

Lionni, Leo. *Little Blue and Little Yellow*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011. Print.

Award-winning author, artist, and graphic illustrator, Leo Lionni, had a distinguished, decades-spanning career and wrote over 40 children's books in an easily recognizable style. *Little Blue and Little Yellow* was his first children's book, and it won the *New York Times Book Review* Best Illustrated Children's Book of the Year award in 1959. Lionni was also a four-time Caldecott Honor Book winner, an award that celebrates excellence in children's picture books. This review pertains to the 2011 board book edition, just right for the littlest hands.

The story is simple perfection. Little Blue and Little Yellow, are best friends who live across the street from one another. They enjoy all sorts of games both together and with their other equally-colourful friends. One day, Little Blue wants to play with Little Yellow but cannot find him. Overjoyed as they finally meet up, they hug until they become green! However, when they go home, their parents do not recognize them, and they are very sad. Where did Little Blue and Little Yellow go? Are they lost?

This delightful story has many layers. It can simply be read as a way to introduce the concept of colour to young children, but it has deeper, yet understated, themes of friendship and diversity. It is a delight to read and look at, and while this sturdy edition is certainly aimed at the preschool crowd, older children will enjoy it too.

Highly recommended: 4 out of 4 stars

Reviewer: Debbie Feisst