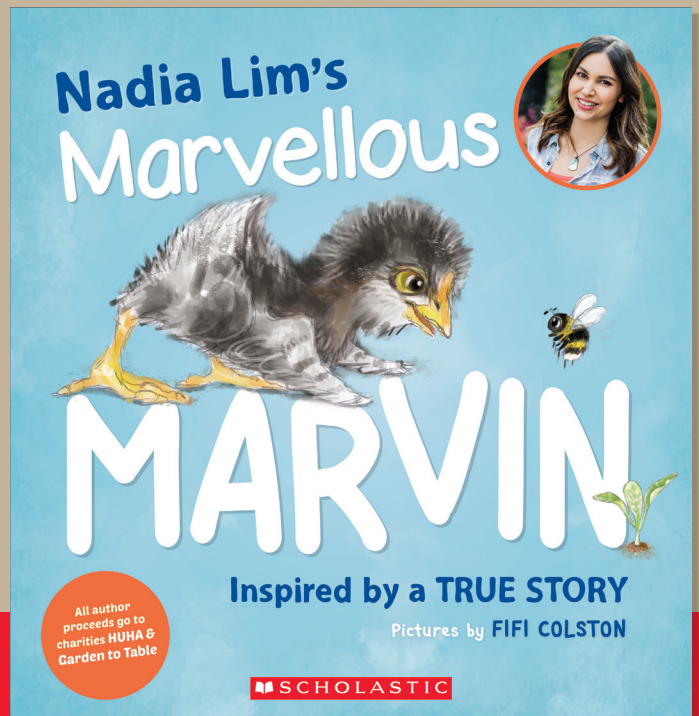


Marvellous Marvin

By Nadia Lim
Illustrated by Fifi Colston

• Reading • Writing • Science • Thinking Skills •



Synopsis

A hen lays some eggs but forgets to keep sitting on them and lets the eggs go cold. Luckily Mama notices and brings them inside to keep warm. But only one chick hatches – little Marvin. Marvellous Marvin, as she calls him, is always on the go, looking at himself in the mirror, pecking at his food and playing peek-a-boo. He's also an adventurous boy, stealing food from the children's breakfast plates, and pooping on dad's shoulder. At night he snuggles to sleep on a furry hot-water bottle.

The book also contains photographs with captions, information about chickens, a recipe and a letter from Nadia Lim.

About the Author

Nadia Lim is a celebrity cook, entrepreneur, food writer and television personality. Since winning New Zealand's MasterChef in 2011 she has published 10 cookbooks. This is her first children's book. Nadia lives on a farm with her husband and two sons in Central Otago.

About the Illustrator

Fifi Colston is a Wellington veteran of The World of Wearable Art Awards and is the author of the children's 'how-to' costume books, *Wearable Wonders* (winner of the Elsie Locke Award for non-fiction) and its companion volume, *Ghoulish Get-ups*. She is a junior fiction novelist, children's book illustrator, magazine poet and a long-standing television presenter of arts and crafts. Fifi has also illustrated a number of Scholastic titles, including the acclaimed *The Red Poppy*, written by David Hill.

Writing Style

Marvellous Marvin has four types of writing: captions (pages 2-3, 30-31), prose (6-25), expository non-fiction (26-27, 32) and functional non-fiction (28-29).

The **captions** describe what is happening in the photographs, which feature Marvellous Marvin hatching, interacting with Nadia's family and his extended family, and exploring the garden.

The rhyming **prose** tells the story of Marvellous Marvin hatching and integrating himself into the family. The rhyming pattern is a-b-c-b with four lines for each stanza. The text includes conjunctions such as 'but', 'and', 'until' etc; and verbs such as 'laid', 'rescued', 'swooping'. The story also encourages young readers to count along with the reader and hypothesise (guess) how many eggs will hatch. Some of the text is descriptive, introducing chick body parts and what makes Marvin marvellous. The main protagonist also uses dialogue, and there is onomatopoeia (*cheep-cheep*). The designer draws the reader's attention to some words, making them bigger, using a different font and coloured type.

The **expository non-fiction writing** includes facts about chickens in bullet points (feathers), such as the different names for chickens (chicks, pullets, hens, cockerels, roosters), fertilisation of an egg, different breeds' names, how long they take to incubate, and so on.

On the last page is a letter from Nadia telling the reader that Marvin's story is true and that all author proceeds will go to two charities. The **functional non-fiction writing** is a pancake recipe, with a list of ingredients, and step-by-step instructions.

Target age 3–7 years old; read-aloud for the younger ones and read-alone for 6- to 7-year-olds.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

During the shared sessions encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of characters and events. Have them make predictions, inferences and relate to their own experiences. Read the passages aloud or have students read alongside or by themselves.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the cover and read the blurb.

- When and where is this story set? How can you tell?
- Who is the main character in the story?
- What do you think this story is about? Why do you think that?
- What do you already know about chickens?

Comprehension questions

- Why do you think the author has included photographs of a baby chick?
- Why do you think the hens forgot to sit on the eggs?
- What happens to eggs when they go cold?
- What sound does a chick make?
- What parts of it's body does a chick use to help it get out of the egg?
- Why do you think Mama calls the chick 'Marvellous Marvin'?
- How is Marvin handsome?
- What does Marvin like to do on the farm?
- What is Marvin's favourite vegetable?
- What adventures do you think Marvin gets up to on the farm?
- What are the two boys eating for breakfast?
- What has Marvin stolen? Do you think the younger brother is pleased or upset? Why?
- How is Marvin messy?
- What does Marvin sleep on and how does that help him sleep?
- What are female/girl chicks called?
- How can you tell a chick is becoming a rooster?
- How long does a fertilised egg have to be kept warm to hatch a chick?
- What is 'pipping'?



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Activities

ACTIVITY 1: MATCHING & BINGO GAME!

Brainstorm what each of these words mean: **verb** (doing word), **onomatopoeia** (sound word), **dialogue** (speech), **adjective** (describing word), **conjunction** (joining word), **rhyme**.

To familiarise students with the words, play a matching game (see first chart) and have students match cards (verb, sound, speech, adjective, conjunction, rhyme) with the words in the six squares.

Matching cards

verb	sound
speech	adjective
rhyme	conjunction

Matching Bingo

laid swooping counts	Cheep-cheep
“Welcome Marvellous Marvin, to our little family.”	handsome bright-eyed sooty
told – cold	and Until but

Once they are familiar with the words, re-read *Marvellous Marvin* one page at a time and ask students to tick the boxes (see right) when they hear that type of word in the story. More advanced students can write the word in the box or on a sheet of paper.

a VERB (doing word)	a word that describes a SOUND
an example Of SPEECH	an ADJECTIVE (a describing word)
two words that RHYME	a CONJUNCTION (joining word)

ACTIVITY 2: BOOKMARK BLURB

Ask the students how they would describe the story in one sentence/synopsis. As the teacher you might need to model how to do it with other books. For example, *Marvellous Marvin* is a story about a chick hatching on a farm.

Then ask students how they would rate the book from 1 😞 to 5 😊 and why they liked/disliked it. Students can then write their synopsis, rating, and what they thought of it on a bookmark/postcard.

Tell students that their evaluations may encourage others to read the story.

ACTIVITY 3: MISCHIEVOUS MARVIN

The author has called the chick *Marvellous Marvin*. **What if** it was called *Mischievous Marvin*? How might that change the story? Have the children brainstorm what mischief a chicken could get up to on a farm. Then ask them to turn to the person next to them and tell them what mischief they've chosen for *Mischievous Marvin* and describe what he'll do. Students then write a couple of sentences (about four lines) about the mischief *Marvin* gets up to in story format.

Extension students can try to write it in the a-b-c-b rhyming style, making their second and fourth lines rhyme.

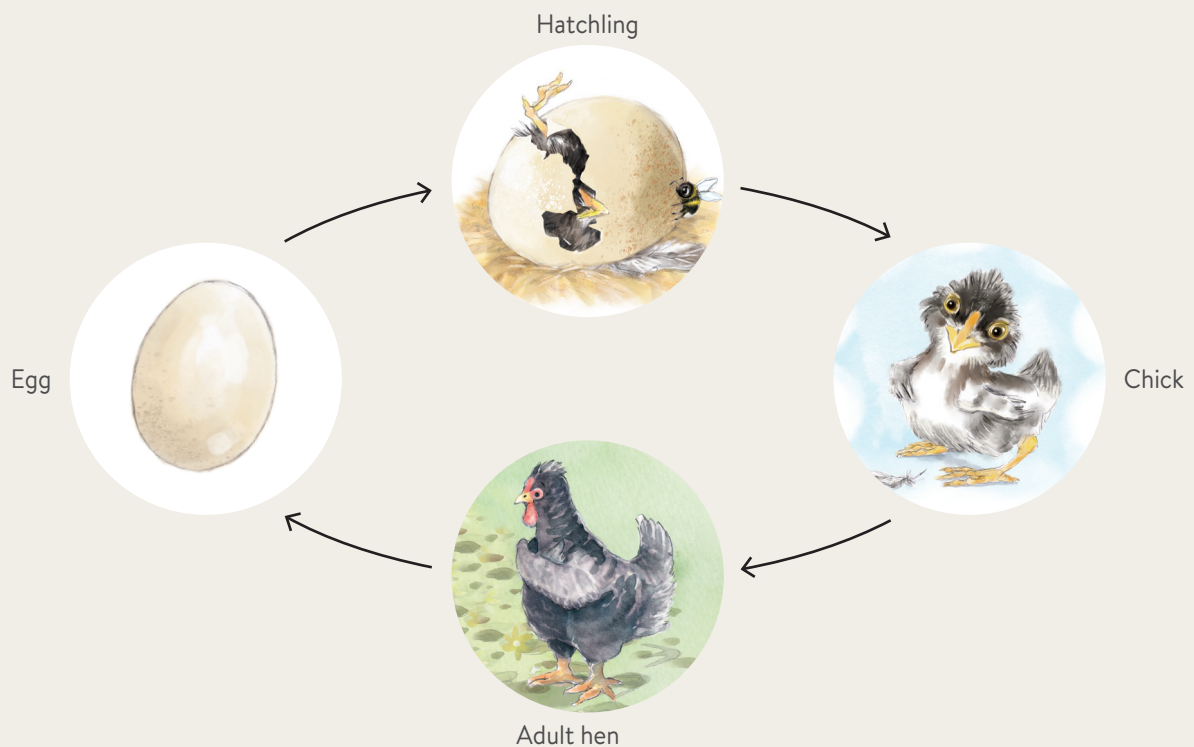


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ACTIVITY 4: THE EGG OR THE CHICKEN?

Ask the students to discuss whether the egg or the chicken comes first. Whatever they decide, get them to draw a flow chart of the different stages/life cycle of a chicken. For example:



ACTIVITY 5: MAKE THE PANCAKES

Follow the recipe with a partner or parent (helper) to make the pancakes at school or home. Before you start, predict how it will go. Make the recipe and eat the pancakes. Then reflect on what happened.

Write down:

- Did you predict correctly? Why not?
- How easy/difficult was it to follow the recipe?
- Did you make any mistakes, and if so, what happened?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What did you think of the pancakes?
- How could you make a creative twist on the recipe?

Written by Maria Gill