



2020

### Up Verses Down

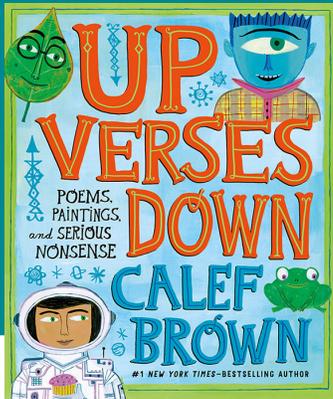
Krista Alletto

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## Book Review

# Up Verses Down

### Author

Calef Brown

### Illustrator

Calef Brown

### Reviewer

Krista Alletto

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### Rating

Outstanding

### Level

Toddler, Preschool,  
Primary, Intermediate

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### Pages

80

### Year

2019

### ISBN

9780805099294

### Publisher

Henry Holt and Company

Up Verses Down is a collection of poems and paintings ranging in topic from family trees to footie pajamas. The book is divided up into sections titled “People Are People,” “Food-Stuffs,” “Sleepy time,” “Odd-Ments,” and “Animal Life.” In one short poem entitled “Borscht,” Brown describes a wanderer in a bog. He likens the sky to red borscht and then pokes fun at his own poetry in these lines, saying “The air was like borscht./ This poem is the worscht./ The rhymes are forscht.” In another poem entitled “Simile Park,” the voice describes a favorite place that is “as vast as the sea/ and as precious to me/ as a diamond aglow in the dark.” Another poem, “GO! DO!” lists many wacky, creative activities to do on an afternoon like “Knit an ugly sweater/ for a favorite family pet./ Eat a massive sundae/ that you instantly regret.” The last poem of the collection is a general celebration of poems in all their varieties.

Up Verses Down is a clever, comical, and eclectic collection of poems for children. The wordplay throughout the book, including in the title, adds interest and amusement. Every poem in the book has an illustration that perfectly supports and adds to the comedic (and oftentimes, nonsensical) quality of the text. Many different ethnicities are represented in these illustrations. Not every poem has a meaningful message, but many do. For example, in “My Tree,” Brown teaches that families are never perfect, but they are always special. In another poem entitled “Chris and Trudy,” Brown tries to teach readers about friendship, inclusion, and service. This fantastic collection of verses will interest children (and adults) of all ages.