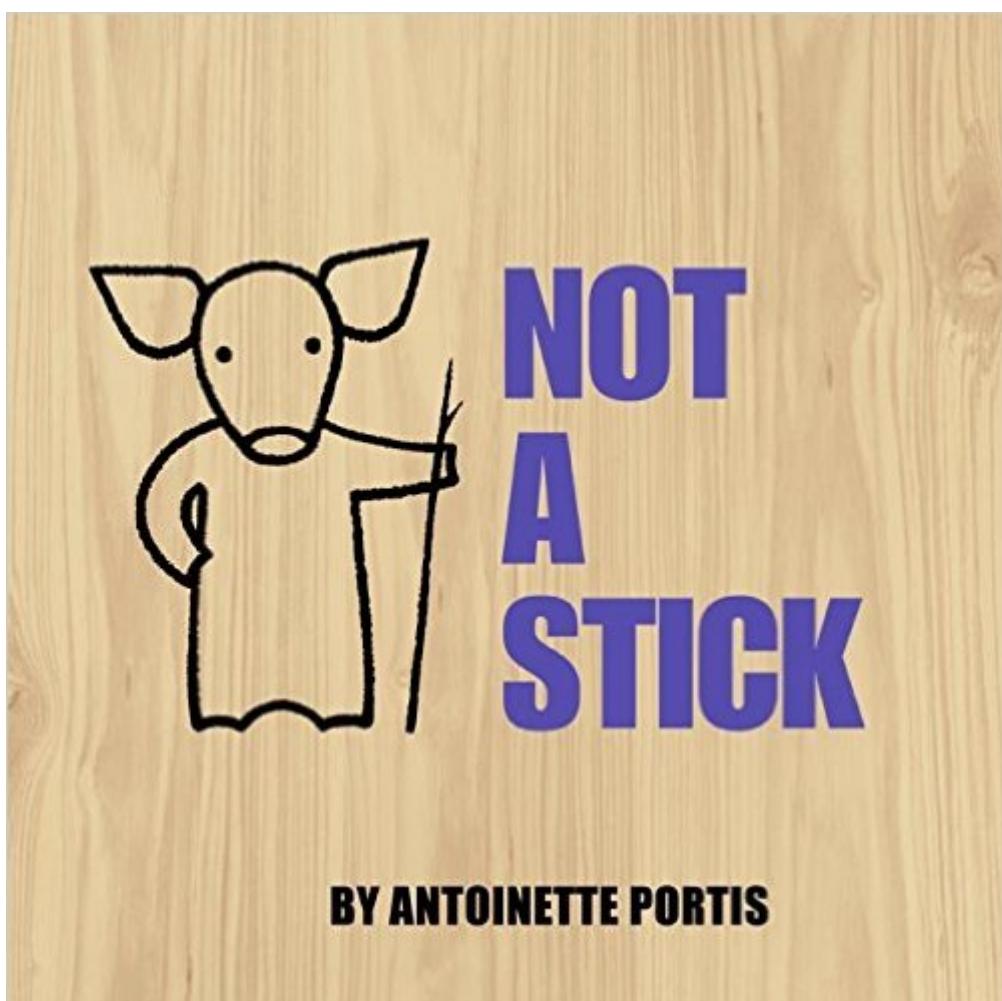


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# Not A Stick



BY ANTOINETTE PORTIS



## Synopsis

Antoinette Portis again captures the thrill of when pretend feels so real that it becomes real. With a stick in hand, the options are endless—whether it's conducting an orchestra, painting a masterpiece, or slaying a dragon—give a child a stick and let imagination take over and the magic begin.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Product Dimensions: 9 x 0.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (63 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #10,473 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #56 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Pigs

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 1

## Customer Reviews

If the "Not a..." franchise continues to grow, that'll be fine by us. We're fans of both. For those enjoyed the first book, this is the sequel you would've hoped for. If you haven't already seen (the award winning) "Not a Box," no matter; This one is as good a place to start. (As far as the pig goes, I'm a fan.) For anyone who's had to slog through too many bedtimes with the all too standard fare of the genre, "Not a Stick" easily stands with the best of them. Great illustrations, too.

If you give a publisher a popular book, they're going to want another. While the book is fine on its own, it's too slavishly similar to "Not a Box." Whether it's the author or the publisher making that decision, I don't know. I do know that my boys, who loved "Not a Box"--and rightly so--they like this just fine, but it's nothing special. The original has been read ad infinitum in the last year, and to this day. This has been in the house for less than a week, and it's already passe. Even without "Not a Box" for comparison, I've got to say, the pig just is not as engaging a hero as the bunny. It's a fine book when you read it in the store, but would you really want to read it over and over and over?

Some of the phrasing is awkward--"look where you're going with that stick," likely done to avoid overusing the word "watch," which is in the very next line--and the lovely sound and rhythm that came from pairing "not" and "box" is lost here. The similarly creative, and creativity-encouraging, "Harold and the Purple Crayon" books each build on the previous and go to new places, new worlds. Right now, I'm afraid of the same repetition that hit the "if you give a blank a blank" books. Or even "The Very Adjective Insect" by Eric Carle. (Blasphemy, I know.) I don't want to see that happen, because based on "Not a Box," I think Ms. Portis may be better than that. That being said, I know I wouldn't be buying "Not a Ball," "Not a Chair," "Not a Sock," "Not a Hoop" or "Not a Blanket." We get it. Please, show us something new, something more.

I just love this little book! It's about me (or any parent) and my two boys (or any kid who fancies himself a swashbuckler at age four.) Every scenario's hero: the shark fisherman, the gallant knight, the he-man weightlifter, the caveman hunter, even the band leader -- is a role my boys have performed with gusto and aid of a stick at one time or another in their dramatic-play lives (with me advising "Don't poke anyone!" from the wings.) Antoinette Portis has obviously observed children at play or remembers that abandon from her own childhood. The steadfast surrender to one's imagination (as only kids can do) is celebrated with each reveal. Joy to look at, joy to read, joy to share (especially with boys, but, sure, with swashbuckler girls as well!) Cute piggy, fun book!

Oh, to be young again and find such joy and abandon in something as ordinary as a stick! Last year, we loved how Ms. Portis reminded us that a box is not just a box. Now, she delights us by reminding us that a stick is not just a stick. From the very first page, I was enchanted by the sweet-faced pig reaching out for a tree branch. Page after page, we are treated to the author's ingenious and creative notions of what an ordinary stick might actually turn out to be. As in "Not A Box" Ms. Portis again uses simple line illustrations (although the illustration on page 15 is anything but simple and quite a lovely surprise) and quiet text to transport us into her character's imagination. "Not A Stick" is not just another book; it is a wonderfully imaginative book and I only hope that there are more Not-A-Books to come.

My little girls love, I mean really love, Not A Box, the perfect toddler book that came out last year. We read it OFTEN -- over and over. Mommy loves it too, but (whew!) I was ready for a change, just a little change (or my girls would never let me "out of the Box".) And then... Not A Stick arrived in our bookstore! Thank you! Thank you! Ms. Portis. The pig is adorable, my girls are happy, they yell "It's

not a stick!" just like the refrain from Box. We're all enjoying the fun new drawings of the pig's imagination. Not A Stick, Not-A-Moment too soon!!!

This book is cute. We bought it as a follow up to the "Not A Box" book. It is not as clever as the original but still very creative. It's fun to see how the stick becomes different objects through a little imagination.

When it's been illustrated by Antoinette Portis. This charming sequel to Not a Box is a treasure in its own right. An ode to those who find the world more interesting than the plastic schlock that's mass-produced for them to play with, Not A Stick is perfect for the imaginative child in your life, or the college kid who thinks outside the stick. Move over Wilber, Portis' piggy is an adorable addition to the pantheon of ovine literary heroes.

The kids in my family and the kid in me have all been waiting for Not A Stick after so thoroughly enjoying Not A Box. We weren't disappointed. This new book, in what I hope will be a long series, scores really big. I don't know what those other reviewers were talking about -- Not A Stick is fun, funny, clever, heart-warming, and the pig is adorable. It's terrific, and I can't wait to read what comes next.

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