



The Busy-Body Book of Fun-Atomy Tunes

Karla R. Poer

Anna Grace Delp, Illustrator

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In *The Busy-Body Book of Fun-Atomy Tunes*, the author takes the old songs, “Do Your Ears Hang Low?” and “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” and creates an interactive musical experience for children eager to learn the parts of the body. From ears to toes, the author creates little rhymes that play with language and introduce not only the body, but metaphor.

The book opens with an introduction that reveals the author's Christian view of the world. Karla R. Poer encourages readers to thank God for their bodies and to use the body and its miracles of movement as a way to praise God. The introduction also reveals a writer careful to explain words that children might not know. She is very focused on keeping the book accessible.

The author and her young daughter approached the book as a team. Poer, the mother, wrote the lyrics and Anna Grace Delp, the daughter, drew corresponding pictures. The illustrations are appropriate to a young child, and while not technically proficient, they are expressive. The drawn characters show mood through strange eyebrows and hunched shoulders.

The lyrics themselves, often funny and inventive, sometimes suffer from the necessity of rhyme, encouraging the writer to make images that don't quite work or to sacrifice the measure of the poem. For instance, in “Knuckle Sandwich, Anyone?” she writes:

*Are you hard on your knuckles?
Are they prematurely wrinkled?
Would you eat 'em in a sandwich?
Do you lick up sticky sprinkles?
Do you crack 'em, rap 'em, chap 'em,
squeeze 'em tight till they cry 'Uncle?'
Are you hard on your knuckles?*

The fifth line begins the odd rhythm that doesn't quite work; however, it shows the linguistic awareness of the writer. She teases with language: cracking knuckles, rapping knuckles, chapped knuckles. Children will acquire language through the rhyme as well as the puns and plays on words. In “Zoo to Ewe,” she offers a host of animal puns that will delight young readers, eager to be in on the secret:

*Is there a zoo inside of ewe?
Goose bumps? Is nothing gnu?
Has the cat gotten your tongue,
while your dog's eating your shoe?
Are you hungry as a bear, but*

*eat a butterfly or two?
Is there a zoo inside of ewe?*

Parents can explain the little plays with language and children can imagine the animals in the body.

The book spurs creativity. In fact, the last few pages of the book are blank, so that children and their parents might enjoy an activity together by writing and illustrating their own versions.

This book is a very good choice for helping children acquire language skills, though non-Christianity parents might be uncomfortable with the introduction.

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