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Monkey Business

AnnMarie Hamar

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Edwards, Wallace. *Monkey Business*. Illustrated by Wallace Edwards. Kids Can Press, Ltd., 2004. ISBN 1553374622. \$16.95.

Reviewer: AnnMarie Hamar

Reading Level: Preschool, Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Humorous Stories;

Subject: English Language-Idioms--Juvenile Literature;

Edwards offers his interpretation of twenty-six English language idioms in this collection of illustrations. His colorful and detailed watercolor and gouache paintings depict animal characters in humorous situations. For example, the idiom "to play by ear," is depicted by a basset hound playing a one-stringed bass with his ears. The illustrations are quite clever, particularly the facial expressions on some of the animals. The book begins with Edwards' definition of "monkey business," and the observant reader will notice that he has included thereafter, one monkey in each of his paintings. The actual definitions of each idiom Edwards uses are listed at the end of the text. This book is reminiscent of Fred Gwynne's series, *The King who Rained*, and *A Chocolate Moose for Supper*, which also visually define idioms. Due to the clever illustrations and humorous subject matter, this is a very imaginative collection.