



On a Magical Do-Nothing Day

Beatrice Alemagna , Jill Davis (Translator)

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Give the gift of a magical do-nothing day!

This picture book with startlingly beautiful words and pictures will spur imagination and a break from boredom or screen time. Now a *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book of the Year!

All I want to do on a rainy day like today is play my game. My mom says it's a waste of time, but without my game, nothing is fun! On the other hand, maybe I'm wrong about that...

While reading *On a Magical Do-Nothing Day*, one gets the sense that the illustrator became lost in her drawings, and as a reader, you'll want to do the same. Perfect for fans of picture books by Julie Morstad, Carson Ellis, Jon Klassen, and Tomi Ungerer.

"Hands down, Beatrice Alemagna is my favorite contemporary illustrator," said the Caldecott Honor-winning illustrator of *Last Stop on Market Street*, Christian Robinson.

***On a Magical Do-Nothing Day* has been recognized with a Gold Medal from the Society of Illustrators. Don't miss this picture book that beautifully encourages unplugged exploration.**

On a Magical Do-Nothing Day Details

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Author : Beatrice Alemagna , Jill Davis (Translator)

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From Reader Review On a Magical Do-Nothing Day for online ebook

Michael Fitzgerald says

I like the illustrations (though why did no one notice that in one picture the kid's jacket wasn't colored in at all?), but the story is dumb. Instead of writing a story about a video-addicted kid who goes and explores nature, just give us a book that glorifies nature and imagination. I feel like Marie Hall Ets got this concept better.

Elizabeth Willis says

Enchanting & grumpy & beautiful & perfect.

David Schaafsma says

I decided to read all seven of the books Maria Popova (on twitter) says were the loveliest picture books of 2017:

<https://www.brainpickings.org/2017/12...>

This is my fourth in the series, a NY Times Picture book of the Year, mainly for its pretty stunning illustrations by the author. A girl wants to stay inside and just play her gameboy. Her mother pushes her outside, where she loses the device and then has to discover nature instead: Snails, mushrooms, mud, sunbeams, running, falling.

"The whole world seemed brand-new, as if it had been created right in front of me."

"I talked to a bird."

"I breathed in air until my lungs were bursting."

"I noticed bugs I'd never seen before."

And once you start noticing things, everything changes, your relationship to the natural world, to people, and yourself.

Nicki Fairman says

I really enjoyed this picture book which would be ideal for a Year 1 or 2 class. It tells the story of a child who just wants to play on their games console but when they finally get outside they get carried away in an adventure of the great outdoors! A captivating story which shows children there is so much to be explored

beyond digital screens.

Stephanie Day says

The character within this book was very relatable, a lot of children can feel bored and like they have nothing to do. The child goes from playing on a computer game to going on an adventure and the child running away with their imagination. I also loved the illustrations within the book.

Laura Harrison says

Whimsical, child-like and happy. Bright, wonderful colors. 5 stars all the way!

Sara says

This is a wonderful story about the magic of the world all around us that we can only see if we really stop and look closely.

A little girl and her mother have left the city (and the girls father) behind to go to their house in the country so mom can write. Its a rainy, miserable day and all the little girl wants to do is sit and play her video game. When mom tries to hide the game the little girl opts to put on her raincoat and go outside to play it in secret. But, she's out of luck when she drops the game in a pond.

But the tears only last for a moment and soon the little girl is rambling through the woods, appreciating all the things she could never be bothered to look up from her game to notice before. Her imagination starts to run wild as she imagines the creatures that live under the ground and the myriad ways everything in nature is connected. She races through the rain, dancing and rolling down hills, suddenly and wonderfully delighted with just being a little girl in the rainy woods.

This is one of those rare children's books with an important message to impart but the wisdom to impart it without banging you over the head. Really its a simple one anyway. Just slow down for a sec and look up from your screen, take a breath, and just take it all in. Just for a second.

There's an effervescence to the artwork that really sells the story. Alemagna has a very light touch with her brush, her lines are very gentle and while her colors are on the browner side its the sort of color you expect from a rainy, muddy sort of day. There's a feeling of freshness and cool air wafting over everything.

Let the worries of the day go for a minute and spend some time wandering in the woods with this little lady. Its well worth it.

Hannah says

Nature can awaken even the most stodgy of imaginations. In **MAGICAL DO-NOTHING DAY**, Alemagna's

bespectacled, bored child (gender is never addressed, which I LOVE) finds their jump-started after they drop their video game in a pond and begin to notice the wonder of the woods around them. Alemagna's prose and illustrations sing with delicious metaphor, and her magical, mystical forest is rich in texture and detail. I dare you to read this book and not want to immediately go traipsing through the woods, finding your own magic.

Cecilia says

Okay. I had a lot of issues with this book. I'll start with the illustrations just by saying they look like a child did them. If a child did do them, I love them a lot more. If an adult did them (and either accidentally or on purpose) made them look this way, I really could not connect with them at all.

Plot: Preachy much? Childhoods change. There's nothing magical about playing outside more than playing inside, and this book sounded like one of those parents that constantly says, "Back in my day...!!" like 1,000 times a day without realizing that living as a child today is a different experience than it was back in your day, peedle-pops. The overhanging judgey attitude behind this book just throws me off. Now, that's not to say that if a person genuinely enjoys outside that there's anything wrong with that. This book just rubbed me the wrong way.

WTF BookMom/BookKid Moment: If a kid A) drops a 3DS or some sort of handheld device in a pond and then B) just leaves it, the reward is not hot cocoa. Those things are ridiculously expensive, considering that the games aren't free. There would serious consequences for damaging and/or losing one, not to mention I don't think any child entrusted with such a device would take it outside...IN THE RAIN. Also, games nowadays are way beyond Atari's ALIEN game in plot, difficulty, and required actions. That would not be the game she was playing.

Also, video games are not "doing nothing." They teach you problem solving, eye-hand-coordination, communication, logic, pattern spotting, and even the technical basics (if not the physical basics on systems like the Wii) of certain skills. They are highly important systems, and seeing them ragged-on in a picture book--A NEW ONE AT THAT--just makes this book seem so out of touch.

Now, the one part I did like: her dad wasn't there and she missed him. At the end, she felt like she'd been able to connect with him even though he never appeared. I liked the quiet moment of drinking cocoa in the kitchen. Those moments were very sweet. I just wished they had been framed so much better.

Karen Witzler says

One of the NYT Best Illustrated Children's Books of 2017. A bored modern child is encouraged to go out and play on a rainy day, and after losing their electronic device, are able to open themselves up to the wonders of rain, play, dirt, imagination, and the natural world. The child in the lovely illustrations(that seem to be Pacific rainforestry) may be perceived as either male or female. I actually liked the rendering of the interior of their cozy book -and- junk filled house better than the illustrations of the outdoors. One problem for me centers on the characterization of that house as their "cabin"- apparently a retreat for the mother's

work as a writer. Father works in the "city" where presumably their real house exists. Even though I know lots of people are rich and have two houses, I didn't like this stuffy insertion of privilege, at all.

KC says

Beautifully illustrated story of a boy and his mom who go to a cabin the woods and where he discovers a world of wonder.

Elizabeth A says

I'm slowly making my way through The 7 Loveliest Children's Books of 2017 as selected by brainpickings. You can see the list here: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2017/12...>

This is the fourth picture book on the list that I've read and it's worth picking up for the art alone. The illustrations are lush and wonderfully textured. The story is about this young kid who is bored, bored bored. After the electronic gadget is accidentally dropped in the water, what is a little person to do? Good thing there are trees, and dirt, and rocks, and the whole natural world just outside to explore. I particularly liked that the gender of the kid is not easily identifiable and never mentioned.

Put down all things with an on/off switch and get outside. That's a message I can get behind. This would be a lovely read aloud story for all the littles in your life.

Alex (not a dude) Baugh says

A young girl and her mother arrive at their cabin on a rainy, rainy day. Not really happy to be there while her mother works, the girl loses herself in her device, playing games and destroying Martians. When her mother takes the device away from her and tells her to go outside, the girl manages to pocket the device so that her mother doesn't notice. But while jumping from rock to rock in the pond, the device falls into the water. Now what? She is afraid she will be lost without her games. Sitting against a tree in total despair, four huge snails appear and when the girl asks them if there is anything to do around there, "Yes, indeed" they tell her and suddenly the young girl's day becomes magical. The rest of that rainy day is spent exploring and remembering a time before her device and games took over her life. Why, at the end of the day, she asks herself, hadn't she done these things before? Why indeed! The excitement of discovery rolling down a hill she lands on her back and as she sees the world upside down, suddenly it feels brand new.

Dario says

Had Goodreads had a half-star rating system, this book would've gotten 3.5. It's a lovely read surrounded by cute-ish, seemingly old-fashioned illustrations. Regarding the story, the protagonist is a child much alike most of other today's children - computer games are all it takes to keep them busy.

The child, whose gender is not explicitly mentioned in the text (which I love!), one day chooses to go for a

walk in the woods, puts on a bright orange raincoat - in complete contrast with the outside world - and tries not to get the game all wet due to rain. Unfortunately, the game falls in the water and there is nothing else to do but keep on walking. And that's where the magic happens! The forest comes alive, the colors become more vivid, the creatures turn into friends and passers-by... a really nice childhood experience!

What made me give it a three-star rating is the fact that, in spite of it being a children's book, it might not be well-understood at that age, and could potentially be more accepted among adults, reminding them of their own children *or* themselves. Also, the text is incredibly hard to read - putting dark-colored letters on top of gloomy illustrations is not the best thing to do, y'know.

Overall, it's a nice book to read when talking with your child about electronics not being the only fun in the world. It might prove to be a great addition to your own words.

Danielle says

"Why hadn't I done these things before today?"

Love these illustrations, especially the neon orange raincoat, which feels linked to the neon pink fluffy in Alemagna's **THE WONDERFUL FLUFFY LITTLE SQUISHY**. Both are objects that are kind of infused with specialness and strangeness, that lead to experiences and observations and connections for the child at the center of each story on their quest for something.

I also liked the way the ending hints at the mother's writing endeavor inside on this rainy day as sort of doing the same thing the child had done outside on this rainy day: daydreaming, noticing, doing nothing in a magical way (which is kind of what writing and what exploring without a goal are).
