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Book Review: I Have a Weird Brother Who Digested a Fly

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REVIEWS

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I Have A Weird Brother Who Digested A Fly. Joan Holub. Illustrator, Patrick Girouard. 1999. Albert Whitman & Company, Morton Grove, IL. 21 pages. ISBN 0-8075-3506-0

You may never have been tempted to swallow a fly—nor even challenged to do so 'on a dare'—but there's a solid chance you've wondered about some of the mysteries of digestion. Joan Holub offers an engaging book to share with the young people in your life who may share an interest in the intrigues of human body processes.

Written with humor and illustrated delightfully by Patrick Girouard, *I Have a Weird Brother Who Swallowed a Fly* is a children's book that can be enjoyed on several levels. The simple title poem can be read on its own, bringing smiles as the adventures of the unfortunate fly are traced during its journey through brother's di-

gestive system. The clear, colorful illustrations contribute greatly to the book's appeal and promise to entice older as well as younger children to savor this book more than once. In fact, your second or third times through the text may be the best opportunities to attend to the information tucked in short, factual, and interesting sections on each page.

Holub does not shy away from introducing a suitably wide range of important vocabulary terms. She includes explanatory phrases, pronunciation guides, and diagrams in several spots to aid comprehension. Her explanations are short and straightforward, yet not too sketchy to be meaningful. Suggestions are included to entice readers to see for themselves by sniffing an orange to get their saliva flowing, or chewing a piece of celery to note the action of their teeth. The last two pages encourage further involvement through an interesting set of questions and answers designed to whet our appetites for inquiring further . . . for instance, how does she KNOW some spiders taste like peanut butter? Holub and Girouard have combined here to provide an informative and interesting book for children of diverse ages. Best yet, it's definitely packaged in an easy to digest format.—JAN HANDLER, *Education Division, Mount Mercy College, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402.*