

# *Argus*

**AUTHOR:** Michelle Knudsen

**ILLUSTRATOR:** Andrea Wesson

**PUBLISHER:** Candlewick Press

**COPYRIGHT DATE:** 2011

**ART MEDIUM:** watercolor and ink

**GENRE:** Humorous Stories

**LIFE SKILLS:** caring, responsibility, friendship, sense of humor, pride

**SYNOPSIS:** Mrs. Henshaw hands each of her students an egg for their science project. Sally's egg turns out to be different in all kinds of ways. Argus captures the heart of Sally and the reader in this sweet tale which shares that it is okay to be different.

**BOOKTALK:** All the kids have white eggs. Except Sally, her egg is green with spots. All the kids' eggs hatch yellow fluffy chicks. Except Sally, her hatchling is green and scaly. All the kids' chicks eat seeds and bugs. Except Sally, her hatchling tries to eat the other chicks. Which would you prefer for a pet? Help answer this question in the book called *Argus*.

**AUTHOR:**

**Michelle Knudsen** has written over 40 children's books. Previously a children's book editor, she also teaches children's book writing workshops. Michelle lives in Brooklyn, New York with her cat named Cleo.

**Other books written by the author:**

*Big Mean Mike*

*Bugged!*

*The Dragon of Trelan*

*Library Lion*

*The Princess of Trelan*

*A Slimy Story*

**ILLUSTRATOR:**

**Andrea Wesson** studied at the Rhode Island School of Design and now lives in Maryland.

**Other books illustrated by the illustrator:**

*Evangeline Mudd series*

*Jack Quack*

*Not Just Another Moose*

*Opera Cat*  
*A Pet for Miss Wright*

**CHALLENGING WORDS:**

Incubators, hatchling, measurements, graphs, emerged, investigate, relieved

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- 1 What is one phrase that the teacher Mrs. Henshaw says often? Do you think Sally was being difficult?
- 2 List and describe the differences and similarities between the chicks and Argus.
- 3 Why is Argus surrounded by cones on the playground?
- 4 Why didn't Sally say something at first when Argus disappeared?
- 5 What should Sally do with Argus?
- 6 Would you like to have a teacher like Mrs. Henshaw? How was she a good teacher or a bad teacher?

**ACTIVITIES with CORE STANDARDS:**

*Language Arts:*

EL.K.2.2 2006 -- Use pictures and context to aid comprehension and to draw conclusions or make predictions about story content.

- The text in the book never says that Argus is a dragon but you can tell this from the illustrations. Make a list of how Argus is described just from the words in the text. Draw a picture of another way the illustrator could have created Argus from this description.

*Mathematics:*

MA.1.5.1 2000 -- Measure the length of objects by repeating a nonstandard unit or a standard unit.

- Measure and chart the heights of all students in the classroom.

*Science:*

SCI.2.3.1 2010 -- Observe closely over a period of time and then record in pictures and words the changes in plants and animals throughout their life cycles-including details of their body plan, structure and timing of growth, reproduction and death.

- Replicate the science project done in Sally's classroom with chicken eggs (or tadpoles, caterpillars, flower seeds, etc.). The students will note and chart the changes as their living thing grows.

**RELATED INTERNET SITES:**

[www.michelleknudsen.com](http://www.michelleknudsen.com)