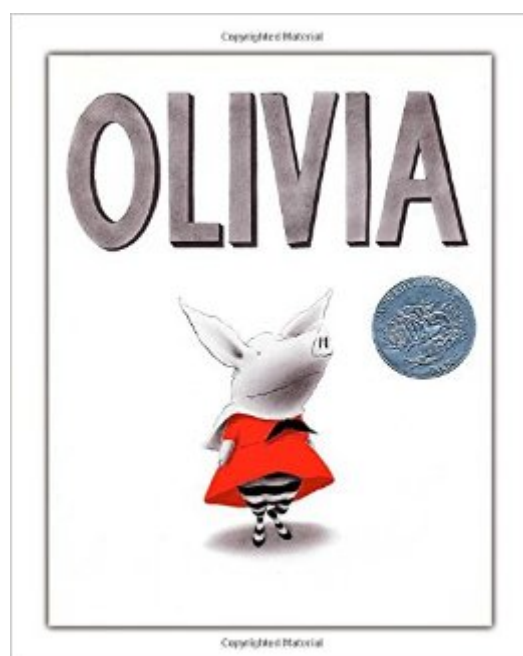


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# Olivia



## Synopsis

Have fun with Olivia...-dressing up -singing songs -building sand castles -napping (maybe) -dancing -painting on walls -and -- whew! -- going to sleep at last.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD270L (What's this?)

Series: Olivia

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; 1 edition (October 1, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689829531

ISBN-13: 978-0689829536

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.5 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (292 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #9,872 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #23 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Growing Up & Facts of Life > Health > Personal Hygiene](#) #54 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Animals > Pigs](#) #544 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life](#)

Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

"This is Olivia," begins Ian Falconer's delightful picture book about a precocious piglet. "She is good at lots of things." In charming and hilarious illustrations, Olivia's busy adventures take her through dress-up, playing with her cat, going to the beach and museum, (reluctantly) taking a nap, and going to bed after just one story...no, three stories. This simply is one of the finest children's picture books of the year, and sure to be named on everyone's Top of 2000 list. Quietly humorous and tongue-in-cheek narration, fluid and expressive black-and-white-and-red artwork, and the charming portrayal of the busy and mischievous Olivia make this an instant classic. Sight gags abound (Olivia's ambitious sandcastle, her pink-pink sunburn, her dreams of being a ballerina, and her songbook "40 Very Loud Songs") and Falconer, a New Yorker cover artist and theatre designer, portrays the never-ending energy of a tiny pig, er, girl, with wit and charm. Don't miss this one: suitable for all ages from the very young to the very old, "Olivia" is the prize of the season. It's the kind of book kids will be begging to have read to them before bed: bargaining for not once, not

twice, but three times.

As the first page states..."This is Olivia. She is good at lots of things." And she is. Good at wearing people out, scaring her brother, combing her ears, getting dressed, building sand castles, painting...everything but napping. She's a precocious, feisty, imaginative, wonderful little pig. Ian Falconer has captured the essence of a pre-schooler in his first children's book. His short, simple text is complimented by his expressive black and white illustrations, with just a touch of bright red to highlight the right parts. This is a book your youngsters will want to read again and again, as they see a bit of themselves in Olivia. A must for all home libraries, Olivia is sure to become a classic.

I love Ian Falconer's New Yorker covers, and now I love Olivia too. I only discovered Olivia just this afternoon while I was browsing at the local bookstore. Olivia reminds one of Elopise, but at the same time, it's nice to see her with parents and siblings. I was enchanted by this book, I laughed out loud, and darn it all... if I had only had a few bucks more, I would have bought it. The prose is simple, but sharp and direct, and the artwork is hysterical (especially when Olivia's brother is shown copying everything she does.) Even more fun is Olivia's appreciation for art and the like. Imagine a little kid wanting a Callas picture book read to them. It's touches like this that make Olivia the clear winner as one of the best picture books to emerge this past year. I am hoping Falconer will write a few more books about this precious piglet. In the meantime, be proud to buy a copy of this book for yourself, even if you don't have any kids. It will definitely be the literary high point of your week.

Olivia is a young, energetic pig who "is good at lots of things." She likes to run, play dress-up, build sand castles, and scare her little brother away. In fact, Olivia has so much energy, that her mother finds it hard to get her take a nap during the day. Like most children, Olivia has bigger and better things to do than worry about a little sleep, especially when she could be at a museum looking at her favorite picture. Also like other children, Olivia gets inspired and decides to paint a picture on her own bedroom wall. All her adventures during the day make Olivia a typical child. Before the end of the day, Olivia really wears out her poor parents. As a tradition in many families, Olivia's mother still finds the strength to read her a few books before bedtime. And when all is said and done, her mother still loves her anyways. Like many children, Olivia is into many activities and uses her energy to the full extent. This book allows children to feel comfortable and secure in knowing that they can play all day, make mistakes, and wear their parents out without losing their love. It provokes children to be energetic and creative while enjoying the tales of lovable pig who inspires

them to play and create.

What I loved: The artwork. The artwork. The artwork. The skill and subtlety of shading is breathtaking. The minimalist palette (black & white plus red) is brave, and certainly helps to highlight key elements (mostly Olivia's clothes!). I am reminded of the ghost-activated inventory in *The Sixth Sense*. In any case it should come as no surprise that Mr. Falconer is a talented set designer. What I didn't love: The many examples of poor behavior. I can accept that a piglet like Olivia has an ego bigger than her size belies. But letting a young child act out in a selfish and often destructive manner is no recipe for success. Maybe it works in a pigpen but then again, Olivia is anthropomorphized so we must hold her to a higher standard than most swine. Painting on the walls à la Pollock and intentionally frightening her younger brother are actions not to be admired or laughed at. Olivia's parents are of course complicit to some degree. Allowing her to try on upwards of twenty outfits every morning, and negotiating before bedtime, would never stand in this house. Finally, and possibly most egregious, the goodnight exchange of "I love you anyway" seems far from a secure and sincere expression of love.

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