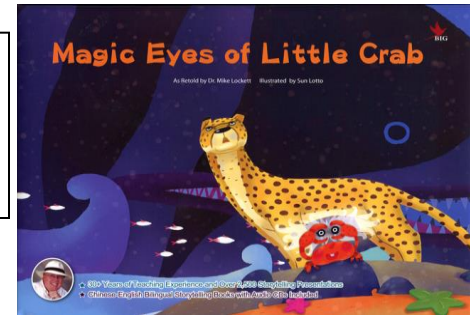




Reggie Reads: August 2011

Review by [JoAnna Stephens Mink](#) August 1, 2011



Lockett, Mike. *Magic Eyes of Little Crab*.
Normal, IL: Heritage Schoolhouse Press, 2010. 64pp.

Summary: *Magic Eyes of Little Crab* is a version of a folktale found in British Guyana by German folklorist Theodor Koch-Grünberg. It is retold here by Mike Lockett and beautifully illustrated by Sun Lotto.

Magic Eyes of Little Crab is one of six children's bilingual picture books written in both Chinese and English. For the alternate-language version, the reader simply flips the book over, as the illustrations are reproduced. Included in the book is an audio CD of Lockett reading the text in a most engaging manner with appropriate background music and sound effects. Consequently, a parent could read the story to very young children or they could listen to Lockett's rendition. Older children could read the story themselves. Either is an enjoyable experience. The second track is the story read in Chinese.

Although he's sitting on the beach, Little Crab's eyes can see all kinds of wonderful beings in the ocean depths—a turtle, a swordfish, even a shark. But once when he was playing his "sailing" game, whereby his magic eyeballs pop out of his head and fly into the deep blue sea, a jaguar comes along and threatens Little Crab. So, to demonstrate his game, Little Crab makes his magic eyes see an angelfish and a squid and other sea creatures—even a mermaid. Of course, Jaguar wants his eyes to go sailing even though Little Crab explains that it's dangerous.

But Jaguar insists so Little Crab says the magic words. Jaguar's eyes pop out of his head. He can see how beautiful the sea is—until a huge fish swallows Jaguar's eyes. Then everything is dark. A vulture flying overhead hears Jaguar crying and makes a deal whereby he will bring him new eyes if Jaguar agrees to always give him some food. And this is why to this day jaguars and all large cats leave part of their food for vultures, and crabs still hide under rocks.

Other stories retold by Lockett in this series include *Teddy Bear*, *The Cat and the Mouse*, *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, *Monkey and Rabbit Together*, and a new version of *Hickory Dickory Dock*.

About the Author: After teaching elementary school and serving as a high school principal and central office administrator for more than 30 years, Mike Lockett '72, M.S. '75, Ed.D. '92, is now in demand as a storyteller, workshop leader, and keynote speaker. As "The Normal Storyteller," he presents special programs in the USA and Eastern Asia. When not traveling, he lives in Normal.