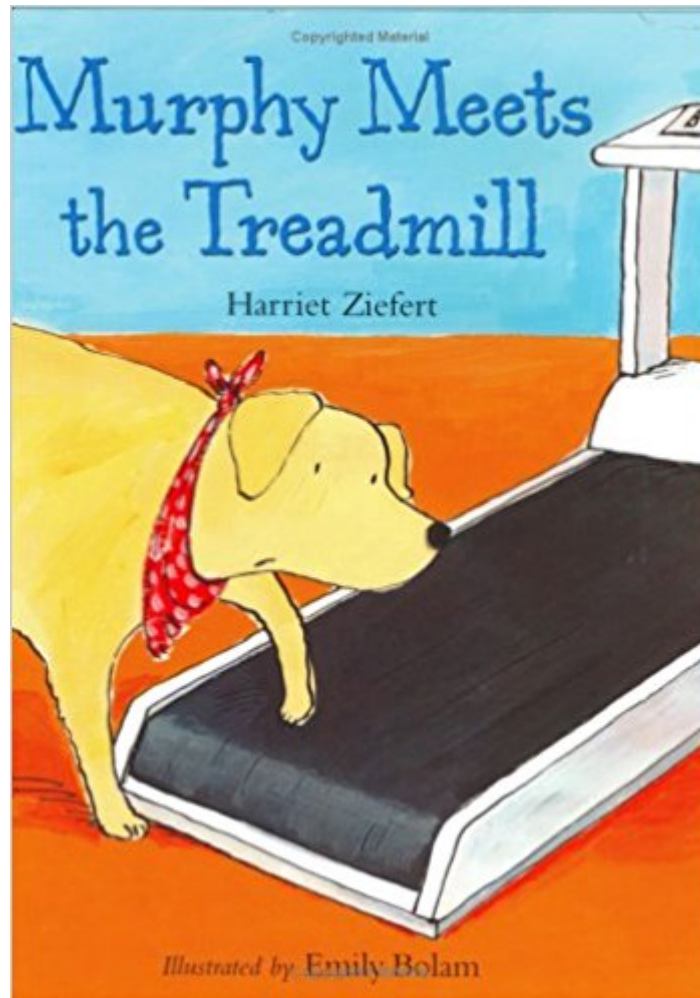




The book was found

Murphy Meets The Treadmill



Synopsis

Murphy is a simple dog with simple pleasures. Heâ€™s happy just to lie on the porch and watch the people go by, especially if they have treats for him to eat! All those treats add up, though, and even Murphy has to admit that maybe heâ€™s not such a fine example of his breed after all. But whatâ€™s a dog to do? Cheryl says he has to diet, and thatâ€™s just the beginning. One day a delivery van arrives with a strange machine. Murphy puts up quite a fight, but Cheryl is determined to get him trim and fit. Soon, the neighbors canâ€™t stop talking about Murphyâ€™s new activity. Who says you canâ€™t teach an old dog new tricks! Readers will delight in the familiar battle of wills between pet and owner, hilariously portrayed through Harriet Ziefertâ€™s witty text and Emily Bolamâ€™s warm, expressive illustrations.

Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

The narrator of this makeover tale starts out as a roly-poly Labrador whose favorite pastimes are lying on the porch and bumming junk food from the neighborhood kids. His owner, Cheryl, informs Murphy in no uncertain terms that he has tubbed out. "I was surprised. I thought I had a good build and was an excellent example of my breed," the fellow protests. Cheryl puts Murphy on a fitness regimen worthy of Rocky Balboa, and the poor pooch responds with expressions ranging from despondency to seething anger. But when Cheryl forces Murphy to work out on the treadmill, he not only sees the light, but also attains the status of celebrity hunk. "I knew she thought I was

handsome. And physically fit," says Murphy of a sleek hound named Nikka who comes to check him out. "And I said to myself, Exercise is worth it!" Beneath Ziefert and Bolam's (previously teamed for *I Swapped My Dog*) deadpan words and cartoons, they've mined a rich vein of wry, knowing humor. And they make palatable the timely lesson that leaving the couch potato life behind yields impressive rewards. Ages 4-8. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Gr 1-3-A delightful comedy narrated by a slightly neurotic yellow Labrador. Murphy has a weight problem, so his owner, Cheryl, buys a treadmill. After a bit of coercion, he learns to use it and comes to see the benefits of exercise. After the machine is moved to the porch, he gains the admiration of fellow dogs, his human neighbors, and the local newspaper. And, as Murphy puts it, "When Nikka, the neighbor's hound, came to check things out, I knew she thought I was handsome. And physically fit." Ziefert's engaging text is flavored with some amusing phrases, such as "low-fat chow." While some of the humor may be lost on the intended audience, the importance of exercise and a proper diet will be clear to children of all ages. Like the text, the pictures are humorous and include just the right amount of detail. Those of Cheryl and her initially uncooperative pup are particularly funny. From the lush green grass to tangerine and yellow backdrops, the settings provide just the right atmosphere. Bolam's cartoonlike style is reminiscent of her work in *Vic Parker's Bearobics: A Hip-Hop Counting Story* (Viking, 1997) and has instant child appeal. Louie Lahana, New York City Public Schools Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

cute book!

I am the mother of a 2 year old and 4 year old. We have a yellow lab, and can relate to this book completely! This is a great bed time story, and it reminds my kids that exercising is important!!! I wish that our dog could learn to use our treadmill, but until then, we'll stick to the family walks. This is a light-hearted book with adorable pictures. If you are a dog lover, you'll enjoy this book!

I just had to respond to the reader who panned this book: do you own a dog? This is a VERY funny book! And well done. Murphy, like many dogs and their humans had gotten into the habit of too many calories and too little exercise. To view the storyline as a case of "society's...reverence of appearance above all else" and to equate Cheryl's conduct with "humilia[ion] by forced exercise or dieting" is a major case of the reader projecting HER issues on Murphy! He's a dog: he lives to eat, sleep AND please his alpha dog, Cheryl. And Cheryl, like any good alpha dog (or parent, for that

matter) is using positive discipline and proactive behavior to mold her protege into the best--and healthiest--dog he can be. My kids love this book! And they don't see the negative messages that the CA reader does; they see a funny story about an owner's creative way to help her dog get healthier.

Exercise increasing longevity in a dog. This is NOT a diet book for dogs. It's fun for my dog and she loves going on the treadmill. It gives her an extra walk in the day - and she already gets 4 outside (I live in Manhattan and have to walk a JRT). If she didn't like it, I would have just sold it on ebay. This book is very funny and Cheryl is clearly making exercise fun. Sooo.... relax about this being some kind of deranged diet book or that everyone is sooo concerned with appearance. It's about my dogs health and her having fun!

Murphy is a fat yellow lab whose human, Cheryl, purchases a treadmill and forces Murphy to use it. He does, loses weight, attracts a female dog, and becomes famous. While Ziefert's intentions may be good, i.e. to encourage children to exercise and eat right, the less-than-subtle messages conveyed here are disturbing, to say the least. Is it alright to force someone to exercise, or to threaten them with punishment if they don't? Do we want to perpetuate this society's fascination with and reverence of appearance above all else? How many of us were humiliated by forced exercise or dieting as children, and how do we feel about it now? Did it improve our relationship to food or exercise? Were the results ultimately beneficial? Though this reaction may seem strong, picture books are read and absorbed by impressionable young children, many of whom are already overly body conscious. We don't need to encourage this kind of coercion.

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