

faire les amateurs des deux genres. Francine Pelletier, qui a gagné le Prix Boréal en 1988 pour un recueil de nouvelles, sait garder l'intérêt ainsi qu'attiser la curiosité de ses lecteurs. Elle dévoile vivement et habilement tous les fils de son intrigue policière dans un décor futuriste tout en ajoutant une histoire d'amour et un "personnage" comique, Nounou, un ordinateur quasi-humain. Elle laisse aussi chez ses jeunes lecteurs un message plus sérieux. Elle souligne l'importance de leur vigilance à protéger l'environnement contre l'appétit insatiable des intérêts commerciaux.

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SOME ACTIVITY BOOKS

Outdoor fun. Catherine Ripley. Greey de Pencier, 1989. Owl and Chickadee Magazines. 32 pp., \$7.95 paper. ISBN 0-920775-37-3; **Making money.** Teena McDiarmid. Illus. Judy Willemsma. Hayes Publishing, 1988. 48 pp., paper. ISBN 0-88625-152-4. **Dinosaurs: Scholastic sticker fun.** Pat Hancock. Illus. Paul McCusker. 32 pp., \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-590-73167-X;

"Oh those lazy, hazy golden days of summer" to which phrase, by the second week of the school holidays, parents might want to add the word "crazy". Three new activity books should help diminish the summer crazies. First, Owl Magazine's new *Outdoor fun* to the rescue with ideas for crafts, games and puzzles, covering everything from building a windchime from old keys to learning to juggle, from playing an Inuit game to going star gazing.

Each activity is carefully presented, beginning with a list of the materials needed, followed by step-by-step instructions. These instructions are not, however, so detailed that creativity is stifled; for example, the directions for making a scarecrow suggest fashioning its head out of everything from a bucket to an old soccer ball decorated however you please. Mixed in with all this fun are some interesting facts, too, such as the amount of newsprint made from the average tree and information on how to tell if the moon is waxing or waning. Brightly coloured photos and humorous drawings showing kids having fun taking part in the various projects make this book instantly appealing to school aged children.

Glove sprinkler, flying saucers, ice sculptures and Chinese dragons, there is sure to be a project in here to appeal to everyone. When boredom strikes in the summer, Owl Magazine's *Outdoor fun* promises a useful antidote.

The second book is more utilitarian. Inflation affects everyone these days, even kids. Just look at what's happened to the ten cent chocolate bar! In

Making money Teena McDiarmid tries to address this problem by suggesting work pre-teens can do to earn money while still having fun.

The majority of suggestions are traditional – delivering papers, shovelling snow, baby sitting or dog walking – but some ideas are newer or more unusual, including selling craft products or organizing people's Christmas card lists on a home computer. The author stresses good business practices and record keeping and gives instructions on figuring out expenses. She also emphasizes that, while the aim is to make money, it is more important to do what you enjoy rather than simply what pays the most. Working in groups, the author suggests, makes for more fun and allows you to benefit from the skills and interests of others.

The style of the book is informal and will appeal to pre-teens. McDiarmid writes in a breezy manner full of exclamation marks, while cartoon style illustrations, in both colour and black and white, pepper the pages. Given the interest level of the book, I do wonder about the age appropriateness of some of the activities, such as conducting a child's birthday party or running a bicycle tune-up shop.

The more involved activities are also rather sketchily covered. For example, a child wishing to babysit really needs a whole book on this topic alone, although the author does recommend that any potential sitter should take a course at the "Y" or a local school to learn first aid and child care.

My one reservation about this book is that it contains no warning about the need to check the references of employers and the advisability of working only for family friends or well-known neighbours. In a large urban centre such a warning is vital.

An attractive book which should have immediate appeal for its intended readership, *Making money* should serve as a catalyst for young capitalists.

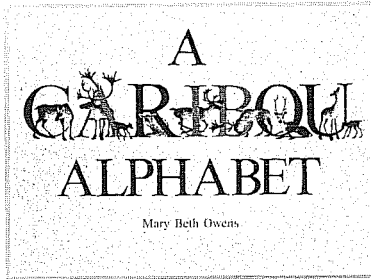
Finally – a dinosaur sticker book. Why is it that four-year-olds, who can barely pronounce their own names, are easily able to talk about "Ankylosaurs" and "Diplodocus"? Why are children who are unable to differentiate lions from tigers able to tell "Protoceratops" from "Triceratops"? The eternal fascination of dinosaurs centres, I suspect, around their image as a "real" manifestation of the monsters that haunt children's imaginations; "real" monsters who have, furthermore, the security of being very much extinct. Certainly, whatever the reason, the dinosaur does hold a position of power in the child's psyche and for these children Pat Hancock's *Dinosaurs: Scholastic sticker fun* will be a welcome treat.

Each page in this book consists of a brief description of a species of dinosaur, with above it a space into which to insert one of Paul McCusker's action filled stickers. These self-adhesive stickers are attractively drawn, showing dinosaurs running, eating and fighting, rendered in careful detail in various muted shades of blue, green, brown and purple. The text provides a large amount of information in an informal style, with an emphasis on the kind of

things that fascinate children, such as the fact that the thighbone of a *Ce-tiosaurus* is taller than most basketball players or that a *Tyrannosaurus* could swallow a human in one gulp. The text also shows that paleontology is still a developing science and that we are far from knowing "all" about dinosaurs. For example, all that has yet been found of *Deinocheirus* is a pair of gigantic fossilized arms!

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A UNIQUE ALPHABET BOOK



A caribou alphabet. Mary Beth Owens. Firefly Books, 1988. Unpag., \$14.95 cloth. ISBN 0-920668-52-6.

As a literary form, the alphabet book lends itself neatly to the exploration of specific subjects or themes. One such recent thematic alphabet book is *A caribou alphabet*, which stands out for two reasons. First, its subject, the caribou, has a definite mystique, with its spectacular migrations, its unique adaptations to its northern environment, and its charming appearance. This majestic yet gentle animal is a symbol of Canada that even four-year-olds can identify, for as every *Sesame Street* fan knows, "A quarter has a caribou on it."

A second reason for this book's exceptionality is its genesis. In 1987, a group of citizens in Maine who had formed the Maine Caribou Transplant Project with the aim of re-introducing the extinct caribou to northern Maine arranged with the government of Newfoundland to airlift 27 caribou from the Avalon Peninsula to a research station at the University of Maine in Orono. By 1988, the nursery herd had almost doubled, and in April 1989 fourteen animals were released into the Maine wilderness. This project directly inspired Pennsylvania-born Owens to produce *A caribou alphabet* as a celebration of international co-operation and a tribute to a remarkable species.

Despite its unusual inspiration and its special subject, this book is visually in the alphabet book mainstream. Layout is traditional, with a vignette illustration centred on each page above a line of text. The language, in rhymed couplets, tends to be telegraphic and allusive at times, but most references can be understood through the illustrations, and specialized vocabulary such