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Sorting It Out

Author's New Book Helps Kids Organize

MT. PLEASANT, S.C. (July 29, 2008) – Large pieces of pottery and sea glass, worn from residing along the ocean shore; various glass paperweights, rich and vibrant in color; multi-colored Venetian masks, intricate in design and style—Barbara Mariconda, children’s author and educator, credits her vast collections of these items as inspiration for writing her newest picture book, *Sort it Out!*

Told in rhyme, *Sort it Out!* (Sylvan Dell Publishing, 2008) invites kids to help Packy the Packrat get organized as he sorts through his ever-growing collection of trinkets and puts them away. Digital paintings by Sherry Rogers show the packrat family and their crafty uses of Packy’s collectibles (e.g. face moisturizer as a nightstand), making the 32-page book as colorful as it is clever.

“While teaching second grade, I was constantly looking for entertaining math-related books to use as introductions or for review of skills taught,” explains Mariconda. “I wrote this book because it was the book I needed in my classroom and one I knew my students and fellow teachers would enjoy.”

More than math was on Mariconda’s mind while teaching second grade in Fairfield, Connecticut. After developing a successful writing program for students there, she and a fellow teacher founded an educational seminar/consulting firm. Empowering Writers, LLC was formed in order to share the two educators’ high impact methodologies with colleagues nationwide. They now train thousands of educators each year.

Sort it Out!, though primarily a math-themed picture book, doesn’t fall far from Mariconda’s work with Empowering Writers. The story teaches analogous thinking—a skill she says is as important in writing as in math and science.

“In order to write in an organized fashion, to group like details with broader main ideas, to recognize the ways in which main ideas in a piece of writing may overlap and therefore encourage redundancy—all of this is related to the writer’s ability to think critically in this way.”

Aside from her career with Empowering Writers, Barbara has been a certified educator in Connecticut for more than 20 years, teaching in grades K-6 and also serving as an adjunct professor of Children’s Literature and Process Writing at Sacred Heart University’s Graduate School of Education in Fairfield. She also has written a wide variety of musicals, songs and books, including the middle grade novel *Turn the Cup Around*, which was nominated for an Edgar Allan Poe Award.

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Readers interested in learning more about Barbara Mariconda, her books and Empowering Writers can visit her website, <http://www.empoweringwriters.com/>. Ordering information and free supplemental materials—such as audio readings, activity ideas, learning links and interactive quizzes—are available at www.SylvanDellPublishing.com.

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Visuals & Other Requests:

For cover art, visit <http://www.sylvandellpublishing.com/ImageGallery.htm> or e-mail SaraDobie@SylvanDellPublishing.com.

For all other requests, please contact Sylvan Dell’s publicist, Sara Dobie, at (877) 958-2600 or SaraDobie@SylvanDellPublishing.com.

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About Sylvan Dell Publishing

Sylvan Dell Publishing, based in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., is on a mission to create picture books that excite children’s imaginations, are artistically spectacular and have educational value. The company specializes in “Science and Math Through Literature” and provides free supplemental parent/teacher resources for every title. For more information about Sylvan Dell’s books, educational resource grant and free parent/teacher resources, visit www.SylvanDellPublishing.com.
