



2017

The Zoo Box

Cynthia Phillips

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Book Review

Title: The Zoo Box
Author: Ariel Cohn
Illustrator: Aron Nels Steinke
Reviewer: Cynthia Phillips
Publisher: First Second
Publication Year: 2014
ISBN: 9781626720527
Number of Pages: 48
Interest Level: Primary
Rating: Dependable



Review

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to reverse roles with zoo animals? This animated comic strip explores that possibility. Meet Erika and Patrick. Their parents are going out for the night and Erika is in charge. Mom has asked them to be in bed on time with the promise of going to the zoo in the morning. Erika and Patrick enjoy playing until they find a box that says "DO NOT OPEN." Of course it must be a fun surprise. . .or is it? Once the box is opened zoo animals start coming out of it! The children find themselves in a zoo where the exhibits are full of people "in their natural habitat." By the time they reach their home again they're not so sure they want to visit the zoo in the morning.

This book is formatted as a comic book but in picture book length and presentation. It is a great book for early readers as the words are not too complex and the length of the book is just right. The context is a bit intense for young readers and a bit political, but not overbearing or direct. The storyline might be too scary for some younger readers, so parents and teachers may want to read it first to make sure their readers will be comfortable with the abstract and intense nature of the story. The pages are of good quality and the illustrations are colorful and dynamic. This book is a great for children who enjoy reading progressive stories and comic books. It is also a wonderful medium to expand their imagination.