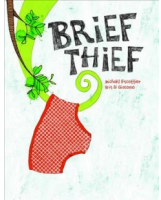


Learning Right From Wrong with the Brief Thief



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We often get requests for books that help teach children about proper rules of behavior ? everything from sharing to telling the truth. While we frequently turn to our nonfiction collection for titles designed to teach children about specific subjects or topics, often picture books more powerfully portray the importance of doing the right thing.

The use of humor is one reason the messages in picture books can have a greater impact with children. And you can't get much funnier with preschoolers (or even the K-2 crowd) than the word underpants ? not to mention the word poo. (Please, don't mention it!) The picturebook *Brief Thief* by Michael Escoffier uses both words in a span of a few pages while reminding readers that it's not right to take things that don't belong to you.

You see, poor Leon the Lizard finds himself without a necessary item after relieving himself. He notices an old pair of underpants hanging from a nearby tree branch and uses them to ?finish his business.? As he discards the underpants behind a bush, a voice calls to him. It claims to be Leon's conscience: ?The little voice you hear inside your head whenever you get up to something naughty.? The voice continues: ?? Since when are we allowed to touch other people's things? What do they teach you in school, anyway?? Leon never learns the real identity of his conscience, but readers will be amused to learn that the voice belongs to a rabbit who had been using the underpants to complete his superhero costume. We don't learn his superhero name, but I'm guessing that it's Superego.

Recommended for ages 3-8.

Posted by Lisa C. on August 3, 2013

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