

Ducky the Spy: Expect the Unexpected!

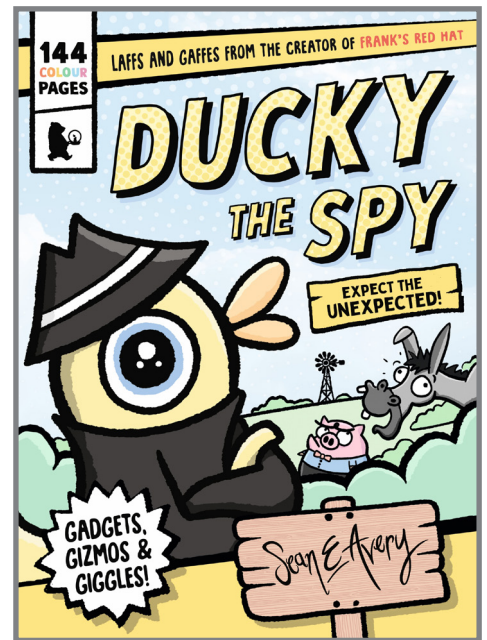
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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Ducky works as a spy on Mr Pig's farm, with his friend, a ditzzy donkey called Donny. Ducky's mission is to find the thief who is stealing from Mr Pig's food trough. But then Ducky and Donny are tasked with a harder ask—confronting the cat gang. Luckily Gretta the Inventor is on hand to help.

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Sean E Avery is a teacher, writer-illustrator, sculptor and designer born in South Africa currently living in Perth, Western Australia. Locally, he's best known as the writer-illustrator of well-loved children's picture books, such as *All Monkeys Love Bananas* and *Harold and Grace* published by Fremantle Press and *Frank's Red Hat* which was shortlisted in the CBCA 2023 Picture Book of the Year award. Internationally, he's best known as a sculptor who uses CDs and DVDs to create breathtaking works of art that reside in galleries and private collections all around the world. He is curious, enthusiastic and ready to work hard for the things he believes in.

STUDY NOTES

BEFORE READING

- Before reading, view the cover and title of the book and identify the following:
 - The title of the book
 - The author/illustrator
 - The publisher
 - The blurb.
- Based on the title only, what do you think this story is about? Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? Did your ideas change after seeing the cover?
 - How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.
- Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attention and give them some idea of what the book is about.
 - Write your own story using the title of the book.
- Look at the front cover, read the blurb on the back to gather clues and use any prior knowledge you may have to predict some events that might happen in this story.

WHILE READING**Exploring the Text**

- Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?
- Is the book an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?
- Literary techniques allow a writer to convey a deeper meaning in their text. What techniques can you find in *Ducky the Spy*? Eg. metaphor, imagery, alliteration, personification.
- What deeper meaning can you draw from the text?

Exploring the Illustrations

- How do the illustrations add to the story?
- Do you think the illustrator has effectively told the story visually?
- Cover the text in the book and write your own story following the illustrations.
- Choose one of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following illustration decisions:
 - How do you think the people are feeling? What clues might there be in the pictures?
 - Is there a main colour in this spread? How does it make you feel?
 - Do the colours change from spread to spread? Why might that be?
 - Do the pictures take up the whole page, or are they framed?
 - Are any of the words bigger on the page than the others? Why could that be?

AFTER READING

- Mr Pig is the big boss of Carnaby Farm. Ducky is his spy who helps him keep track of everything that's going on—do you think Ducky makes Mr Pig's life harder or easier? Give reasons for your answer. You can also make a pros and cons column listing Ducky's strengths on one side and his weaknesses on the other.
- Gretta the inventor creates some amazing gadgets to help Ducky be the best spy he can be. If you were in charge of inventing gadgets for Ducky, what do you think would be useful to him?
- A thief stole from Mr Pig's slop trough and a gang of cats kidnapped Mr Pig's son, Richard the goat. If you were writing a story like *Ducky the Spy*, what might be some funny farm-related crimes you could write about? If you come up with some good ideas, send them to Sean the author, because he's always on the lookout for new adventures for Ducky and Donny! Seriously. He gets most of his ideas from kids.
- Donny 'The Distraction' Donkey is Ducky's sidekick and best friend. Do you think Donny does a good job supporting Ducky in his spying endeavors? Give reasons for your answers.
- Ducky wears a trench coat and a detective's hat most of the time, but sometimes he dresses up in disguise to sneak into places undetected. Design an outfit for Ducky if he were to sneak into the following places:
 - A zoo
 - An aquarium
 - A circus
 - A medieval fair
 - A pirate convention
 - A karate tournament.