



Sharing books...

# Angelica Sprocket's Pockets

by **Quentin Blake** (Jonathan Cape 2010)

**T**his joyous book is about a sparkly lady called Angelica Sprocket. Dressed flamboyantly with dangling earrings and a bright coat, Angelica has a pocket for every occasion and every eventuality. At first, she produces two mice and two cheeses from one of her many coat pockets. Then, hankies, umbrellas and sun hats for goats appear.

With each page turned, objects become increasingly unexpected and even absurd. Watch out for the ducks, alligators and an elephant. By the end of the book, there is a jubilant party procession with Angelica producing for the children a birthday cake alongside a palm tree complete with parrots. There's even the proverbial kitchen sink!

## A GOOD CHOICE

Older babies, toddlers and Reception-aged children will all find something fascinating in this marvellous book, with its energetic illustrations and pace – the words beat out a rhythm. ‘There’s a pocket for ducks, and pocket for boats and a pocket with lovely straw hats... For GOATS.’ The pictures are full of detail and so pre-readers will be able to enjoy this book independently once they are familiar with the story. For early readers, the pictures as well as the simple text should allow them to re-tell.

## SHARING THIS BOOK

Familiarise yourself with the book before sharing it with children, as there are a few verbal surprises, and while Quentin Blake often draws the eye to the left-hand side of the page, the surprise often comes overleaf. Children will probably want to rush

on with the story, eager to see what else emerges from Angelica’s pockets.

Take time to look at the details within each of the illustrations. Let children point out things that they notice and also expect that children will have favourite pages. As there is so much detail and possibilities for talking, try to share the book with pairs or individual children to start with. Once many children are familiar with it, you can then use it to create some activities.

## SUPPORTING LEARNING

There are many ways in which you can use this book to support different areas of children’s play and development.

## Mathematics

Look out for counting opportunities once children have become familiar with the book. Can they count how many pockets are on Angelica’s coat? How many times do the mice and the ducks appear in the book? In addition, look out for a hanging shoe organiser or a fabric advent calendar that has pockets. You could put random items in each of the pockets for children to count in real life.

You could also use this book to help children think about sorting. Based on the illustrations within the ‘kitchen sink’ pages, you could put five or so objects in a fabric bag and see if children are able to sort them according to height or width.

## Language

There is an abundance of detail within the illustrations. This should mean that there are plenty of opportunities to point out objects and name them for younger children, but also to ask questions of older children. Why do they think

## ABOUT THIS SERIES

Over the course of this monthly series on sharing books with children, **Penny Tassoni** will look at a range of fiction and non-fiction titles, from rhyming books for babies to picture books that adults and children can explore together.

that Angelica has so many pockets? Where does all the stuff come from?

## Literacy

This type of book is one that encourages and motivates children to want to learn to read. In addition, the book can also be used to help children hear rhymes in words. Three-year-olds who know the book well will soon be able to finish the end of the rhyming sentences. In addition, older children may also be able to come up with a few things that rhyme that could go in different pockets – for example, pockets and rockets, cats and hats.

For some children who enjoy mark-making, you could put out stickers and labels as, after all, perhaps some of Angelica’s pockets may need labelling. Children could also write to Angelica to make suggestions about what else she could have in her pockets.

## ANGELICA’S CAPE

- For more information on how to make an Angelica cape, visit: [www.bobbinsnbuttons.co.uk/world-book-day-costumes](http://www.bobbinsnbuttons.co.uk/world-book-day-costumes)



## Creativity

If you can find a shoe organiser or even sew pockets onto simple garments, children from around three years may well start to role play some aspects of this story.

## Personal, social and emotional development

This book provides the basis of an interesting discussion with children from around four years about right and wrong. On one page, a child tries to ‘pick pocket’ Angelica’s coat. What might be his motive and why was it wrong for him to do this?

## And finally...

There are always some children who try to pop nursery things in their pockets, so it may be worth warning parents once you have read this book! ■

