



What If?

Laura Vaccaro Seeger

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MULTIPLE STORIES . . . MULTIPLE STORIES. A story about choices from the "Queen of the Concept Book."—The Horn Book

WHAT IF a boy found a beach ball and kicked it into the ocean? WHAT IF two seals found it and began to play? WHAT IF a third seal appeared on the beach looking for a friend?

In this spare and deceptively simple book, Laura Vaccaro Seeger shows us the same story with three different outcomes, each highlighting the possibility in possibilities. Youngest children will enjoy this visit to the beach and the chance to guess what happens when different choices are made.

What If? is a 2011 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

What If? Details

Date : Published April 27th 2010 by Roaring Brook Press

ISBN : 9781596433984

Author : Laura Vaccaro Seeger

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Donalyn says

This deceptively simple, almost wordless picture book is actually a lesson in conflict resolution and friendship as three seals, all on the same beach, explore three different outcomes when they meet and decide whether or not to play together.

I had trouble telling the seals apart and had to reread the book several times to understand what was going on with each seal.

Shaylee Roberts says

Picture book: I liked this book because it used illustrations to convey the true meaning of the book! As we discussed in class, children are really great at picking up on visual cues and gathering meaning from just the pictures. Three different possibilities are explored in this book, with the last being a happy solution.

Nielson says

With very simple and limited text, this book depicts the possibilities of a ball, a beach, and three seals. The same story premise is illustrated three different ways so children will have the chance to explore the possibilities of what if? This would be a great book to get kids' imaginations churning. Though the words are basic and simple, the bright and color-popping illustrations are what create the story.

Jess says

Three options are presented via illustrations along with a few clue words.

This is the sort of book best used by a teacher/parents with a kid/class. I don't know that kids will like/get it otherwise. You could probably consider it a concept book, just not one about numbers or the alphabet.

Well reviewed and recommended in several places, but I don't know that it's as great as they said. For Seeger concept books, I'd go with One Boy or Lemons Are Not Red first.

Stephanie Skolmoski says

Laura Baccaro Seeger has captured the ability to imagine and tell your own story in this beautifully illustrated book. "What if" is merely the beginning of a fun story that children will tell themselves. Every time you open the book a different story will begin with "What if." The setting is on the beach with a beach

ball and seals. What happens next is all up to the reader. This book is great for any age!

David says

WHAT IF a boy found a beach ball & kicked it into the ocean? WHAT IF two seals found it and began to play? WHAT IF a third seal appeared on the beach looking for a friend? In this spare & deceptively simple book, Laura Vaccaro Seeger shows us the same story with three different outcomes, each highlighting the possibility in possibilities. Youngest children will enjoy this visit to the beach & the chance to guess what happens when different choices are made. (Goodreads summary)

What If? by Laura Vaccaro Seeger is a nearly wordless picturebook that explores the possibilities of different actions and the possible outcomes, focusing on the concept of exclusion. The illustrations are thickly applied & feature bright colors, & brush strokes that are swirled. Illustration size and format vary. What If? invites use for building narrative skills. Since I tend to use picture books for story hours, this is pleasant, but not as useful as Seeger's other books. For preschoolers and kindergateners.

Jennifer says

This book is just too simple. It may work as a one-on-one if you're trying to teach a lesson on inclusion, or you're working with a small group of elementary aged kids, but it just won't work as a group read aloud for anyone under about 7. 3 stars instead of 2 because the illustrations are marvelous.

Genee121 says

“What If” written by Laura Vaccaro Seeger is an almost wordless story that is interactive with the reader. Rather than just using words, Seeger gives different scenarios of “What If” a boy found a beach ball and kicked it into the ocean? What if seals found the ball and begin to play with it? What if the beach ball was found somewhere other than where it is seen in the particular scenario? Instead of just giving the reader a story, the author give three different scenarios and a chance to guess what happens when different choices are made. The cover is quite catchy, bright and the scene of a beach, and yet the illustrations within the book are pretty simple with basic colors. Overall, I enjoyed the story.

Brett says

What a cool concept!

Jo Oehrlein says

Very different than the other books I've read by this author.

The book is written in a wordless style.

The narration is basically

What if...?

And what if...?

Then what if...?

But then...

or...

This repeats, with each two page spread having one phrase.

The same story is repeated multiple times in the pictures, but the characters (seals) make different choices.

It's a story about friendship and sharing and inclusion.

Jeshua says

Genre: Modern Fantasy

Grade: K

I had to read it a second time to figure out what was going on. But once I did I realized that it is a story about problem solving and social relations in a way a kid could understand.

Joy says

The cover is appealing, beachy and bright, but this nearly wordless picture book left me feeling blah. It presents three scenarios that play out about a ball and seals at a beach.

My three year old (who selected the book in her random library shelf pulling) was not engaged by the book and hasn't asked for a re-read. My seven year old actually told me he thought it was boring.

So, I get the concept, and the illustrations are colorful, but this wasn't a hit for our family.

Lindsey says

Sure, there is loads of repetition in this book, but it is such a dull tale. It is a cause and effect story, but not a very strong one. Two sea lions play with a beach ball. What happens when they continue to play in the ocean? What happens with one leaves to go on the beach? What happens when they include a third sea lion? Anyway, it could have been a lot better, but it fell completely flat.

Kevin White says

I informed my students that I had some books to read for Cocky. I told my students that Cocky wanted to

know what books he should read to boys and girls. The students were absolutely thrilled to be apart of this adventure. They were very involved and engaged in the books and in the discussions regardings the things they liked or disliked about each book.

The students loved the pictures in the book, What If?. Some students stated that they did not like that the book only said the words: what if?, then what if?, and, or. A lot of the students said that the book was boring.

I feel that this book would not be a great choice for Cocky to read because one would want the audience to be engaged and involved. This particular book during that type of event would not be a wise choice. I feel that this would be a great book when discussing illistrators and for students to pay attention to details in the pictures. This book one would need to really pay attention to the details in pictures in order to really make sense of the book.

Lyla says

What if a boy found a beach ball and kicked it into the ocean? What if two seals found it and began to play? What if a third seal appeared on the beach looking for a friend? Enjoy this visit to the beach and the chance to guess what happens when different choices are made.

This is an almost wordless book that would best be enjoyed reading to one or two kids, in my opinion. The illustrations are so cute and the expressions really tell a lot. It could help kids make good decisions about letting others play with them and help them think about others' feelings.
