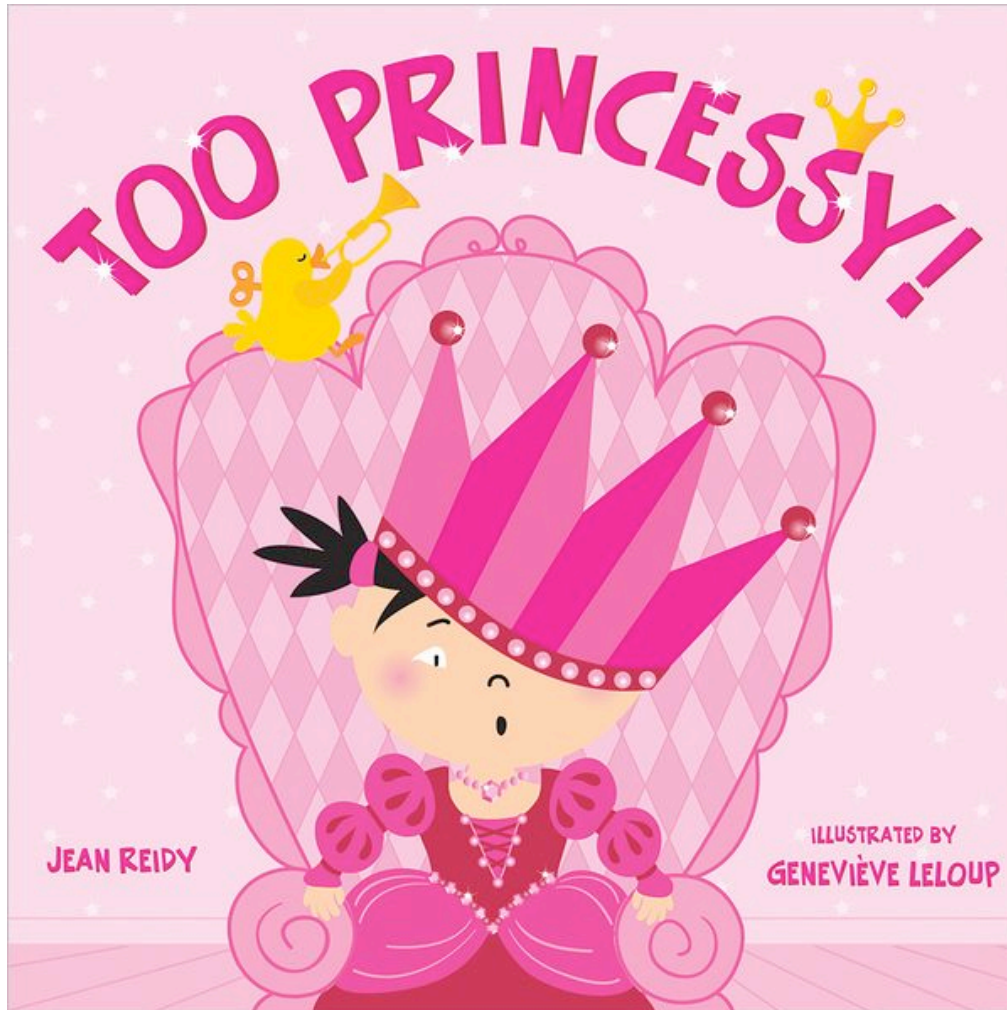


A Teacher's Guide to  
**TOO PRINCESSY!**

Written by Jean Reidy  
Illustrated By Geneviève Leloup



TOO PRINCESSY! © 2012 by Jean Reidy; Art by Geneviève Leloup;  
Bloomsbury USA Children's Books

## **PRAISE FOR TOO PRINCESSY!**

“Bright colors and high visual energy match the quick verse...kids will want re-reads.” ~*Kirkus Reviews*

“This high-energy outing sends a clear message: sometimes the simplest toy is the best one.” ~ *Publishers Weekly*

## STORY SUMMARY

It's a rainy day, but not a single toy in the toy box seems fun enough for our adventuresome little girl. She tries everything from trucks to telescopes, puzzles to pianos, but nothing does the trick until she lets her creative sparks fly. In the spirit of the first two charmers, *Too Purpley!* and *Too Pickley!*, Reidy's sprightly text is again beautifully illustrated with Leloup's stylish art. Preschoolers will love to see and say all the games and toys the little girl tries, and adults will appreciate the celebration of imagination that is the best solution of all.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Once upon a time, JEAN REIDY was a princess ... as well as an Olympic figure skater, an astronaut, a rock-and-roll star and a dreamer. She's still a dreamer. Jean writes from her home in Colorado where she lives with her husband, Mike. She has four children and hordes of nieces and nephews who provide her endless inspiration. *Too Princessy!* is her fourth picture book.



## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



**GENEVIÈVE LELOUP** studied graphic arts, animation, and printing in Belgium, where she was born. Her whimsical illustrations have highlighted editorial articles, paper products, ads, children's furniture, and textiles (including lots of children's clothes), but this is her very first picture book. Her travels have taken her to China, Easter Island, Patagonia and Marrakech. She has lived in Brooklyn, New York since 1992.

## PRE-READING

### Boredom Busters

Ask your students what they do when they've got cabin fever. How do they chase away boredom? Give each child a large (5"x7") blank card. On the front, have them illustrate their idea for a "boredom buster" or bring in a photo from home. On the back, they can write or dictate to you what is happening in their illustration or photo. Place the cards in a class "Boredom Buster" shoebox. The next time inclement weather keeps the class indoors, pull out a card for a new boredom buster idea!

To see some ideas on the author's blog, visit:

<http://tooprincessyboredombusters.blogspot.com/2012/01/boredom-buster-ideas-by-category.html>.

- *Students will make connections between reading and what they already know.*
- *Students will add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.*

### Take a Book Walk

Point out the title and names of the author and illustrator. Ask students what they think the title means. What is the girl on the cover doing? How does she feel? Why might she feel this way?

Open to the title page spread. What is the story's setting? Who is in the house? What might be the problem in this story?

Turn the pages and ask why the girl seems so upset on each page. What does she find wrong with each toy? (Don't reveal the last page where she turns her toy box into a castle.)

As you go through the pages, ask children to use the illustrations to predict the next toy that the girl will pull from the box.

Where is the duck on each page? How does the duck feel about each of the toys?

- *Students will identify the cover, title page, and author of a book.*
- *Students will use comprehension skills such as previewing, predicting, and inferring.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the girl bored? (*knowledge*)
2. What does the girl do to entertain herself? (*comprehension*)
3. Which toy in the story do you like best? Least? Take a class poll and graph the results. (*application*)
4. Why do you think the girl has the most fun with a plain box? (*analysis*)
5. If you had your own “boredom buster box,” what would you put inside? Which items in your box do you think the girl would like most? Why do you think so? (*synthesis*)
6. Do you think the duck had a good time? Why or why not? (*evaluation*)

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Invite students to learn and play alongside the TOO PRINCESSY star with these book companion activities.

### Too Piecey!



Make your own class “too piecey” puzzles with a free online puzzle maker like this one: <http://bighugelabs.com/jigsaw.php>. Upload a photo of your class, an image of the alphabet or children’s individual names and let them practice putting the puzzles together.

**Bulletin board idea:** Take a photo of each student reading his or her favorite book. Create a jigsaw puzzle of each photo. Have students put their own puzzles together and glue them onto a construction paper background. Display the puzzles with a title that reads:

## BOOKS—WE LOVE ‘EM TO PIECES!

- *Students will orally describe or tell about a picture.*
- *Students will write and recognize letters in own name.*



## Plinky Music Makers

Make plinky guitars and strike up the class band! Cut a hole in the lid of a shoebox or use an empty tissue box. Pull some “too-stretchy” rubber bands of different sizes across the hole. Slip a pencil or crayon under the rubber bands on either side of the hole so that they’re perpendicular to the rubber bands, like the frets on a guitar.



Once your class band is assembled, have them sit in a circle. Clap out a rhythm and see if they can repeat it by strumming their guitars.

- *Students will expressively perform in groups or independently.*
- *Students will perform basic rhythmic and melodic patterns.*
- *Students will create music through a variety of experiences.*
- *Students will echo and perform simple melodic and rhythmic patterns.*

## Too Goopy



Take a look at this video clip that explains the properties of “oobleck,” the substance featured in Dr. Suess’s book *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*:

<http://sciencecafe.org/content/2008/12/22/how-to-make-oobleck/>

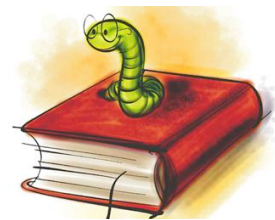
Make your own “oobleck” and take photos of students carrying out each step in the recipe. Ask students if oobleck is a liquid or a solid (it acts like both). Take photos of students working with oobleck when it behaves as a liquid and when it behaves as a solid.

Print the photos as cards and laminate them. Let students practice putting the cards into the correct sequence.

- *Students will order sequence information using words.*
- *Students will classify solids and liquids based on their properties, and justify their choices based on evidence.*

## Too \_\_\_\_\_

After reading all of the TOO books, create your own class book of things that are “too\_\_\_\_\_.” Take photos of the children with their “too” objects, or let them illustrate the pages. Create a cover here: <http://bighugelabs.com/magazine.php>.



- *Students will create visual narratives from familiar stories and subject matter.*
- *Students will orally describe or tell about a picture.*

## Too Collage-y



Over the course of three days, read all the books in the series by Jean Reidy and illustrated by Genevieve LeLoupe: *Too Purpley!*, *Too Pickley!* and *Too Princessy!*

After each reading, poll students about their “too” attitudes regarding clothes, food and toys. Give children magazines and catalogs and let them cut out pictures of things that are too\_\_\_\_\_. Give each child a zip bag or envelope for storing their pictures.

Using the chart on the following page, have children sort their pictures into clothing, food and toy categories. Do any items fall into more than one category (such as dress-up clothes)?

Have children choose a picture from each category to add to a class collage. After each child glues on a picture, have the child write (or dictate to you) “Too \_\_\_\_\_!” filling in the blank.

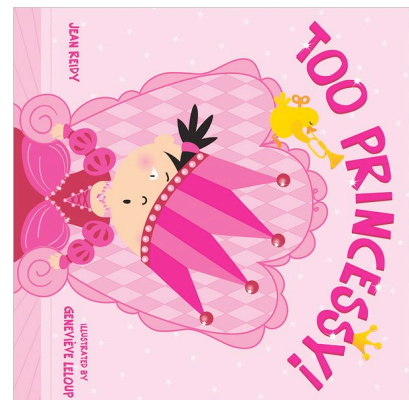
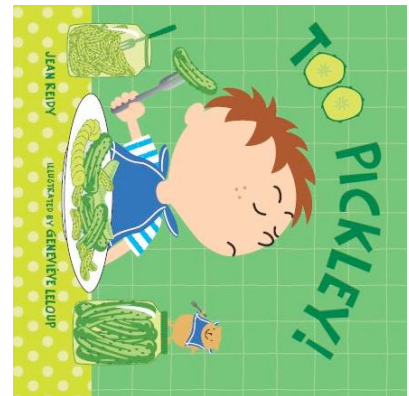
- *Students will create visual narratives from familiar stories and subject matter.*
- *Students will use art media and processes to express, ideas, feelings, and emotions.*

## Ring Toss

Set up a ring toss in the classroom, gym, or outside. With younger children, use large hoops (such as hula hoops) and mark off a large square target area. For older students, use smaller hoops, or add a toy (like the duck in the book) as the target.



- *Students will manipulate objects such as jump ropes, scarves, hoops, and balls.*



## Out of This World

Display models of the planets in your classroom (either 2-D pictures or 3-D models). Help students make their own telescopes to observe these “planets” up close:



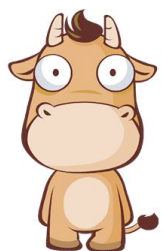
1. Start with a cardboard tube such as a paper towel or wrapping paper roll.
2. Stretch a piece of plastic wrap over one end for the “lens” and tape it to the tube.
3. Cover the tube with blue or black construction paper.
4. Add a strip of yellow tape around the edge of the tube near the plastic wrap.
5. Let students add stickers (such as glow-in-the-dark stars) or decorate with white crayons or silver markers. Point out the constellations on the “Too Marsy” page of the book, and encourage students to connect their stars with dashed lines.
6. Give students plastic magnifying lenses to hold at the opposite end of the tubes while looking through their telescopes.

Afterwards, have students choose one planet from your class display to draw and color. When they have finished, let them use their telescopes to observe the planet again and add detail to their planetary drawings.

For more space-y fun, visit: [www.nasa.gov/audience/forkids/kidsclub/flash/](http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forkids/kidsclub/flash/).

• *Students will identify, predict, and extend patterns based on observations and representations of objects in the sky.*

## Down on the Farm



Point out the cow nose mask that the duck is wearing on the “Too Mooey!” page. Read a book about animal noses, such as *Whose Nose Is This?* by Wayne Lynch (Whitecap Books) or *Let's Look at Animal Noses* by Wendy Perkins (Capstone Press). Help students make their own animal nose masks like the ones on this Crayola craft page:

<http://www.crayola.com/crafts/detail/put-on-an-animal-nose-craft/>.

Once the children are wearing their masks, ask what attributes some of the noses have in common, (color, whiskers/no whiskers, snout/no snout, shape, etc.). Moving like their animals move, have children get into groups according to shared attributes.

Challenge: Add animals that have nostrils, but not noses—frogs, spiders (who have nostrils on their abdomens), or fish that take in oxygen from the water through a set of gills.

- *Students will observe, investigate, and describe how objects can be sorted using their physical properties.*
- *Students will explain why objects are sorted into categories.*
- *Students will sort a set of objects based on their physical characteristics, and then explain how the objects are sorted.*
- *Students will imitate movement from nature such as animals.*

## Bubbles

Make your own bubble solution and experiment with shapes:

Pour 1 cup of dishwashing liquid into a bowl. Add three cups of water and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup corn syrup. Mix well.

To make wands, have students twist chenille craft stems into shapes. Twist ends together, saving a 3-inch piece to use as a handle.

Ask students to predict the shape of a bubble made with a non-circular wand. Let them test their hypotheses and discover that bubbles will always form spheres no matter the shape of the wand. Discuss how the three-dimensional bubbles come from two-dimensional shapes of the wands.

- *Students will make simple observations, predictions, explanations, and generalizations based on real-life experiences.*
- *Students will identify and describe shapes.*
- *Students will identify shapes as two-dimensional or three-dimensional.*





## Race Car Rally



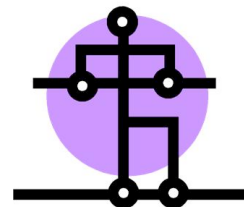
Let students test the relationship between *zoomy* speed and the slope of a track. Show students two identical racecar toys and two ramps. Using blocks, raise one ramp higher than the other and have students predict which car will go the furthest. Let students experiment on their own with different types of cars. How does the weight and shape of a vehicle affect its speed?

**Challenge:** Use masking tape to mark an X on the floor. Place a line of tape about a yard away from the X to mark where the foot of the ramp should touch. Let students experiment with various vehicles and slopes to see if they can get their vehicles to land as close as possible on the X.

- *Students will observe, investigate, and describe how different objects move.*
- *Students will recognize and investigate cause-and- effect relationships in everyday experiences.*
- *Students will observe, investigate, and describe how different objects move.*

## Strike a Balance

Try a “tight rope” walk like the girl in the story using a low balance beam or long strip of tape on the floor. Ask students to predict what might help them keep their balance. How will they hold their arms? What is the girl in the story holding? What affect does the hoop have on her balance?



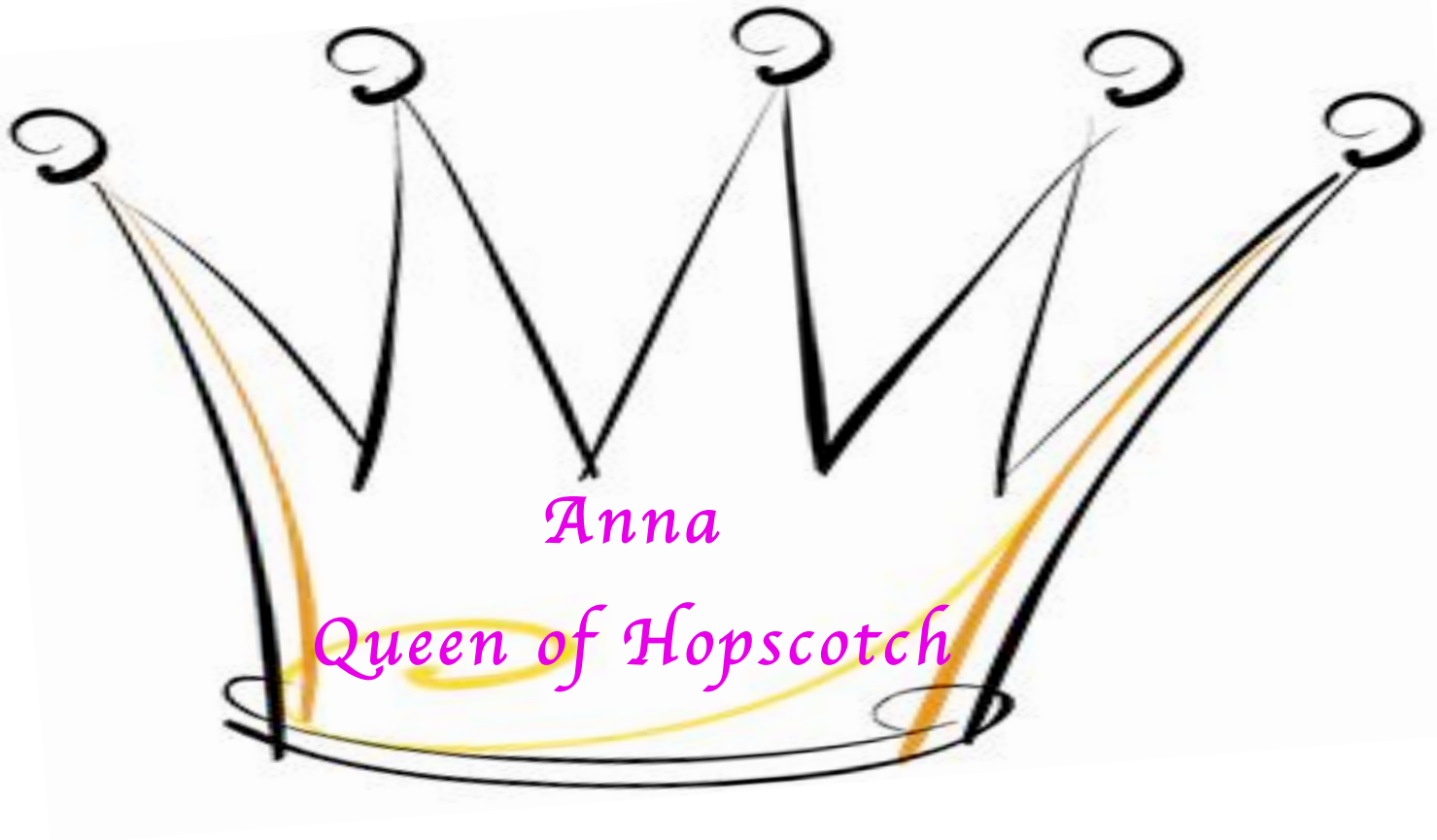
Encourage students to experiment walking the line with their arms at their sides, their arms out, and with a hoop in one or both hands. Which way is easiest? With tape on the floor, challenge students to close their eyes. How far can they go before straying off the line?

- *Students will demonstrate both static and dynamic balances.*
- *Students will demonstrate control, coordination, balance, and elevation in the basic actions of travel.*
- *Students demonstrate focus and concentration while moving.*

## Crowned

Ask students to brainstorm a list (written or illustrated) of talents they have. Encourage them to think of talents that they might not normally consider as such, like making friends, helping others, or observing bugs.

Have them make crowns to wear that announce their talents.



- *Students will use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces.*

## Juggling



Let students practice juggling skills like the girl in the story. Give them brightly-colored scarves no bigger than 12"x12". Starting with one scarf, demonstrate how to toss it into the air with one hand and catch it with the other as the scarf drifts down. Encourage them to always throw with one hand and catch with the other.

Once students have mastered this skill, let them try "juggling" with two scarves. Show them how to begin by holding a scarf in each hand. Toss one scarf into the air, then pass the other scarf to the throwing hand. As they toss the second scarf into the air, the first one should be drifting downwards.

- *Students will manipulate objects such as jump ropes, scarves, hoops, and balls.*
- *Students will follow a simple series of instructions for an activity.*

## Thinking Inside the Box

Show students the last page of the story where the girl has made a castle from her toy box. What other type of building could the girl have made?



Ask a department store to donate a large box from a washing machine or another large appliance. Bring it to school and ask students what they might make from the box. Once they've decided, cut out the openings after school hours, then let the students decorate the box the next day.

Encourage them to role-play a "Too \_\_\_\_\_" scenario with props that go with the building they've designed. For example, if they've created a castle, they might find things too sparkly (a tiara), too velvety (a royal cape), or too scaly (a crocodile from the moat).

- *Students use body and movement to depict various pretend characters.*
- *Students use body and voice to depict various everyday characters.*
- *Students initiate sustained dramatic play.*

## Match It

Rhymes help children to predict and decode new words. Copy the following three pages onto colored cardstock and cut out the crowns (there are additional blank crowns to add other rhyming words). Challenge children to pair the rhyming crowns.

- *Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend materials such as rhymes.*
- *Students will use word recognition skills and resources such as phonics.*
- *Students will identify and create rhyming words.*









## AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR JEAN REIDY



**TOO PRINCESSY! is your fourth published book. What have you learned about the writing and publishing process since your first book, TOO PURPLEY!, was released?**

I've learned that the creation of a picture book is an extraordinary collaboration among passionate people - editors, agents, designers, marketers, the illustrator and me - who care about creating books kids will love. Hours and countless e-mails can be spent pouring over page design, perfecting text for repeated readings and illustration potential, creating payoffs for every anticipated page turn and, at last, landing on a most satisfying ending. No matter what the age of the our audience or how silly the storyline, we all take our work very seriously

**2. You've had the same illustrator, Genevieve Leloup, for the first two books in this series. Did anything surprise you when you first saw the illustrations for TOO PRINCESSY?**

My picture books in this series have very simple texts. With her illustrations, Genevieve springs off the playful word choices to complete the story and creates complimentary underlying threads. So even though my text begins "I am bored," the rainy day idea was totally Genevieve's. Plus, Genevieve always adds a little character buddy to the story who provides sidekick humor on every page. In this case it's an adorable, wind-up duck.

**3. Do you have a writing routine?**

When I wake up, I usually throw on some sweats, pour myself a cup of coffee and then -- even before breakfast -- get to work. I have a thing about getting the tough stuff done first and planting rewards for myself throughout the day. I read a few e-mails then start writing. I write best in the morning because at night, when I'm tired, I love to read instead. Usually I take a break after about an hour or two and eat breakfast. Then it's back to my computer. I reward myself midday with lunch and a run or bike ride. It's amazing how many ideas -- bits of narrative, strings of dialog -- have come to me when I'm away from my computer. Running, walking, bike riding, and showering are the best cures for writers block. Then usually I have to rush home to get my ideas down before I forget them.

**4. What's the best piece of writing advice you've ever received?**

To allow myself to stink - at writing that is. When I was growing up and through college all of my writing was done by hand and then typed on a typewriter. Revision was a mess of whiteout and correction tape. So consequently there was heavy pressure to get it right the first time. Now using a computer, the pressure is off. And while I do have to get it right eventually, it's easier to sit down at the blank page if I know I can go back in and rework my words.

**5. What advice do you have for young writers?**

To not be afraid to write. To not worry about the blank page or the blank screen. To just do it - like NIKE says. Let your ideas pour onto the page no matter how weird you think they sound. You can always revise. And if you're stuck on what to write, remember there are ideas all around. Look at the usual stuff in your everyday life and ask "What if?" What if that lamp grew tentacles? What if the bully became the principle of the school? What if dinosaurs drove fire trucks? It can be lots of fun. And finally - read, read, read.

**6. When you aren't writing, what are some of your favorite things to do?**

I love to read -- especially in front of a cozy fire. And I'm a sucker for card games. Consequently, my kids have turned into some pretty savvy card players. Here in Colorado we're so lucky to have miles of amazing trails and, of course, the Rockies, so I take full advantage of this beautiful state. I love to hike, run, walk, ride my bike, and -- um -- ski. I'm also an ice skater. I grew up in Chicago, across the street from an outdoor rink and spent hours teaching myself jumps and spins. I still wear my really old, broken-in, "just right" skates.

**7. What did you like to play with when you were small?**

My "go to" toys were always my art supplies - crayons, paints, glue, chalk, clay, yarn or fabric. While I enjoyed many other games and toys and could play make-believe "school" and "house" by the hour, tempera paint, papier-mâché or play dough would beat out baby dolls any day. That's why I like that my little "princess" fashions her own castle at the end of the story, because, like her, I never met an appliance box I didn't love.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH ILLUSTRATOR

### GENEVIÈVE LELOUP



**When did you begin to think of yourself as an artist?**

As a child I always participated in artistically-oriented activities. Whether it was dance, drawing, crafts or music—that is just what I liked to do! I didn't think about it very much. But I suppose I had to start thinking of myself as an artist when I decided to go to Art school. It was an important decision that led me to really become a visual artist (although I still dance and play music!).

**What media do you like working with the most?**

I always used pen and ink, and I was a silkscreen printer for many years and still love to print. As a textile designer, I had to eventually switch to computer-generated design and I learned to love it and use it in my illustration work as well. I draw on the computer with a pen and tablet so it is not that different from the manual pen.

It is extremely fun to create patterns with that technique; you can play endlessly with the shapes and colors with the click of a button. I started to develop a style in that medium which is actually pretty close to what I was doing before on paper.

**How did you break into the children's book illustrating profession?**

I have been an illustrator for quite a while doing a lot of work for a very young market (my favorite audience!) in magazines, school books, packaging, clothes, etc. My agent was contacted one day by Bloomsbury—they had seen samples of my work and were interested in my style for Jean's text. I met with the editor and I was seduced right away by the concept and by the freedom that her writing left me to come up with the images.

**What are the rewards and challenges of illustrating a series?**

The rewards are mostly in the creation of a kind of "world" that the children will



feel more and more familiar with. Something that hopefully they will recognize from book to book and will look forward to the next.

The challenges are to find what exactly this world will be made of and to find the visual link that will tie the series together. And also to find the subtle changes and additions I can bring in order to keep children surprised and interested in a new experience of that world with each new book.

**Now that you've illustrated three picture books, what other projects are you looking forward to?**

Right now I am looking forward to working on a new book project that will include a little doll inside. A new experience for me!

**Pablo Picasso once said, "All children are artists. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Do you agree?**

I think that if you are an artist, fundamentally, it is impossible to change that or forget it. You're going to be a creative person all your life! But yes, a lot of people forget to keep their imagination active as they grow up. It is never too late to reclaim that talent, though!

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

I love to dance and play my accordion or piano. In New York, it is easy to always be artistically active! I go see plays and concerts and performances a lot. I also help organize some of them, as well. I like to cook and throw parties. I also love to travel and discover other cultures (and ways of cooking!); it is where I renew my inspiration.

**What did you like to play with when you were small?**

I liked to play "dress-up", find old costumes or come up with my own. I also liked to play with any kind of crafts, I loved to create things whether they were puppets or pottery or jewelry or books...

It's hard to think of a toy I didn't like but I remember that puzzles were certainly "too piecey"!