

Little Pigs have tied up her grandmother. Emily tickles the pigs' noses with her wildflower bouquet and the "Aaa-choo" releases the hungry wild animals to clear out the pigs from her grandmother's house.

The illustrations by Ruth Ori match the mood of this fanciful story. Flowers and other small vignettes of Emily skip across the pages underneath the text. The full-page illustrations are bordered by wooden-like flower frames, giving the book the feel of an old fairy tale.

Ooo-cha! is a book that can be read many times over and enjoyed by children and parents alike.

Ingrid Masak Mida is a freelance writer and editor.

Pussycats Everywhere. Sheila McGraw. Illus. Sheila McGraw. Firefly, 2000. 32 pp. \$6.95 paper. ISBN 1-55209-348-4. Ages 5-8.

Sheila McGraw is probably best known for her illustrations in *Love You Forever* by Robert Munsch, and her latest work, which she has written and illustrated, tells the story of a lost cat and a little girl's efforts to retrieve him. When beloved Mister Whiskers disappears, a young girl named Karen puts up "Lost Cat" posters. She forgets to include a description of the cat, and all of the stray cats in town are dropped off at her door. Thirty-seven cats arrive, and Karen is kept busy entertaining them while continuing her search for Mister Whiskers. She invents "pussycat games" like "cat-nip mouse tag." The language in the book makes it perfect for reading aloud. For example, when the thirty-seven cats arrive, readers hear their arrival through repeated "ding dongs" of the doorbell. Perhaps the most inventive part of the text is the three page *cat*-ologue that pairs a cat picture with a cat name. The names are creative: there is Clawdia, Purcee, Tux, and Ruggles along with the more usual Smudge, Socks, and Snowball. More importantly, the catalogue appeals to younger readers who rejoice in naming all the beings in their world. McGraw's illustrations are, for the most part, warm and glowing, and cats peek out from hiding places on each page. Karen and Mr. Whiskers are reunited in the end, and all thirty-seven cats find their rightful homes, offering emotional reassurance to young readers. The plot offers delightful chaos and a comforting return to order.

Why? The best ever question and answer book about nature, science and the world around you. Catherine Ripley. Illus. Scot Ritchie. Owl, 2001. 192 pp. \$19.95. ISBN 1-894379-25-X. Ages 3-8.

Covering topics from acid, air, and animals to wrinkles, yarn, and yawns, this book tries to provide answers to the questions kids ask about the world around them. *Why? The best ever question and answer book* is a compilation of some six books that previously appeared in Owl Books's *Question and Answer* series under titles such as *Why is soap so slippery?* (1995), *Why is the Sky Blue?* (1997), and *Why does Popcorn Pop?* (1997). This collection is comprised of six sections organized from a kid's-eye point of view: Bathtime Questions, Supermarket Questions, Nighttime Questions,

Outdoor Questions, Kitchen Questions, and Farm Animal Questions. The illustrations by Scot Ritchie make this an appealing book that a child would want to sit down and browse through, even without having a specific question. An uncomplicated index is included for those who have a specific question. The answers are written in a direct and simple manner, sure to satisfy questioners for a little while at least. At the end of each chapter, there are "bits" of information added for interest, such as "Surprise...cheese comes from grass! Cows eat grass, and inside their bodies the grass gets turned into milk. After the cow is milked, some of the milk is used to make cheese." Straightforward diagrams are included where necessary to make explanations clearer. One, for example, shows behind-the-scenes at a supermarket; another shows the tendons in a bird's legs; and another shows the inside of a cow. Even adults will be interested to learn the names for each of a cow's four stomachs, and this book may inspire further parent-child investigations. It is, overall, a useful reference work for home or school libraries.

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Soccer: The Winning Way. Bob Mackin. Greystone, 2001. 66 pp. \$14.95 paper. ISBN 1-055054-825-5.

Bob Mackin directs this instructional manual at novice players. Its advice, in short paragraphs or point form, is succinct, occasionally even mystifyingly cryptic. I am delighted that so many of the colourful photos show skilled *girls* active in training sessions: too many other such books read male-only. It's difficult to get *still* photos that clearly illustrate *process*, the skills and techniques of a fast-moving game. Some are clear, but several are rather ambiguously related to the accompanying text. The full-page photos of soccer heroes are glossy and glitzy, but decidedly less informative than the training photos. Among 22 glossies, four are of female players, including one of the inevitable Mia Hamm and one of Canadian national teamkeeper Nicci Wright. The tips in this book will seem mostly routine for players who have played three or four seasons or who are over age twelve, but *The Winning Way* will serve as a fine first soccer book for the starting player.

Laurie Ricou has coached girls' soccer since 1979.