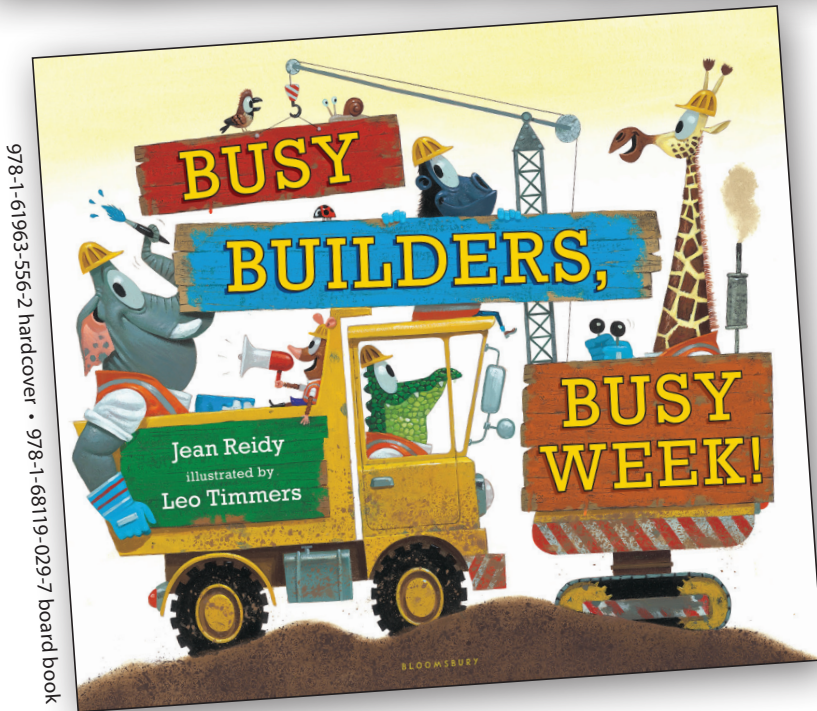


# CURRICULUM GUIDE and STORYTIME KIT



## BUSY BUILDERS, BUSY WEEK!

BY Jean Reidy

ILLUSTRATED BY  
Leo Timmers

Sunday!  
Dream day!  
Study, scribble, scheme day.  
Map, measure, plan a treasure.  
Gather up a team day!

**A** BIG PROJECT IS UNDER WAY in the neighborhood! And it's going to take lots of teamwork—and fun construction vehicles—to complete it quickly. What could all that digging, dumping, and bulldozing create?

In this delightful rhyming picture book, young readers will learn the days of the week as a joyous construction crew works together to make a wonderful surprise for all to enjoy.

In this fun kit, find Common Core aligned discussion questions and worksheets as well as engaging storytime ideas and activities for schools, libraries, and bookstores to use in sharing *Busy Builders, Busy Week!* with children everywhere!

"The energetic rhyme and bright paintings make this a natural storytime crowd-pleaser. The illustrations provide plenty of material for discussion and repeated readings." —*School Library Journal*

"A joyful cacophony of color and activity." —*Publishers Weekly*



[bloomsbury.com](http://bloomsbury.com)





[jeanreidy.com](http://jeanreidy.com)



The materials in this kit with CCSS notations refer to applicable Common Core State Standards. For more information on the Common Core, visit [corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org). Next Generation Science Standards are also listed where applicable. For more information on NGSS, visit [nextgenscience.org](http://nextgenscience.org).

# Storytime Ideas



-  Invite kids to bring their favorite toy construction vehicles to storytime. Allow some time for sharing and encourage kids to talk to the group about their truck and the role it plays on a construction site.
-  Talk about the days of the week. Can the kids recite them in order? What do they do on each day of the week? Can anyone say the days of the week in a language other than English?
-  Don a construction hardhat and tool belt when you read *Busy Builders, Busy Week!* aloud to the children. Read the book all the way through for your first reading. Then read the book again, one day of the week at a time, pausing at each spread to encourage the children to look carefully at the illustrations and notice the details in the artwork. Who are the five construction workers? Which one is in charge? What's happening in each illustration?
-  Invite the children to stand and sing a Busy Builders construction song with you. Have them act out the motions for each activity. (Sing to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush.")

*This is the way we saw the wood, saw the wood, saw the wood.*

*This is the way we saw the wood so early in the morning.*

Additional verses:


*Hammer nails*

*Stack the bricks*

*Plant the grass*

*Paint the fence*

*Play all day!*

-  *Busy Builders, Busy Week!* is filled with lots of fun action words and phrases!

Have the kids act out these busy lines from the story:

*Dig it, dump, dispose it*

*Roll, mash, crunch, crash*


*Stack, spin, pour it in*


*Hoist, haul, pull it all*

*Build it, nail it, drill it*

*Rake, spread, till a bed*

*Scrub, sand, paint it grand*

-  Break the children into groups of 2-3 and give each group a supply of paper cups, craft sticks, and marshmallows. Have each group create an imaginative jungle gym using these materials. Invite each group to present their structure to the rest of the kids.

-  The builders added plants and grass to the playground to make it beautiful. Plant sunflower seeds in paper cups with the kids for a fun take-home favor from your *Busy Builders, Busy Week!* storytime.




# CLASSROOM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES




These questions and activities can be adapted for bookstore and library use as well!


## Discussion Questions


 The setting of a story is not only **where** the story takes place but also **when** the story takes place. Information about the setting of *Busy Builders, Busy Week!* can be found in the illustrations and in the way the author organizes the story. What is the setting for this story? What clues from the illustrations and text help you identify the setting?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3

 Look at the pages in the story that describe what happens on Wednesday. Why do you think that the author and illustrator decided to stretch the action out over three pages?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7

 Did you notice how the characters in *Busy Builders, Busy Week!* are animals? What is the connection between the characters who are the builders and the actual playground equipment they built? CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7

 Examine the illustrations of the playground area before and after the project was finished. What words would you use to describe the area before and after the playground? How do the colors that the illustrator used in the “before” illustration compare with the colors used in the “after” illustration? How might the color choices make the reader feel?


CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7

## Activities




 Part of the fun of reading *Busy Builders, Busy Week!* is that the author uses words that rhyme. Go on a rhyme hunt through the book with a partner. Make a list of all of the words that rhyme.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.2.A

 Now that you and your partner have hunted down the rhyming words in the text, choose one pair of rhyming words and use them to create a word family. For example, if you had the rhyming pair *bake* and *cake*, you could change the first letter/s of the word to create new words that belong to the same family: *lake*, *make*, *take*, *brake*, and so on.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.2.E

 A builder’s motto is “Measure twice, cut once.” Measure various objects around the classroom with a ruler, paper clips, or Unifix cubes. Measure each item twice. Have a partner measure the same items twice. Did you both come up with the same measurements each time?

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.MD.A.2; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.MD.A.2

The CCSS- and NGSS-aligned activities in this kit were created by Leigh Courtney, PhD. She teaches in the Global Education program at a public elementary school in San Diego, California. She holds both masters’ and doctoral degrees in education, with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction.

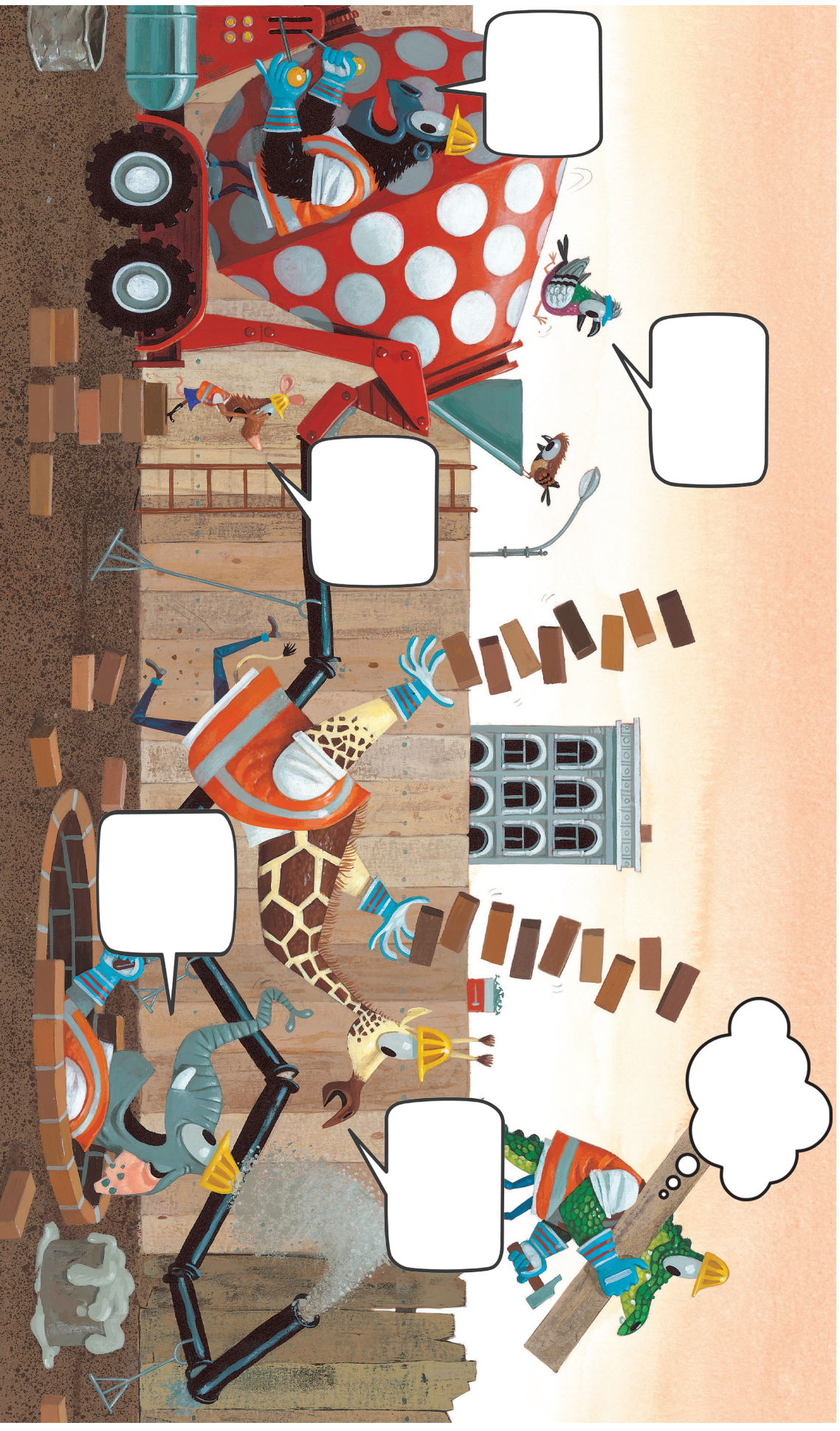


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Say What?

Look carefully at the illustration below. What's happening in this scene? What do you think the construction workers would be saying or thinking based on their actions? Add dialogue to this scene by filling in the speech and thought bubbles.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Playground Blueprint

On Sunday in the story, the construction workers have a “dream day” to “plan a treasure.” Builders put their design layout on a blueprint and use it as a guide when they build their project. If you had a dream day to plan the perfect playground, what would your play equipment look like? Think about a typical piece of playground equipment—a swing set, a slide, a jungle gym. How could you improve it to make it better? Make a blueprint or design layout of your playground below.

NGSS K-2-ETS1-2; NGSS K-2-ETS1-3



**BONUS IDEA:** Use materials from the recycling bin to make a model of your dream playground based on your blueprint!

# Busy Week!

The workers in the story are busy every day of the week!  
Match the story events by drawing a line between the  
day of the week and the correct description of what  
happened on that day.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1



**Sunday**

“Mix day!  
Pipes and boards and bricks day.”

**Monday**

“Load day!  
Take it on the road day.”

**Tuesday**

“Dream day!  
Study, scribble, scheme day.”

**Wednesday**

“Fill it day!  
Build it, nail it, drill it day.”

**Thursday**

“Doze it day!  
Dig it, dump, dispose it day.”

**Friday**

“Finished? Yes! Take a guess!  
Playtime fun for every day!”

**Saturday**

“Last day!  
Pots and plants and grass day!”



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Come and Play!

On Saturday the project is finished and everyone is excited! How would you advertise the playground if you were trying to get kids to come and play there? Write a PERSUASIVE piece that presents your opinion of the playground with REASONS and EXAMPLES of why kids should come there to play.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.1



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Counting Critters

How many animal legs and insect legs are in this illustration? Use cubes, pictures, number sentences, and words to show your solution. [CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.OA.A.2](#); [CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.OA.A.1](#)



## Cubes and pictures

Animal legs

Insect legs

## Number sentences and words

Animal legs \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Insect legs \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

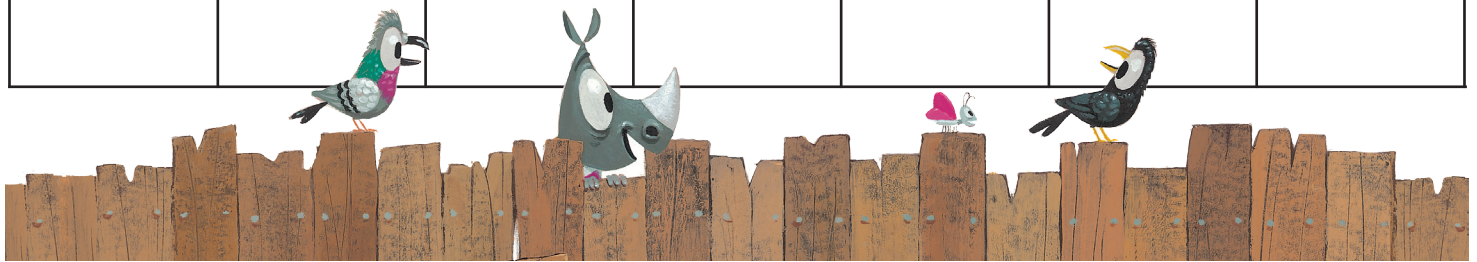
There are \_\_\_\_\_ animal legs and \_\_\_\_\_ insect legs in the illustration.



Use this adaptable calendar template to plan your busy week! Fill in the month and dates. Use this as a classroom or event calendar or hand out to students to keep track of assignments.



<b>SUNDAY</b> Dream day!	<b>MONDAY</b> 'Doze it day!	<b>TUESDAY</b> Mix day!	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Load day!	<b>THURSDAY</b> Fill it day!	<b>FRIDAY</b> Last day!	<b>SATURDAY</b> Hey! Hey!
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# A Q&A with author Jean Reidy

## How did you come up with the concept for *BUSY BUILDERS, BUSY WEEK!*?

The concept for *BUSY BUILDERS, BUSY WEEK!* was a bit of a mash-up. My editors at Bloomsbury asked me to write a days-of-the-week book for their list. I loved the idea, so I brainstormed a variety of approaches that ranged from the mundane to the wildly weird. But that's the way I work, creatively uncensored, putting all the possibilities out there. I've always wanted to write a construction trucks book, so when I hit on the notion of a "construction week" the only decision left was, "What can we build in a week that will resonate with a child?" Well, a playground, of course. Even better, a playground designed by illustrator Leo Timmers.

## Writing in rhyme is difficult, but you make it look so easy! What process do you use to make the rhythm and meter work so well?

I grew up reading and writing poetry. I also grew up singing and surrounded by music. Rhyme and rhythm, for me, are as much about recalling the rhythms of my past—songs, poems, jump rope rhymes, commercial jingles—as they are about listening carefully now. When I stumble upon a story idea, the rhythm of the piece often stumbles in with it . . . or soon after. And I keep in mind the age of my audience and tone of the writing as I let that rhythm percolate. I develop rhyming word lists and unexpected turns of phrase. Then I write and revise by ear—which means reading and reciting the story out loud hundreds of times. But after hundreds of rereads my ears can become unreliable critics. That's when I turn to a line-up of fresh readers to make sure that my rhyme scheme reads effortlessly.

## What was the most challenging aspect of writing this particular book, and how did you overcome it?

Once I had the kid-friendly rhythm and rhyme scheme for *BUSY BUILDERS, BUSY WEEK!* then came the challenge of meeting the demands of that scheme over seven days' worth of text. As usually happens in my writing, about 90% of the text-in-verse flowed easily once the structure was set, but the remaining 10% required much more work. Constructing those remaining difficult verses in a set rhyme scheme is always challenging. But it's the part I most enjoy, because I have to work harder for the words. I might have to dream up a way to creatively use a word that, at first glance, might not seem to fit the tone or concept of the story. I have to reach beyond the usual to explore the unusual. And the resultant text is often richer for it. Oddly, those troublesome verses often end up being my favorites.

## Why do you like to write for this very young age group?

By writing books for the very young, I have a chance to reach children at the beginning of their reading journeys. To play even a small part in those journeys is an awesome notion, because beloved books not only launch young kids into the wonderful world of reading but also plant the seeds for their imaginations to blossom. So I love every step in the process—finding those perfect, few, fun and sometimes whimsical words; presenting a concept with pacing and page turns to keep a kid captivated; leaving room for amazing art to complete the story; creating a book that a kid will love. It's a far-reaching, challenging, and delightful responsibility.



**Jean Reidy** is a two-time winner of the Colorado Book Award. Especially gifted at writing for very young children, Jean is a frequent presenter at national and local literacy, writing, and education conferences and at schools across the country—in person and via Skype. She is a member of the Colorado Council International Reading Association and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, and she has served on the board of Reach Out and Read Colorado. Jean writes from her home in Colorado where she lives right across the street from her neighborhood library, which she visits nearly every day.



# A Q&A with illustrator Leo Timmers

## Can you briefly describe your process in approaching Jean Reidy's text for **BUSY BUILDERS, BUSY WEEK!** for illustration?

One of the things I knew early on was that I wanted to work with a team—a group of animals that would build the playground. I could have gone in another direction and used different characters in every spread, but I like the idea that children can identify with these builders. Once settled on this idea, I started to make a lot of sketches of the animals and also of the kind of look I wanted. I knew I wanted a more simple approach than I used in my previous collaboration with Jean's text, *ALL THROUGH MY TOWN*, but also with visual ideas and fun details. The process is really trial and error. It's like making a puzzle, and you try to fit all the pieces together without it feeling contrived. It was also important to build up tension and show slowly what they were building so there could be a big reveal in the last spread. Jean's texts are so open that I can inject my own ideas and preoccupations into them, and make it my own. I really like that.

## How did you settle on the types of animals for your construction crew?

After sketching a couple of versions of the book, I wasn't satisfied with the ending and I thought it needed an extra surprise on top of the reveal of the playground. Then I got the idea of making the different playground equipment in the shapes of the animals, which would connect them even more with the building of it. So I looked at what animal I could use also for what equipment. I changed my previous cast and replaced them with ones I could use in the end spread. Most important were the giraffe (I needed something high), the crocodile for the swing, and the elephant for the slide. I added the gorilla mainly because I wanted heavy guys. And then I thought it would be a nice contrast for this gang to have a small lady boss who is *really* in charge. So there was the mouse!

## There are so many rich details in your illustrations—earthworms pack up to move but are shown settled back in in future spreads; insect helpers deliver nails to the workers; playground equipment honors each builder. Do you plot these out ahead of time, or do they happen more spontaneously as you create each spread?

These visual narratives develop spontaneously during the sketching phase. I try to tell a story on every spread that's not in the text, but belongs only to the viewer. I had this idea to introduce a new bird or insect in every spread, but then I also wanted to tie this idea into the main story. So the painting on the wall of the insects was the perfect way to do this. Suddenly a small idea that was in the background pops up to the front and takes center stage. For me this adds not only an extra narrative layer, but it is also interesting on a purely visual level. These details and ideas make this world come alive. I like it when there is a reason behind all the things I do. I don't like randomness, and just filling up an image with useless, decorative elements.

## You live with your family in Belgium. Are there any uniquely Belgian aspects to your illustrations in this book that American children might be interested in noting?

I don't think there are on an obvious level. There is a very strong painterly tradition in Belgium and I think this shows, not only in my work, but in the work of a lot of illustrators here. I, for example, look a lot at the work of Breughel for the many details in his work, the compositions, and colors. But also the surrealists—I'm a big Magritte fan, and I have made a homage picture book about him called *MISTER RENNY*. I've studied his work very closely. Strong visual ideas, imagination, a bit funny and strange, chaotic, and surreal—yes, these are some treats that are maybe grounded in Belgian culture and they also show up in my work.



**Leo Timmers** studied advertising and graphic design in school and has written and illustrated many children's books. He and Jean Reidy collaborated previously on *ALL THROUGH MY TOWN*. His books have been translated into more than 25 languages. Leo is currently very involved with animation as a television series based on his book *ZIGGY AND THE ZOO TRAM* is currently in production in his native Belgium, and a second show based on his book *DEEP SEA DOCTOR DEREK* is in development. He lives in Brussels with his wife and two daughters.