



## Children's Book and Media Review

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Sparky

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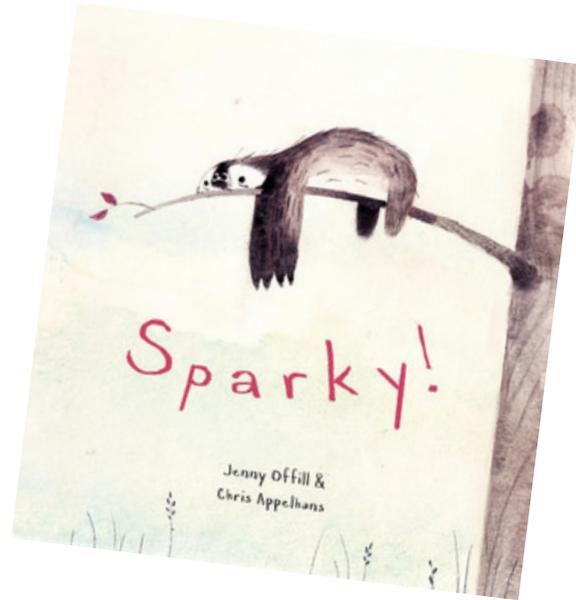
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# Book Review

**Title:** Sparky!  
**Author:** Jenny Offill  
**Illustrator:** Chris Appelhans  
**Reviewer:** Aylea Stephens  
**Publisher:** Schwartz & Wade Books  
**Publication Year:** 2014  
**ISBN:** 9780375970231  
**Number of Pages:** 40  
**Interest Level:** Toddler, Preschool  
**Rating:** Outstanding



## Review

When the little girl's mother says that she can only have a pet that doesn't need to be walked, bathed, or fed, the little girl discovers that a sloth would be the perfect friend to have. A bird or a trained seal would take too much work, but her librarian helps her learn that sloths sleep most of the time and rarely eat, so she orders her new pet. She plays games with her new pet, Sparky, with various success. When her friend Mary comes over to see Sparky, she starts to feel like maybe Sparky isn't good enough so she decides to have a Trained Sloth Extravaganza to prove that he is a great pet. When he doesn't perform as she hoped he would, the little girl has to come to understand that her pet is unique and has his own gifts.

The narrator's confidence that Sparky is a great pet even when he is not the most obedient or playful is charming. The book reflects the unnamed little girl's attitudes in illustrations and repeated lines such as "a promise is a promise" and the amusing illustrations, such as the sloth inside the Express Mail box. When she loves her pet in spite of him being different from most other pets and she is determined to prove that he is a great pet, the reader is reminded that it is important to love pets (and people) for being just who they are. Sparky! is a delightful book that will thrill young audiences and adults alike.