



A Dazzling Display of Dogs

Betsy Franco , Michael Wertz (Illustrator)

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From the award-winning team behind *A Curious Collection of Cats* comes a new collection of visual poems celebrating all things canine—from obedience school, to backyard break outs, to flatulent Fidos. Whether your best friend is a plucky Jack Russell, an indecisive basset hound, or a poodle with an indiscriminate appetite, you're sure to find this dazzling display doggone delightful.

A Dazzling Display of Dogs Details

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Cierra Garrison says

I originally picked up this book because I saw it was about dogs. I have 6 of my own at home that I absolutely love to pieces, and would have 6 more if it was up to me. I also love children's poetry, so I figured this book would surely be a success. I would use this book as an introduction to poetry in a 1st-3rd grade class. There are many shape poems incorporated throughout the book, which makes it even more entertaining for the readers. Using an entertaining book like this sets the tone that poetry can be fun! One thing I would do with the students is have them each pick out their favorite dog poem. There are 37 different ones, so each child has a variety to pick from. After they selected their poem, I would have them go through and pick out all of the figurative language they found through out it. Then, I would have them write one or two of their own pieces of figurative language based on the dog they chose. For example, "slobbery, sloppy, slimy, sphere-oh, tennis ball" could be "My dog is like a maniac with his scummy, slushy tennis ball." I think the students would love getting to pick out a dog that they feel suits them the best, followed by getting to personalize it just a bit more by coming up with their own versions of figurative language. Using a topic, such as dogs, in which most students will have at home, or at least have a positive interaction with, will start a poetry unit on a positive note.

Barbara says

Thirty-four concrete poems celebrate the world of dogs. Using different poetic forms, Franco clearly draws on the canines she has known to describe them at their most loveable and most annoying. Here are several different breeds of dogs doing everything dogs love to do: chasing their own shadows, getting lost and found, farting during a car ride, destroying furniture, and endlessly circling in search of the right spot. In one poem, Emmett crafts an ode to his "slobbery, sloppy, slimy" but oh, so loved, tennis ball. Young readers will laugh at the hard lesson learned by Bing whose "nose now knows" the difference in flies that buzz and bumblebees that sting. The illustrations, created in pencil and through monoprints and Adobe Photoshop, are filled with vivid colors and fill each page completely. At times, the poems may be hard to read because of the illustrations and font colors, but readers will be willing to make the effort since the poems are so playful. These might be fun to read with your dog when he or she is settling down for a nap after a busy day spent with a favorite companion--you!

Hannah Scully says

This collection of poems about all shapes and sizes of dogs is certainly interesting. Each poem has an unusual shape that winds and twists around the page or into shapes that vary from a typical poem. There are many bright colors and different textured used by the illustrator to grab the reader's attention. However, while all these elements are interesting, it is really difficult to stay focused on the actual poems. They get lost in the art and style of the illustrations. As for the poems themselves, they are interesting and fun. The reader certainly would enjoy them on their own, but the overall meaning is certainly lost in the artistry. There are simply too many elements on each page, especially for poetry which can be difficult for young children.

Nancy Kotkin says

Text: 4 stars

Illustrations: 4 stars

Picture book of poetry about dogs. These poems are called concrete poems, but are not shaped like any dog breeds. Still, the text is arranged non-traditionally for all the poems. Illustrations are frenetic and fun. The poems are very dog-like.

Mary Ann says

Betsy Franco and Michael Wertz team up again to celebrate the love we have for our pets: this time, they shed light on our lovable dogs. As in *A Curious Collection of Cats*, Franco and Wertz create playful, fun concrete poetry that is bursting with color. These poems arrange words within the illustrations, where the words gain meaning from where they are placed within the picture, and the words form part of the picture themselves.

The color leaps off the pages, and kids will love following the words, figuring out the jokes and inside meaning. Franco and Wertz share their love of dogs, whether it's a tiny Pekinese peaking out from a backpack as it travels everywhere with its owner, or it's a Bassett Hound that goes "in and out / in and out ... again and again / and again and again." In "Emmett's Ode to His Tennis Ball," the text is enclosed in a circle held firmly in the dog's mouth. It begins, "Slobbery, sloppy, slimy, sphere-oh, tennis ball, I hold you dear..."

This will delight kids (and teachers), inspiring them to combine words and images in a fun, new way. I plan on sharing them using our document camera, so the kids can see the poems projected on the screen. The visuals are exciting and draw them right into the poetry, as they figure out how to read each poem.

Megan Patel says

A Dazzling Display of Dogs is a very colorful and playful read. This picture book has poems about different kinds of dogs and their lives. There are many shapes in the illustrations and each page is filled with a variety of colors. This a perfect picture book for a child that loves dogs.

The poems in the book were all different types. The text was hard to read with everything else that had been going on in the book with the illustrations. It was a little difficult to focus on the words that were read.

Overall, this book is meant for a child who loves illustrations and dogs the most.

Jane LoBosco says

A Dazzling Display of Dogs is an extremely fun book that children and adults will love reading. This poetry book is perfect for children in a young classroom. The book is so well written, yet a bit tricky to follow due to the shape of the poems. All of the poems are worked into illustrations that have to do with the poem itself.

I found this book a little bit confusing, yet also very interesting as it covers the topics of various dogs. Dogs are definitely a topic that children love to hear about, and they all will want to chime in about their own dogs. Kids will absolutely love the illustrations, and will love to follow along with the poems.

This book of poems will be a great read for young kids. They will love that they can follow the poem shape, and it will be a great for them to interact with the story. I believe that this story would be a wonderful introduction to poetry book. If students can see that poems can be fun and exciting, they will love to dive into poetry unit. Ensuring that poems are full of exciting material will allow students to fully know and understand poetry. I think that this book of poems would be best suited for students in Pre-K to 2nd Grade.

Ryan says

This book is absolutely gorgeous. At times it can be hard to read. The poems are not laid out stanza by stanza but formed around, through, and with each illustration. This at times can make it hard to decide in which direction to read.

Laura says

This is a good introduction to poetry for kids--it's fun, simple, and has an artistic WOW factor to grab their attention, yet it actually covers a rather wide variety of poetic forms (I was delighted to find a cinquain near the end).

The use of art as a part of the poetic expression really makes this a great read for all ages.

Candice says

Dogs + poetry = yes please

Claire Minor says

This book is, quite frankly, distracting and annoying to read. Franco's use of nonsense poetry was difficult to decipher. Franco attempts to fit the poems into the images, but in her efforts to do so, confuses and frustrated the reader. She does utilize rhyme and onomatopoeias to move the story along. Also, the images are creative and elaborate, using single and double page spreads.

Summer Gutierrez says

A Dazzling Display of dogs is a collection of concrete poems about dogs. The poems are written in shapes that enclose the different poems. For example, there is a poem that circles around a dog describing how dogs turn around in circles until they find the right spot. One down side to this set of poems is there is so many

colors and shapes that the children might lose interest in the words and just look at all of the pictures.

Kimberly says

Perfect for an elementary-school poetry unit.

Katie F says

This book was a very interesting read! It was a poetry book entirely themed on dogs. The illustrations are bright and colorful and the author/illustrator wove the words from the poems into some of the illustrations. Each page has a new poem to a different dog or dog breed. The words wrap in all sorts of different ways around the page. I personally found myself overstimulated and at times slightly frustrated trying to read some of the poems. The theme itself was great, but I could see children that get easily over-stimulated getting frustrated reading this book. In addition, I think it would take a lot of pre-teaching that although it is creative license to write sideways and upside down, but it's not standard writing.

The poems are well written and there's a lot of variety to the types. Some of them are shorter such as this one: "Pug Appeal- it's almost impossible not to hug and say something silly to Frank the pug". And others are longer. I think that is a great feature to this book, that it includes many different types of poems. Overall, I do not think I'd recommend this book to use in a whole class lesson (unless showing an example of themed poetry books), but instead would encourage students to read it for fun.

Becky says

Betsy Franco's often goofy and sweet poems are fun to read. Some have really great cadence:

"Old Jimbo Claims the Chair"

The chair with the ruffly trim
was always off limits to Jim,
till he chewed it to bits,
made it threadbare with slits-
now no one sits on it but him.

Franco keeps the collection from being too saccharine and rhyme-dependent by also using several different styles. One of my favorite's is her haiku:

"Dog Haiku"

Labrador puppy
piddles on The Daily Post
such watered-down news.

However, Michael Wertz's quirky and colorful illustrations are what make this book truly engaging. Bright primary colors bring these canine characters to life, while the worlds wrap, twists, and travel across the

pages, as appropriate for each singular poem.

Not your average read-aloud. The text - and the letter shapes themselves - can get a bit jumbled up at points, so it might be too difficult for independent reading. But the sounds and the introduction to different rhyming patterns would be fun for one-on-one reading or in a elementary class.
