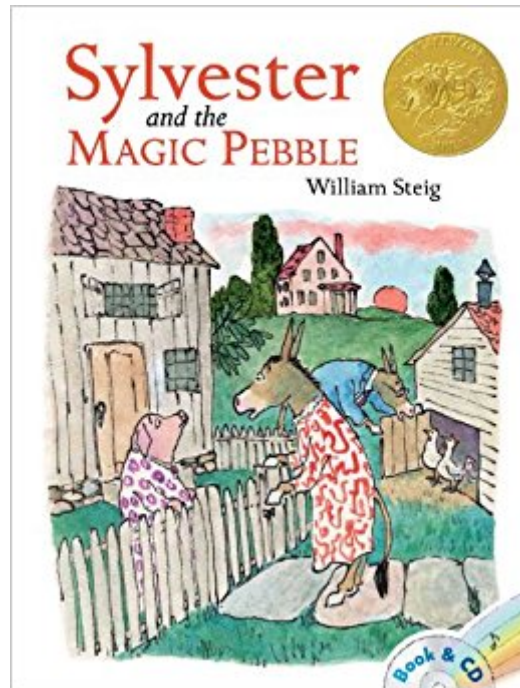




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# Sylvester And The Magic Pebble



## Synopsis

>Sylvester can't believe his luck when he finds a magic pebble that can make wishes come true. But when a lion jumps out at him on his way home, Sylvester is shocked into making a wish that has unexpected consequences. After overcoming a series of obstacles, Sylvester is eventually reunited with his loving family. Illustrated with William Steig's glowing pictures, this winner of the Caldecott Medal is beloved by children everywhere. This package includes a paperback book along with a CD of this modern classic read by legendary actor James Earl Jones.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 780 (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Little Simon; Book and CD edition (March 6, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1442435607

ISBN-13: 978-1442435605

Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 0.2 x 10.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 7 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 210 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #11,383 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #32 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Farm Animals #232 in Books > Children's Books > Classics #388 in Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy & Magic

Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

## Customer Reviews

Imagine all the happiness and wealth you could achieve if you found a magic pebble that granted your every wish! Sylvester Duncan, an unassuming donkey who collects pebbles "of unusual shape and color," experiences just such a lucky find. But before he can make all his wishes come true, the young donkey unexpectedly encounters a mean-looking lion. Startled, Sylvester wishes he were a rock, but in mineral form he can no longer hold the pebble, and thus cannot wish himself back to his equine trappings. His parents, thinking he has disappeared, are at first frantic, then miserable, and then plunge into donkey ennui. Meanwhile, Sylvester is gravely depressed, but tries to get used to being a rock. In 1970, William Steig won the Caldecott Medal for *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble*--the first of his many Newbery and Caldecott honors. In this donkey's tale, Steig imbues his

characteristically simple illustrations of animals sporting human garb with evocative, irresistible, and heartbreakingly vivid emotions. The text is straightforward and the dialogue remarkably touching. Children will feel deeply for Sylvester and his parents, all wishing for the impossible--that the family will one day be reunited. Sylvester's sweet story is one that endures, reminding us all that sometimes what we have is all we really need. (Ages 4 to 8) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

On a rainy day, Sylvester finds a magic pebble that can make wishes come true. But when a lion frightens him on his way home, Sylvester makes a wish that brings unexpected results. How Sylvester is eventually reunited with his loving family and restored to his true self makes a story that is beautifully tender and filled with true magic. Illustrated with William Steig's glowing pictures, this is a modern classic beloved by children everywhere. Sylvester and the Magic Pebble is a winner of the Caldecott Medal.END --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

4/1/17 Update: Apparently, this book is a frequently requested re-read by our grandsons since Christmas. The fact that I'd only just discovered this 1970 Caldecott Medal-winning book last fall amazes me, since I'd tried to invest in wonderful children's books for both my own grown sons and our three grandsons. Made me a bit sad to find it so late, and yet hopeful - there must be so many OTHER excellent books I'm not aware of just waiting for me to stumble across them... just as Sylvester Duncan stumbles across a magical, flaming red pebble in this book. Sylvester is a donkey who collects pebbles as a hobby, and the shiny red pebble he finds - when he's touching it - makes his wishes come true. But that old "be careful what you wish for" saying comes to bear when a hungry lion eyes him, and Sylvester wishes himself to become a large rock... he avoids becoming the lion's next meal, but - as a rock - he can now no longer move or speak, and the pebble lies just beyond him - he realizes that the only way he will be transformed back into a donkey would be for someone to pick up the pebble and wish for a rock to become a donkey; his recognition of the astronomically slim chance of that happening sends him into a deep depression. As time passes, his distraught parents are beside themselves with fear and sadness; many months later, resigned now to the thought that they will never see their son again, they attempt to lift their spirits by going on a picnic, Mrs. Duncan decides a large rock (Sylvester) is a good place to lay out the spread, while Mr. Duncan discovers the red pebble lying next to it, declares how much Sylvester would have enjoyed having it as part of his collection, and lays it atop the rock. Eventually Mrs. Duncan wishes aloud that Sylvester was there with him, and Sylvester - with the pebble now touching him - wishes

he was himself again and... voila! He returns to his donkey form, tears, embraces, kisses, questions, answers, loving looks and fond exclamations follow. When they return home, the pebble is locked away in an iron safe because - just in being back together - "They all had all that they wanted." This is a powerful, tender story... pretty dark, but with a beautiful light at the end! Apparently the author/illustrator was deeply inspired by the story of Pinocchio during his youth, and the longing of Pinocchio to become a "real boy". Though this Sylvester story does share a darkness that I'd felt reading Pinocchio and seeing the movie as a child, it also shares the overwhelming relief and joy when parent and "child" are reunited. This particular copy of the book is a "restored deluxe edition", reissued after the discovery of the original artwork, with the colors being as the author/illustrator had originally intended. It also includes a copy of his Caldecott Medal acceptance speech. Both in its writing and illustrations, the book beautifully depicts the tenderness between parent/child, the deep seated fears we have as both a child (of being abandoned) and a parent (losing a child) - it's a very powerful and moving story that ends happily, and with the recognition that often what we want most in life - when we look to the core of what brings us happiness - we already possess! Every once in a while, it's nice to be reminded of that.

Sylvester is a sweet little donkey who discovers a magical wish-granting pebble. He has a terrible accident, and in the end, a happy reunion. I think the magic of this book comes from the way the parents are described. Their unchanging love for their child, their obvious grief, their search for their adorable son... everything about them boosts the knowledge in YOUR child of how much he or she is treasured. When Sylvester and his parents finally are reunited at the end of the book, we all feel it -- what do we need magic wishes for, when we have everything we could want right here in our family? Who could wish for anything else?

The story is wonderful, but the illustrations are incredible. The soft but clear colors, the patterns on the clothes, everything about them is touching. I usually dislike books about animals wearing clothes and behaving like people, but this book does it right. The various barnyard animals who people Sylvester's world (I love that the police are pigs) manage to seem perfectly natural. This book is a classic.

This Caldecott-Award-winning picture book was selected as one of the 100 Best Books of the Century by the National Education Association, and deservedly so. A young donkey, Sylvester, finds a magic pebble, one that grants his every wish. Through a logical chain of events which make

sense, Sylvester wishes he were a rock. Instantly, he is turned into a rock, unable to move, unable to speak. His parents search for him but cannot find him, and their lives seem without meaning. This, the center part of the book, is very sad. But through another logical chain of events, Sylvester the rock is able to make a wish that comes true. Thus he and his parents are reunited, and all three realize that, having each other, there is nothing else to wish for, because "They all had all that they wanted. A wonderful story: funny, then sad, then joyous and uplifting.

We very much enjoyed this book for the interesting illustration style, but there were a few issues. First, some of the sentences could have been written differently to provide a sentence structure that is easier to read out loud. In other words, it could have been simplified. I also found the story to be a bit scary and sad for my three-year-old. A major part of the plot line is a missing child and the parents who are mourning a significant loss. I don't feel that these issues are particularly kid-friendly, but we still read it from time to time.

This is such a wonderful book. I loved it as a child and as soon as I saw it ordered it for my daughter (age 3). She loves it as well. She struggles with the concept of Sylvester turning into a rock, but otherwise thoroughly enjoys this lovely story and illustrations.

This is a cute book about a donkey that finds a magic pebble and makes a mistake about what he wishes for! A series of events lead to an unlikely but amusing & happy ending! Great story to spur imagination.

Wow! What an amazing story that tells what is really important in a non - preachy kind of way. Really touching to my husband who read it to our children (ages 12, 5, 4, and 1) who all liked it.

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