

## **Magic Eyes of Little Crab**

By: Dr. Mike Lockett; illustrated by Sun Lotto

Published by: Heritage Schoolhouse Press (USA) Date: 2010

ISBN: 978-986-6483-62-2

Price: \$19.95

Ages: 5-10

Rating: 5 stars

Reviewed by: Nancy Messmore

Synopsis: With a magic chant and a “Pop! Pop!” crab can send his eyeballs into the sea to discover beautiful colors and an array of creatures. Jaguar is jealous of crab’s vision and wants crab to help him see below the sea. Even after crab advises him of the dangers, Jaguar demands that crab “Pop! Pop!” his eyeballs. Uh-oh! Crab’s warning is realized! How will Jaguar get his eyes back? And what price will Jaguar and Crab pay for their mistakes?

Overall thoughts: I joyously admit that I read this to myself then listened to the accompanying CD. Then I listened again and again. On its own, Dr. Lockett’s retelling of this folk tale is entertaining and makes a good read aloud for parents, teachers or librarians who do justice to stories by using voices and sound effects. But, in my experience, those with storytelling talents are few and far between. For me, the brilliance of this book is the inclusion of a recording of Dr. Lockett telling the tale. His vocal skills paired with perfect music and sound effects elevate this book to the sublime.

However, Dr. Lockett’s storytelling isn’t the only factor that elevates this book. Sun Lotto’s rich illustrations (mostly computer generated) express emotions. Watch the eyes of the Jaguar, the Crab and even the sea creatures. And be sure to linger over the underwater visions; children will want to identify all of the creatures spoken of in the story. Lotto has added a new dimension to the story.

Another bonus of this book is that it is created in two languages. Flip the book over and you have a Chinese version. The CD includes a Chinese storyteller as well an English version. So I believe that this book will appeal to older children (even teens and adults) who speak English or Chinese and are learning the other language. I imagine this book in the collections of high schools that offer Chinese language courses. Of course it belongs in the libraries of ESL teachers as well.

In the case of *Magic Eyes of Little Crab*, the components are each well done and could stand on their own. In this case, story, pictures and audio combine to create a memorable tale that will be cherished.

Links:

Author: <http://www.mikelockett.com/>