



Babar and Father Christmas | Babar's Travels | Babar the King | Babar's Friend Zephir | Babar at Home

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

0

What to say about these classics? Firstly they have lost nothing in their transmutation to small format paperback. The style of illustration is simple, bold and the typeface sufficiently large for there to be no sense of claustrophobia (remember those eye-boggling Asterix reductions?). To anyone coming new to the Land of the Elephants the style of writing will seem stilted - very thirties middle-class: 'I am a stray dog and I should be very pleased to go with you.'

The storylines will also seem precious. After a lovely day in the newly created Celesteville - built by happily co-operative elephants who go no to choose a new profession - Babar has nightmares of ugly creatures called Indolence, Fear, Despair, Ignorance and so on. These are dispersed by' ... glorious elephants with wings who chased Misfortune far from Celesteville and brought with them Happiness.'

And yet it escapes being 'twee'. Life for the elephants is dangerous (they war with the rhinoceroses) and hardworking but they play hard too and uphold the kind of moral code associated with Arthur Ransome or Kipling.

If you are not utterly deterred by this description, please try them with top infants or young juniors. Will they relate to the traumas of bringing up children in **Babar at Home**? Will they read **Babar's Friend Zephir** as a fairy tale - ingenious protagonist saves royal princess? Will they enjoy the plan of Father Christmas' underground house? Or will they dismiss the lot as out-dated, highflown nonsense?

Running Order:

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