

The Village School Children's Book of Month July 2020
Reviewed by Katrina Walton Ppreschool-2nd grade science teacher
The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse by Charlie Mackesey.

When a relative of mine posted a page of this book online, I instantly fell in love with the illustrations. I was delighted to find that the accompanying text was loving, wise and kind. The sentiments are more important than ever right now. The special relationship between a boy and animals makes this story a delight.

Though the text is simple, this book is for all ages. The unfolding conversation between the boy and his animal characters is so sweet you want to read it over and over. For example, the horse says to the boy, "When the big things feel out of control, focus on what you love under your nose." Another wise friend, the mole, says to the boy, "Imagine how we would be if we were less afraid?" My favorite page has a beautiful illustration of the boy, the fox, the mole and the horse sitting together and the horse says to his friends, "Nothing beats kindness, it sits quietly beyond all things."

The illustrations are simple gestural ink line drawings with a watercolor wash. The hopeful thoughts and kindness that come through this book keep me coming back to it. It's a great book for children and adults, a keeper.