



# Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli

*Barbara Jean Hicks , Sue Hendra (Illustrator)*

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What *do* monsters eat?

*The waitress in this restaurant just doesn't have a clue.*

*Monsters don't eat broccoli!*

*How could she think we do?*

In this rollicking picture book written by Barbara Jean Hicks and illustrated by Sue Hendra, monsters insist they don't like broccoli. They'd rather snack on tractors or a rocket ship or two, or tender trailer tidbits, or a wheely, steely stew. But boy do those trees they're munching on look an awful lot like broccoli. Maybe vegetables aren't so bad after all!

This hilarious book will have youngsters laughing out loud and craving healthy monster snacks of their own.

## Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli Details

Date : Published August 11th 2009 by Knopf Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9780375856860

Author : Barbara Jean Hicks , Sue Hendra (Illustrator)

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# From Reader Review Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli for online ebook

## Tim says

The idea is simple - pretending to be a monster eating trees and buildings, which are actually veggies. But the pictures are so silly and fun that it makes this book memorable.

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## Brittany says

This "monster" books is pretty cute, but sadly not a five-star review. The story is all about "monsters" not eating their broccoli, which kids should relate to easily. The wording is a little iffy in places, and it makes for a clunky read-aloud in a few spots. Overall a good story, but practice reading it several times before you attempt it in front of a crowd of kiddos.

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## Nancy Kotkin says

Love the ending though I'm not especially a fan of picture books that tell children they don't like vegetables. I grew up loving vegetables, because they're delicious and no one told me not to like them.

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## Heidi-Marie says

I know I've read this before today, but I don't remember when. It has great potential for a read-aloud. Yet the ending will require some thinking on my part.

11/9/10 Went well. Preschool liked it. The special needs group got very into the chanting with me, which was fun.

11/16/10 & 11/18/10 The larger Tue. group had more fun with this as they responded to what the monsters liked to eat. (Though I wonder if a couple of those kids were just past preschool age.) The Thu. group enjoyed it, too.

2/15/12 This didn't work for me as well as it has previously. The first and larger group was very late and noisy when coming in. It distracted kids, parents, and, me--I completely forgot about the chanting. And for such a large group, they're still not as responsive as I'd like. I may have to rethink how to draw them out. They did like the end in both groups. And at least the second & smaller group moved heads when asked if they'd eat what the monsters did.

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## Eme87 says

Picky children- behaviors.

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## Laura says

I read this book to my ID population. I used the recurring line (Fum, foe, fie, fee monsters don't eat broccoli) on the Big Mac button for my nonverbal kids. I also asked kids if they would eat the same thing the monsters were eating: ships, boulders, tractors etc. The kids used their communication devices to tell me yes or no. The kids seemed to enjoy it but not anything super exciting.

More of a fun read with your own child than using in the classroom.

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## Betsy says

Oh, ye unfortunate parents of picky eaters, all both short and small. Where do you turn for help in your moments of greatest woe? What methods are at hand to teach your children how to eat their vegetables? Do you purchase an informative DVD that tries to overrule the reality of their tongue with the fantastical teaching of the visuals? Do you establish a set of rules and tell the children to abide by them? Or do you turn to that old standby: the picture book. Picture books helped your kids to learn how to use the potty and how to act towards others, after all. How much more difficult is it then to find one that will teach them how to eat their greens? Mighty difficult, as it happens. Oh, there are books out there, of course. And they have different methods of teaching. Some titles try to convince kids that if you try it, you will automatically like it. Others compel children to be dismissive of those other children who never try anything new. And these are all well and good, but how awesome would it be if you came across a picture book that gave that old adage “don’t play with your food” a hearty kick in the pants? You know how you get kids to eat their veggies? I’ll tell you how you get them to eat their veggies! You let them play, just a little, with their food. Because if there is one thing *Monsters Don’t Eat Broccoli* teaches us, it’s that even the smallest critic can be rendered curious in the face of a catchy text, multicolored monsters, and unnatural foodstuffs.

A slew of hungry monsters stare incredulously at a waitress bearing two huge plates of tasty vegetables. “The waitress in this restaurant just doesn’t have a clue. Monsters don’t eat broccoli! How could she think we do?” With gusto, the monsters take stock of what they do like to eat. Trailers and rocket ships. Redwood trees and sharks. These monsters like their food wild and weird and tasty. But when two of them devour “a clump of giant maples and their yummy, gummy bark,” they are informed (much to their shock) that those aren’t trees they’re eating. It’s broccoli! However, the monsters (who turn out to be two hungry kids instead) stick to their story. “Say what? This isn’t broccoli. It’s crunchy, munchy TREES! And WOW, are they delicious!” Final spread . . . “Another helping, please.”

Big time Barbara Hicks fan over here, that’s me. As far as I’m concerned, Jitterbug Jam was one of those hidden jewels that some kids will be lucky enough to have read to them at bedtime. Though she may be better known for *The Secret Life of Walter Kitty*, Hicks has yet to get people to sit up and take notice of her. Maybe *Monsters Don’t Eat Broccoli* will change that. After all, when you read through it you notice yourself lightly bouncing up and down to the rhythmic text. It’s not something you notice at first. It sneaks up on you. Each rhyme scans beautifully. Every sentence lends itself to illustration. Plus it’s hard not to love the line “Fum, foe, fie, fee, monsters don’t eat broccoli!” I think the book has huge readaloud potential for large groups with that particular chant. When you read it to kids, I bet you could even get them to say it along with you as the story goes on too.

I think that there are a lot of adults out there who just naturally have the opinion that if a book's illustrations are big and bright and colorful, then by extension they must be simplistic, right? Nope. Not as such. Sue Hendra is a British illustrator with, if her bio on the bookflap is to be believed, more than seventy illustrated books to her name. I've not seen her work before, so I couldn't tell you if this was a fair representation of her style. All I can tell you is what I see, and what I see is a pretty fabulous book chock full of details that you might miss if you didn't read it over and over a couple of times. For example, how many adults are going to notice the movie poster for a film called (I love this) *Monsters LTD*? Less oblique, notice too the orange striped monster that always seems to have a car in his mouth. It takes up residence somewhere along the lower jaw, and is particularly visible when his wide blue mouth opens to devour other mechanical creations. So when this orange monster revealed himself to be a child at the end, I tried to see if the car was still in the mouth. It wasn't, but there in the boy's hand sat the same car. A toy so precious that even as a monster he has it readily at hand (at mouth?) at all times. This is just one example, but the book is chock full of such carefully planned moments. Heck, the scene of monsters chowing down on a metallic picnic is perfectly replicated in human form just three pages later. Kids shall have a lot of fun drawing correlations between the monster world and the human world.

If there's any problem with the illustrations, it may be that they are so engrossing that they make a one-on-one reading of the book a little difficult. The words of Ms. Hicks have been parceled out amongst the pages in such a way that a line like "We'd rather snack on tractors or a rocket ship or two, or tender trailer tidbits, or a wheely, steely stew," takes up all of eight pages. And it reads so nicely together that adults are going to be inclined to turn the pages quickly so as to keep up the rhythm of the beat. Kids, however, will put an end to that little plan. They'll want to pore over Hendra's gouache illustrations, giggling and snorting over the antics these sharp-toothed but ultimately harmless monsters get into. As for the ending where it is revealed that at least five of the monsters correspond to little human counterparts, even a couple adults will find that conclusion unexpected if they haven't read the book before. They'll have to explain to the kids why exactly it is that these children have appeared at the end of the book, supplanting the monsters. Might make for a good way to teach the kids about metaphors, or maybe the 'rents can just say, "the kids have been pretending to be monsters. See how their clothes match the monsters' skin? That's because they're the same." The kids will take some convincing, but you'll probably have a couple understand it in time.

It's hard to tell if this story of little monsters existing solely in the heads of the picky eating children was Hicks' original plan or if Hendra just interpreted the text that way when she illustrated the book. Certainly if you read just the words and ignore the pictures, the story stands on its own. Personally, I think that Hicks and Hendra were as one with this interpretation. It's just too cool an idea. But at the same time, I can see the book decades from now being reinterpreted by another artist, who keeps the monsters as monsters from start to finish. It could be cool. There's a lot to work with here.

When I was a kid my mom got me to eat and enjoy lima beans by having me stack them on the tines of my fork. It never occurred to me to dislike them when there was so much fun to be had with them. This same principal guides *Monsters Don't Like Broccoli*. The child that finds a way to enjoy a healthy meal by having fun, be it by turning grapes into boulders or bicycle wheels into tomato slices, will end up the adult who loves their greens. Good habits start young. Want a book to put ideas into your kid's head? Well the sentence "monsters don't like broccoli" may be the chorus of this book, but it is certainly not the lesson kids will take away with them. More fun than a book with a message should ever hope to be.

Ages 4-8.

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## Monster says

Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli was a difficult book for me to review, because my kids kept taking it. Every time they brought it back they chanted "Read it! Read it!" When a book inspires that kind of reaction, there's not much more for a reviewer to add. The text is bouncy and rhyming, and a repeated verse inspired much jumping, stomping, and shouting: "Fum, fo, fi, fee,/ Monsters don't eat broccoli"! The illustrations are bright and clear, and my kids identified with the monsters completely: "I'm the blue one! I'm the orange stripy one!" It was fun for my kids to "find the vegetables", too, as a close look will reveal that those "yummy, gummy trees" look an awful lot like broccoli! The artist also includes clever details and "in jokes" in the background, and a retro look that parents will appreciate.

I will say that Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli has not actually inspired my children to eat their vegetables. They have had a lot of fun looking at the pictures, hearing the story, and chanting the words, though. This isn't a "scary book", but monster-loving kids will have a blast. If you're looking for more along a monstrous vegetable theme, check out The Monster Who Ate My Peas by Danny Schnitzbein. Or check out the author's website, where you can print out the Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli Cookbook.

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## Adena says

I had the kids stomp for "Fum, Foe, Fie, Fee" and chant "Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli" together, and they had such a fun time!

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## Krissy says

okay - I might read again

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## Molly says

Monsters eat a lot of machines, apparently. I had no idea.

Nothing about this really stuck with me after reading it, I'm afraid.

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## JustOneMoreBook.com says

Gasping, gobbling, grinning, crunching and belching, seven sherbet-coloured monsters revel in outrage at their broccoli-loving readers in this rhyming enticement to eat green.

You can listen in on our chat about this book on our Just One More Book! Children's Book Podcast.

Other books mentioned:

Irving and Muktuk: Two Bad Bears

Sleepover Larry

More food on JOMB:

Treasure for Lunch

The King's Taster

Berry Magic

The Butter Man

The Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza

The Luck of the Loch Ness Monster: A Tale of Picky Eating

The Tortilla Cat

Too Many Tamales

Chopsticks

Mammoth Pie

On Top of Spaghetti

Pumpkin Soup

A Medieval Feast

Sanji and the Baker

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### **Kenson and kirra says**

this book made me laugh, and it had a catchy rhyme so it was fun too read. i like broccoli with hot sauce on it.

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### **Rachel Kinney says**

I read Monster's Don't Eat Broccoli for the fantasy book. Monster's Don't Eat Broccoli is a very fun story to read to children. The words rhyme and the children love it when you say "Fum foe fie fee monster's don't eat broccoli" in a monster voice. The pictures are very bright and colorful and draw the children to the pages. At the end of the story, the monsters finally realize that they have been eating broccoli and that they do like it, then the story shows children sitting a table eating their vegetables. In my experience, this story has helped with encouraging children to try broccoli and other vegetables who normally shy away from them.

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### **Sara says**

This book is great! Cute story! Cute pictures!

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