



# Oliver

*Birgitta Sif*

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**Oliver** Birgitta Sif

**An imaginative child who doesn't quite fit in finds a kindred spirit in this utterly charming picture book from a debut author-illustrator.**

Oliver is different. He enjoys his solitude. He likes playing with his friends, who are puppets, stuffed animals, and other toys. With his rich imagination, Oliver's day is never dull. There are bridges to cross, sharks to fight, and treasures to find! But maybe toys don't always give a boy everything he needs. Maybe he needs another kind of companion. Will Oliver discover a way to be, well, *different*? When his tennis ball rolls across the lawn into the yard of the girl next door, he just might be surprised.

## Oliver Details

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Author : Birgitta Sif

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## From Reader Review Oliver for online ebook

### J says

Cute story about an introverted and "different" young boy who finds companionship with an introverted and "different" young girl.

I liked the artwork and the message. Great for beginning readers.

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### Michelle says

Oliver reminds me of my son, and I'm reading this at work (library) and trying not to cry at my desk. Amazing illustrations and great story.

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### Peg says

This is a little gem! I love everything about the book--the art and the text are fantastic! Oliver's okay with his doing things differently and usually by himself. His imagination fills his world, until one day when he feels different and discovers a friend, who is also a little different herself. The illustrations have a muted tone, but add some humor to Oliver and his surroundings. This gentle story would be a great conversation/discussion starter about differences between people. It would be an excellent book to use with children to help them understand autism, even though Oliver could just be one of those kids who are "loners."

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### Angelina says

3.5 stars. One star for the charming illustrations.

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### Lorna says

A lovely story of a boy who prefers to play by himself until an unplanned event introduces him to a new friend. Fun illustrations have a lot of cute details that will have the reader lingering over the page spreads. Text captures well the solitude that some kids need.

Quote: "And sometimes, wherever he was, he wanted to fly away."

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### Erin says

In a very simple style, Sif tells the story of Oliver who's a little different. He has good times and great

adventures with his friends who are really stuffed animals and puppets. He is perfectly happy doing things all by himself. He never even thinks about doing anything with other people until he meets Olivia. She is a little different, too.

Good for storytimes. Also, great for young ones trying to understand autism. Oliver may or may not have autism. He just doesn't have a problem with being alone or different at all, nor does he worry about what others may think of him. Olivia is just the same.

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### **Ellie Labbett says**

A hopeful story that reaches out to those who feel like an outsider, find it difficult to make friends and settle themselves in a lonely bubble. Oliver is a character that is comfortable being by himself, but as time wears on he begins to find difficulties in being alone, with no one to lean on. 'Oliver' carries a message that things do not always have to be like this. You may feel unable to connect to others, but like-minded people will eventually come.

Something that I noticed within Oliver was the common habit of comparing to others leading to a feeling of unease. It is when Oliver begins to see other children with friends similar to themselves that he begins to doubt who he really is or who he ought to be. This might be an excellent discussion point with children, talking about comparing themselves with peers. Seeing what other people have should not lessen our opinion of ourselves.

On another note, I LOVED the final page, turning an ending into a new beginning- so refreshing and positive.

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### **Caroline says**

I loved this picture book about a boy, Oliver, who feels different from everyone else so he spends most of his time alone reading and dreaming...until a chance occurrence introduces him to Olivia. Oliver and Olivia become friends and "it was the beginning of the best adventure he'd ever had." The artwork is lovely in muted colors, and the characters in the book are quirky and odd--a wonderful reminder that we are all odd, and different, in our own way.

The text is simple enough that it could work as a read aloud for an older story time, but the illustrations add so much to the story that it would also do well in a more intimate sharing where the reader has time to examine the spreads at length.

A wonderful tribute to individuality and friendship.

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### **Matthew says**

What a beautiful book! The illustrations are just a lot of fun. There are all sorts of hidden elements running throughout for the observant reader, sub-stories that you can follow visually. The story is of a child who doesn't fit in, but doesn't feel terribly about it. Eventually, however, he does feel a slight longing for

companionship until, by pure happenstance, he stumbles upon just the sort of friend he could use.

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### **HueL says**

Oliver is one of a kind. This book itself is uniquely illustrated, with Birgitta's seemingly free strokes and palette that is not so vibrant.

The story depicts a little boy , a little different from the rest of the world, living in his own small world, with joy, and transformed through an adventure. Deep down in every kids' or even adults' heart, there is a such place, we live in that small world, sometime feel hesitated or even reluctant to walk out. Yes, we have joy in that small world, but at the same time, feel the restraint and limitations of that world. The fulfillment of a human being comes very largely from society, scientifically well examined and proved. This little book worked on this end, and provide children a valuable lesson of how we can all walk out from that small world and start to make friends, and feel of the fulfillment as a person.

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### **Mary says**

The sentiment of this book--even children with different interests from the usual can find kindred spirits--is great. Oliver has a wonderful imagination and enjoys uncommon forms of solitary entertainment with his hand puppets and toys. Eventually he finds someone else with whom to enjoy puppetry. The illustrations are busy, and like Oliver, a little unusual. Tie-in with discussions about acceptance, inclusion, kindness.

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### **Megan says**

Super cute. Reminds me of...me!

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### **Mehsi says**

Not a long review, just a short one to express my thoughts.

This book sounded interesting, but in the end I was mostly bored. I just couldn't connect with Oliver (I found him strange and awkward, and yes, I know he was supposed to be all different and the likes, but for me he just felt like a boy who didn't want to grow up and check out the world around him). The story was also pretty boring. Just Oliver going on his daily life, reading books, playing with his dolls/plushies/whatever and then magically he discovers something (which is spoiled in the blurb).

Continuing on that, I also didn't like that the blurb already spoiled the ending (or as they put it in the book, the beginning). As the whole tennis ball thing, well it doesn't happen until the end. :( It would have been better had this not been known. Had the blurb said something about: "And then Oliver makes a discovery that will change his view on the world."

The illustrations were good though, and they kept me anchored to the book when the story failed. However,

just illustrations being a good thing means I can't rate this one high.

Would I recommend this book? No, no, I wouldn't. I am sure there are way more fun books on the topic of a child being different/strange.

Review first posted at <http://twirlingbookprincess.com/>

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### **Jen says**

SOOOOOOOO CUTE! This was a lovely story about being unique and figuring out how to share that with someone else. The illustrations are fabulous! Don't forget to go back and examine all the pictures once you've read the story!

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### **Basma says**

Can't stress enough how lovely the art is. Seriously. I know all my comments on children's books are about the art, but it does play a major role in experiencing the book -at least to me it is. The ending was quite expected, I wish it was different but it's still cute.

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