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Nerdy Birdy

Axel Trumbo

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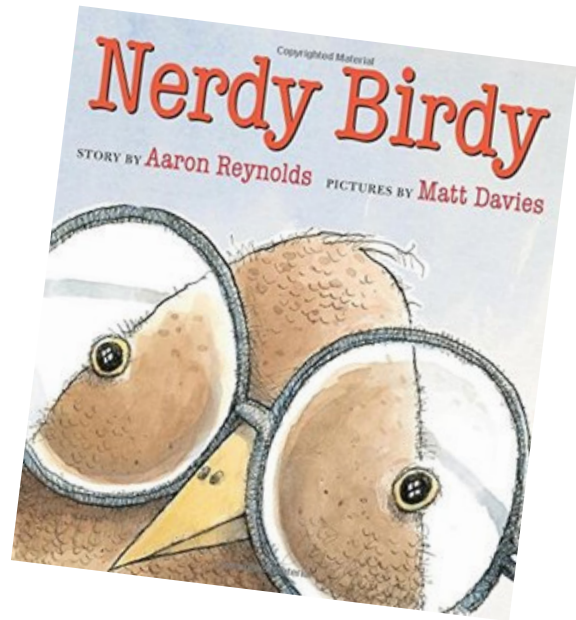
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Book Review

Title: Nerdy Birdy
Author: Aaron Reynolds
Illustrator: Matt Davies
Reviewer: Axel Trumbo
Publisher: Roaring Book Press
Publication Year: 2015
ISBN: 9781626721272
Number of Pages: 20
Interest Level: Preschool
Rating: Excellent



Review

Nerdy Birdy is the quirky story of a nerd with giant glasses, and an even bigger heart. Nerdy Birdy is lonely because, while the cool birds have impressive physiques and abilities, he has food allergies, stubby wings, and reads books. He's made fun of, but still wants their approval. Then, Nerdy Birdy discovers an entire community of nerds that share his same interests and dietary restrictions, and he's welcomed with open arms. Encouraged to be himself, he's finally happy. But a new bird moves into the neighborhood, who isn't cool, but isn't quite a nerd either; she's just . . . unique. Nerdy Birdy is shocked to discover his nerd friends reject her, just as he once was by the cool birds. So Nerdy Birdy befriends this new bird and starts a group where anyone who needs a friend is welcome.

Nerdy Birdy is a playful book with an important message for young readers. The book starts by teaching that it's okay to be a nerd. This is artfully accomplished by introducing funny characters like Eagle the jock and Cardinal the self-obsessed rock star, whose character flaws are obvious, making the reader wonder what's so cool about being "cool." The quirky art style and humor work wonderfully when we're introduced to the other nerds, whose gear references coding, math, Star Wars, and Dr. Who. But a more important message catches you by surprise: even nerds can make the mistake of excluding those who are different. While the nerds' motto was that "there's always room for another nerdy birdy," our kind-hearted protagonist went with, "there's always room for another . . . birdy."