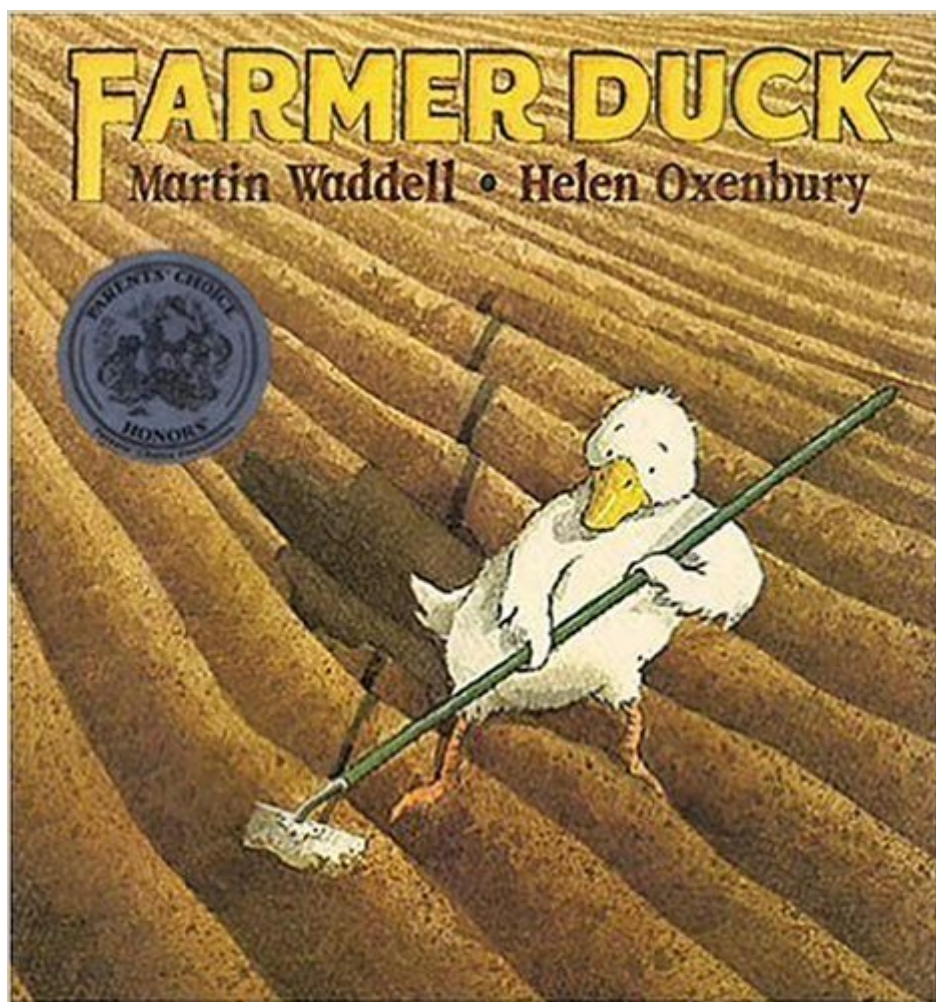


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# Farmer Duck



## Synopsis

Martin Waddell's uplifting modern fable and Helen Oxenbury's humor and pathos make this a very special collaboration. Farmer Duck isn't your average duck. This duck cooks and cleans, tends the fields, and cares for the other animals on the farm "all because the owner of the farm is too lazy to do these things himself. But when Farmer Duck finally collapses from exhaustion, the farmyard animals come to the rescue with a simple but heroic plan.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 360L (What's this?)

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: Candlewick (March 1, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1564025969

ISBN-13: 978-1564025968

Product Dimensions: 9 x 0.2 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (47 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #27,445 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #31 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Ducks & Other Waterfowl](#) #38 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Farm Life](#) #63 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies](#)

Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: [Preschool - 2](#)

## Customer Reviews

Ladies and gentlemen, I demand an explanation. Would someone PLEASE take the time and effort to tell me exactly why it is that I had never heard of this book until the good people of the New York Public Library placed it on their, "100 Picture Books Every Child Should Know"??? Why isn't this book being handed out to every kindergartner that walks into school on their first day? Why isn't there a "Farmer Duck" Day where we all get to take off work and revel in the sublime pleasures of this text? And why, oh why oh why, was this book never recommended to me in any way, shape, or form? Ladies and gentlemen, I place the blame fully on a nation in which Madonna can create best-selling children's books because, according to her, there are NO good books for her kids (I'm having a hard time typing as I gag), while my beloved, "Farmer Duck" remains a small perfect gem

in a sea of terrible literature. But I digress. "Farmer Duck" follows the unlikely premise of a duck that runs a farm all by his lonesome. The actual farmer in charge of the place is a lazy no good so-and-so who would rather eat bon bons in bed than take the time to do any work. While the man relaxes in his shirtless luxury (occasionally shouting out a helpful, "How goes the work?") the duck cuts the wood, weeds the gardens, washes the dishes, irons the clothing, and pretty much does everything that needs doing. When at long last the duck grows, "sleepy and weepy and tired" (what a great way to describe any child that has gone too long without a nap, by the way), the other farm animals decide that enough is enough. Joining forces they run that rotten farmer out of town and set about all doing the chores equally with the duck in charge. The plot is good. The illustrations are brilliant.

Fourteen years ago, as I read this simple, entertaining, and richly illustrated tale to my children, I'd have never imagined the literary and political controversy that has flared among reviewers. \*Farmer Duck\* is just as inclined politically towards the Protestant Work Ethic as it is towards Socialism. The lesson in this short and simple tale is that lazy and unproductive people will eventually get their come-uppance. Personally, I find it has more of a 'French Revolution' flavor but without the guillotine and the violence. As I read their comments, I find some reviewers are reading a different book than I. The farmer is portrayed as a lazy and unproductive human because he IS a lazy and unproductive human. He calls from his bed and chair "How goes the work?" rather than put his pants on and go outside like a proper supervisor to view the work in progress. The animals chase the lazy farmer out of the farmhouse. They don't lay a feather on him. He doesn't resist to defend his 'rightful ownership'. He just runs away, coward that he is. On the literary analysis level, let's keep things in context. The microcosm presented here is 'Farmer Duck', not \*Animal Farm\*. Plagiarism? Come on. Comparing the \*Farmer Duck\* 'philosophy' to \*Animal Farm\*'s is like comparing a pair of garden shears to a corn harvesting combine. What makes \*Farmer Duck\* such a good tool is it's the kind of story that you as a parent can talk with your kids about. Ask them what they felt about the relationships between the farmer, duck, and the animals. Ask them how each character's behavior affected them.

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