FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Picture Books

Little is Big
Sandra Robbins
Iku Oseki, illustrator
See-More's Workshop
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“How do you do? Oh, what do you do when something frightens you?” Most children understand that they have fears, but do they put into words what choices they have when faced with something frightening? Spinny the fish helps them do just that in this creative “Color-Me” storybook. When confronted with his fear of the “biggest fish in the sea,” Spinny asks all his friends in the sea what they do when they’re afraid.

“Even though Spinny was a little fish he had BIG IDEAS.” Using those big ideas, he and his friends come up with a way to scare the big fish. Afterward, Spinny and his friends realize that scaring him may not have been the best choice. In the end, they come up with a different plan—to make their enemy their friend.

The author slips many lessons about coping and problem-solving techniques into the story line. Besides talking to his friends, the main character also uses a crystal to “picture a peaceful sea.” He uses the crystal again later in the book to show the big fish how to visualize a friendship. Robbins is no stranger to positive thinking: her father always told her, “There is always a rainbow after the rain.” She has written, directed, and performed in more than twenty musical puppet plays. At the request of teachers and parents, she has taken “the Stage to the Page,” transforming ten of her plays into children’s books and audiotapes.

The black-and-white illustrations in this volume are ready for the reader’s colors. They are simple with bold lines, making it easy for younger children’s broad strokes. The many different sea creatures provide ample opportunity for individual creativity on each page. The illustrator, who received her art training at Massachusetts School of the Arts, is the head of the Art Department at a private elementary school in Cambridge, Massachusetts where she teaches all art forms.

The rhymes and repetitive text, combined with the CD and coloring pages, make this a perfect book for very young children. While having fun, “little” ones will get their own “BIG

IDEAS” about facing their fears and solving their own problems.