

Children's Literature Reviews

Item 43 of 130

The baker's dozen : a counting book

Dan Andreasen.

Cataloging in Publication

[Contributor biographical information](#)

[Publisher description](#)

New York : Henry Holt, 2007.

p. cm.

Annotations:

The reader is invited to count from one to thirteen as a jolly baker makes delectable treats from one mouth-watering éclair to twelve luscious cupcakes, and serves them to invited guests.

Horn Book Guide:

Spring 2008 Preschool Rating 3, Recommended, satisfactory in style, content, and/or illustration.

Reading Measurement Programs:

Accelerated Reader

Interest Level Lower Grade

Book Level 2.2

Accelerated Reader Points **0.5**

Reviews:

Hazel Rochman (Booklist, Jul. 1, 2007 (Vol. 103, No. 21))

The icing drips and runs / atop four sticky buns.” With a simple rhyme and clear, mouth-watering illustrations, this counting book is about a plump, exuberant baker in a tall, white hat who makes delicious goods, from 1 éclair to 8 warm strudels and 12 small cupcakes. Then, at the end, 13 eager customers (“a baker’s dozen”) come to buy the treats. In his kitchen with a big stone oven and no electronic tools, the baker “draws doodles / on eight warm strudels” and balances 10 little tortes on his finger. A final double-page spread lays out everything for a final count. The diverse names of the cakes, pastries, and cookies are part of the mix, and preschoolers will find the messy baking play as much fun as the food.

Gwynne Spencer (Children's Literature)

The fat and jolly baker who lives in a small room attached to his little bakery makes treats from one to twelve in this slightly-rhyming text with full-page illustrations for each numeral. Treats move scrumptiously along a fatteningly delightful continuum: éclairs (1), German chocolate cakes (2), cherry pies (3), sticky buns (4), cookie men (5), jelly rolls (6), tarts (7), strudels (8), rice crispy treats (9), tortes (10), macaroons (11), and cupcakes (12) for hungry patrons (13). In this day and age, when most kids’ idea of a bakery is the free cookie dispensary at the back of the local mega-mart, this old-fashioned celebration of baking is a calorie-free treat that kids and teachers will both enjoy. In the classroom, it could lead the way to all sorts of food-fancy counting (the Twelve days of Vegetables?) as well as the inevitable temptation to take the kids on a field trip that has absolutely nothing to do with testing-based criteria and is sure to fill both the imagination and the tummy. While some critics might say that this picture book has a total male bias, this reviewer would defend its male-only stance as an enticement for boys to get-er-done in the kitchen; girls seldom need such an enticement, it seems. The overall “feel” of the book is enhanced by each page’s different background colors, the slightly retro artistic style, and the obvious joy with

which the artist undertook the task of bringing this counting book to crispy sugared doneness. Highly recommended for its connection to food AND numbers. 2007, Henry Holt, \$16.95. Ages 3 to 8.

Kirkus (Kirkus Reviews, July 15, 2007 (Vol. 75, No. 14))

The ruddy-cheeked, jolly baker juggling 13 cupcakes on the cover has irresistible appeal to open the pages of this rhymed counting book. Each one-sentence rhyme counts up to a dozen with oil paintings whisking up the delectable baked goods: "The baker takes care / to make one cream éclair. . . . He measures with teaspoons / eleven macaroons." From two chocolate German cakes to four sticky buns to seven tarts to eight warm strudels, the device is extremely clever and will have kids counting over and over. A graph on the endpapers enumerates each treat. When the baker reaches 12 cupcakes, his job is complete because he has 13 folks to greet as he opens the bakery door. Though the term "baker's dozen" isn't explained, preschoolers will get more than a taste of the meaning. Bursting with bouncy flavor, this blue-ribbon winner of counting tales is sure to engage participation. It's simply scrumptious fun (and calorie-free), but one thing is missing that would have put the icing on the cake: Scratch-and-sniff tabs. 2007, Henry Holt, 32p, \$16.95. Category: Picture book. Ages 3 to 6. © 2007 Kirkus Reviews/VNU eMedia, Inc. All rights reserved.

Horn Book (The Horn Book Guide, Spring 2008)

The baker takes great care / to make one cream éclair." This pleasing book features a concise couplet--and a different treat, from four sticky buns to eight strudels--for each number up to twelve. Then: "At last his job's complete-- / now thirteen folks to greet!" The uncluttered design showcases Andreasen's retro-style oil paintings of a jolly, rosy-cheeked baker and his delicious-looking goodies. Category: Preschool. 2007, Holt, 32pp, 16.95. Ages 2 to 5. Rating: 3: Recommended, satisfactory in style, content, and/or illustration.

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