of a scruffy tomboy who becomes a TV star after a producer is attracted by her unkempt appearance. Some teachers were worried about the moral: untidy rebels have all the fun! But the children took the story at face value and enjoyed the touch of adventure and excitement it offers.

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