

Read-Aloud Review®

Brownstone Reviewing Services

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The Read-Aloud Review

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Laughalong

The Jester Has Lost His Jingle

by David Saltzman

Afterword by Maurice Sendak

reading time: 11 minutes

This book is clearly the most joyful, exuberant, fun-filled read-aloud of the decade and there's a wonderful message here besides! When it appears that the world has lost its sense of humor, the King banishes the Jester. Down, but not out, the Jester and Pharley, his alter ego, search the universe, ultimately finding and reinstating laughter to its rightful place: that of regenerating the human spirit.

In creating a book for children ages two to a hundred-and-two which invites the readaloud to perform, rather than merely read, Saltzman has pioneered a new genre: the laughalong. For never has the adage "laugh and the world laughs with you" been more apropos than when Saltzman provides the book's narrator with "laugh lines" which compel listeners and readalouders to laugh aloud together.

Besides providing terrific entertainment, the book provides an alternative to anyone faced with adversity, whether it be financial, emotional or physical: "I turn my sadness upside down and stand it on its head", says the Jester. Maurice Sendak's afterword makes clear that David Saltzman did just that in his life as well as in his art. Instead of wallowing in self pity for the Hodgkins disease which claimed his life before age twenty-three, he created a magnificently illustrated, ebulliently told story in which he left laughter as his legacy.
(Jester Company, 1995, ISBN 0-9644563-0-3 \$20.00)

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