

Siminovich, Lorena. *I Like Vegetables: A Touch-and-Feel Board Book*. Somerville: Candlewick Press, 2011. Print.

"I Like Vegetables" is a dream come true for any nutritionally conscience parent, children's librarian or teacher. The brightly hued collage illustrations are intriguingly textured with patterns and "touch & feel" inlays. Silky peas and rough-skinned carrots invite young readers to learn about vegetables. The layout is quite clever as it leverages contrast and comparison as a learning method. On one side of the page vegetables are depicted as they would appear growing in the garden while on the other side they are in the home being prepared for the dinner table. In addition, the nature side of the page illustrates the concept of opposites. For example, there are "tall" and "short" cornstalks. Orange carrot roots are "below" the ground, while the feathery green tops are "above". The indoor side of the page features close-ups of vegetables against a wood-grain background that evokes a cutting board. Here children get a different perspective on the harvested veggies. We see shelled peas, open cornhusks and a cross-section of a pumpkin. The concluding series of images features an "empty" gardener's basket next to a basket "full" of colourful vegetables on a blue and white gingham picnic tablecloth inlay. This is primarily a picture book with only the names of the vegetables and the two opposing concepts appearing on each page. The typeset is Helvetica and is large and easy to read. It is a sturdy board book and the inlays could not be easily ripped out or damaged. It is therefore a welcome addition to any toddler's library. Other titles in the "I Like" series by Siminovich include: "*I Like Toys* ", "*I Like Bugs*" and "*I Like Fruit*". "*I Like Vegetables*" is sure to engage children from ages 1-3.

Highly recommended: 4 out of 4 stars

Reviewer: Kim Frail