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Ball

Liz Kazandzhy

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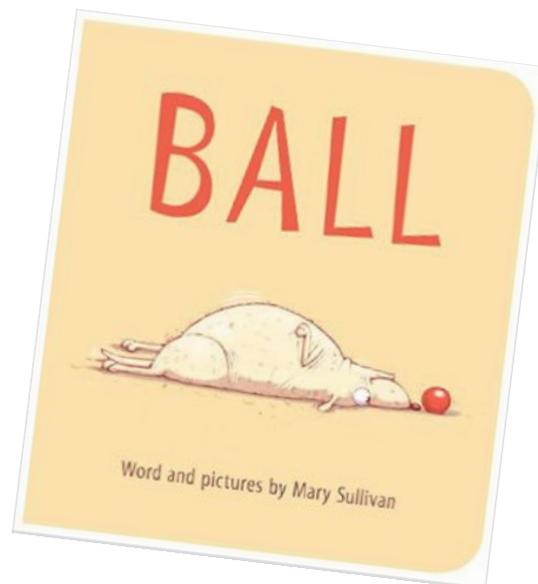
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Book Review

Title: Ball
Author: Mary Sullivan
Reviewer: Liz Kazandzhy
Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers
Publication Year: 2015
ISBN: 9780544313613
Number of Pages: 32
Interest Level: Toddler, Preschool
Rating: Excellent



Review

Like most dogs, all this dog wants is to play with his ball. When the little girl in the house wakes up, she happily plays fetch with him, but soon she has to go off to school, leaving the dog alone with his beloved ball. He tries to get others to play with him—mom, baby, cat—but with no luck. Finally, he starts a game creatively playing with the ball by himself, dozes off, and has a series of vivid, ball-related dreams. Before he knows it, the little girl returns and the dog is finally able to play fetch again.

Ball is the only word in this book, since it's really the only thing on the dog's mind. This may be a turnoff to some readers who are expecting a little more "content," but this kind of style of book can still be very entertaining and conducive to learning, which is the case with this one. For example, new readers will be delighted that they can read an entire book by themselves, and since the message of each "ball" is slightly different, children still have the challenge of deciding which emotions go with each scene when reading out loud. Also, despite the lack of commentary, the illustrations do tell a full story, and the detailed emotions and events engage the reader and could easily lead into additional commentary and a discussion about feelings. In any case, this story would definitely resonate with dog-lovers who understand a dog's enduring obsession with balls, and it is a creative and simple way to teach young readers new concepts.