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Nelly May Has Her Say

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Book Review

Title: Nelly May Has Her Say
Author: Cynthia DeFelice
Illustrator: Henry Cole
Reviewer: Tessa McMillan
Publisher: Margaret Ferguson Books
Publication Year: 2013
ISBN: 9780374398996
Number of Pages: 32
Interest Level: Toddler, Preschool, Primary
Rating: Excellent



Review

Nelly May is the oldest child of her large, poor family. She leaves home seeking employment from Lord Ignasius Pinkwinkle. Lord Pinkwinkle will hire Nelly May if she can remember all his special names for things around the house. After a very confusing tour of his home, Nelly May agrees to Lord Pinkwinkle's conditions and memorizes his nonsense words. Late that night, Nelly May is awakened by the smell of smoke. She runs to Lord Pinkwinkle's room and explains the dilemma using all of his ridiculous terms. As soon as she finishes, she quits and returns home. The next day, Lord Pinkwinkle arrives at Nelly May's home pleading for her return. She accepts his offer if he will stop using his far-fetched terminology.

DeFelice based *Nelly May Has Her Say* on an old English folktale called *Master of All Masters*. But DeFelice has made it her own story in three distinct ways. First, she tells the story from Nelly May's perspective by explaining why Nelly May was seeking employment. Second, DeFelice creates her own hilarious, tongue-twisting terminology used by Lord Pinkwinkle. Finally, she adds a charming, happy ending where Nelly May and Lord Pinkwinkle resolve their problems. Cole's quirky and colorful illustrations support the humor of DeFelice's tongue-tied tale. Cole portrays Nelly May as a small, spunky redhead whose expressions show she has the intelligence to change Lord Pinkwinkle's odd ways. *Nelly May Has Her Say* is a great resource for teaching about folktales from around the world.