



My Momma Likes to Say

By Denise Brennan-Nelson



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From the author of *Buzzy the Bumblebee* comes a child's hilarious visual interpretation of such parental idioms and witticisms as "Hold your horses;" "Money doesn't grow on trees;" and "I have eyes in the back of my head." "Cat got your tongue?" My momma likes to say. I'm not sure what she means but I like it anyway. My cat has never tried to take my tongue away. But if he did, he'd find that it can stretch a long, long way.



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My Momma Likes to Say By Denise Brennan-Nelson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

PreSchool-Grade 3-Brennan-Nelson introduces children to clichéd expressions by setting them in a poetic format: "When life hands you lemons, make lemonade,/my momma likes to say./I'm not sure what she means/but I like it anyway." Each poem continues with a response to the saying: "If life gives me lemons/I'll squeeze them good and hard./Then add some sugar, stir it up/and sell it from our yard." Many of the rhymes do not scan well. In small type, the idioms are further explained with questions, followed by trivia, historical information, and, in the case of the lemon quote, a recipe for lemonade. Some of these entries are choppy and filled with non sequiturs, while others are quite interesting. Donovan's color illustrations are uneven-"Sleep tight. Don't let the bed bugs bite" shows three adorable creatures happily snoozing alongside the boy narrator, but the spreads for "Cat got your tongue?" and "I have eyes in the back of my head" are disturbing to look at. One page invites children to "write the things your momma says to you." For books on idioms, libraries would do better to get another copy of Marvin Terban's *In a Pickle and Other Funny Idioms* (Clarion, 1983) or Loreen Leedy and Pat Street's *There's a Frog in My Throat* (Holiday, 2003).

Bina Williams, Bridgeport Public Library, CT

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 2-4, younger for reading aloud. Proverbs, aphorisms, and maxims get new life in this book that clarifies sayings that kids might have heard but don't completely understand, such as "Money doesn't grow on trees"; "It's raining cats and dogs"; and "Hold your horses." Each two-page spread comprises a sprightly rhyme (the rhymes don't always scan well); a painting that illustrates the saying; and a note giving the idiom's derivation. "Reach for the stars," for instance, is accompanied by a picture showing a boy and his cat in a tree, and a note explaining the idiom and citing the derivation of the saying (in this case, a Russian author's quote, "We sit in the mud and reach for the stars"). Unfortunately for libraries, the last page, which is ruled like notebook paper, invites children to write down special sayings from their own mothers. This will interest teachers and librarians, who will still find many ways to use it for language exercises. For another take on familiar sayings, pick up Loreen Leedy and Pat Street's *There's a Frog in My Throat* [BKL Mr 15 03]. Ilene Cooper

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Review

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-- "Booklist" (July 2003)

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From reader reviews:

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