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# I Want to Go First

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Young readers have a special part to play in this clever picture book, and will identify very strongly with central character Elphie too.

Logically, the story begins at the Front-of-the-Book nature reserve, and will end at the Back-of-the-Book watering hole. A group of elephants, brightly dressed for a day of splashing and swimming, are lining up ready to make the journey from one to the other. As the smallest elephant, Elphie has to go last, but he really, really wants to go first and comes up with some sneaky ways of making that happen. Addressing his readers direct, Elphie asks us to shout out the name of the elephant just in front of him. On the count of three, we do, and Eleanor stays behind to see who wants her; Elphie moves up the line. Next he asks us to make a hissing noise, that frightens Elizabeth up a tree and again, Elphie is one place nearer the front. As the pages turn, on Elphie's instructions readers wobble the book and finally squeak and roar in an attempt to send the biggest elephant to the back of the line. Elgar, however, is wise to what's going on though a surprise final twist leaves Elphie on top again, and leading the troupe on the journey home.

The finale will have everyone laughing, but there's lots to entertain along the way, and Richard Byrne's bright illustrations are wonderfully energetic. A fun piece of metafiction for the very young.

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