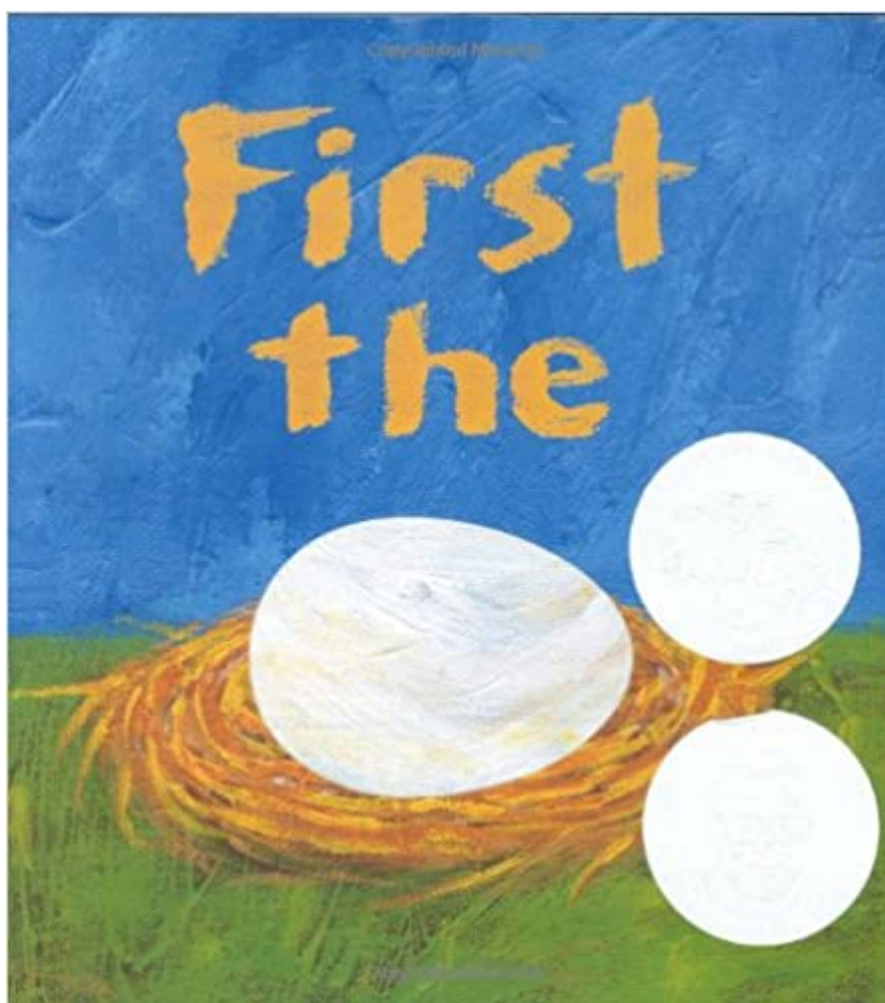


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# First The Egg (Caldecott Honor Book And Theodor Seuss Geisel Honor Book (Awards))



## Synopsis

WHICH CAME FIRST? The chicken or the egg? Simple die-cuts magically present transformation--from seed to flower, tadpole to frog, caterpillar to butterfly. The acclaimed author of *Black? White! Day? Night!* and *Lemons Are Not Red* gives an entirely fresh and memorable presentation to the concepts of transformation and creativity. Seed becomes flower, paint becomes picture, word becomes story--and the commonplace becomes extraordinary as children look through and turn the pages of this novel and winning book. *First the Egg* by bestselling author and illustrator Laura Vaccaro Seeger is a 2008 Caldecott Honor Book and a 2007 New York Times Book Review Best Illustrated Book of the Year. This title has Common Core connections.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Roaring Brook Press; 1 edition (September 4, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1596432721

ISBN-13: 978-1596432727

Product Dimensions: 8.3 x 0.4 x 220 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 78 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #33,208 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Biology](#) #591 in [Books > Children's Books > Early Learning > Basic Concepts](#) #615 in [Books > Children's Books > Science, Nature & How It Works](#)

Age Range: 2 - 6 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 1

## Customer Reviews

Beginning with the die cut on the cover, which completes the title and hides a secret underneath, this delivers a string of delightful surprises as Seeger crisply explores the stages of development in the natural world and, then, how a story grows. Thickly textured backgrounds provide visual energy for minimalist images that cleverly incorporate additional die cuts. First the EGG, reads the text on the opening spread, which pictures the egg through an appropriately shaped hole. When children flip the page, they'll find a fuzzy chick and its adult counterpart then the CHICKEN. So it goes through the life stages of frog, flower, and butterfly. Suddenly, Seeger turns away from nature. First the WORD, she

writes, "First the STORY. First the PAINT . . . then the PICTURE, accompanied by a painting that pulls the book together, showing a chicken, a flower, a frog, and butterfly enjoying a beautiful day together. A funny finale sets up the book's beginning. Pages are sturdy enough to support poking fingers and repeated viewings, both of which are guaranteed.

Preschool-Kindergarten. --Stephanie Zvirin

In another nimble page-turner, Seeger (*Black? White! Day? Night!*) toys with die-cuts and strategically paired words. She introduces a chicken-or-egg dilemma on her book's cover, picturing a plump white egg in a golden-brown nest. Remove the die-cut dust jacket, and a hen appears on the glossy inner cover. The eggshell, thickly brushed in bluish-white and cream, also serves as the chicken's feathers. This "first/then" pattern is repeated ("First the egg/ then the chicken./ First the tadpole/ then the frog"), with a die-cut on every other page. By flipping a page, readers see the cutout in two contexts. For instance, when an ovoid shape is superimposed on a white ground, it's an egg; on a yolk-yellow ground, it's the body of a baby chick. Seeger lines up the recto and verso of every sheet, maintaining a casual mood with generous swabs of grassy greens, sky blues and oxide yellows on canvas. Given the exuberant imagery, the occasional cutout (like the fingernail-size seed of a blowsy peony-pink flower) looks none too impressive. But if minuscule die-cuts seem barely worth the trouble, they do imply the potential in humble sources. Seeger's clever conclusion brings all the elements together in an outdoor scene that returns readers to the opening: "First the paint/ then the picture | / First the chicken/ then the egg!" Ages 2-6. (Sept.) Publishers Weekly

A deceptively simple, decidedly playful sequence of statements invites readers to ponder, what comes first: the chicken or the egg? Carefully choreographed page turns and die-cuts focus on the process of change and becoming, so "First" sits alone on a yellow background, facing "the EGG"--an egg-shaped die-cut revealing a white egg against an orange-and-brown background. Turn the page, and "then" appears, the egg-shaped die-cut now forming the yellow body of a chick emerging from the shell, facing "the CHICKEN"--the white hen whose body gave color to the previous spread's egg. Tadpole and frog, seed and flower, caterpillar and butterfly all receive the same treatment, then word and story, paint and picture bring all the disparate elements together, nature being the catalyst for art. Seeger's vibrant, textured oil-on-canvas illustrations contain a wealth of subtlety, allowing the die-cuts to reveal cunning surprises with each turn of the page. Children and adults alike will delight in flipping the sturdy pages back and forth to recreate the transformations over and over again. Another perfectly pitched triumph from an emerging master of the concept book. (Picture book. 2-6) Kirkus Reviews

## Starred Review

This book was suggested with another book I was already purchasing and I didn't really look at it before getting it home. What a simple, complex book! An oxymoron? Probably, but it seems to fit. The book is simple enough for a little bitty, but complex enough for a school-age child. It's great to be read to a child. It's great to be read by a child. You can take it at face value or you can expand on the ideas presented. The artwork is gorgeous; the "holes" in each page creative. This is a very well done book. It's not surprising that it's an award winner.

"First the Egg" was my first Laura Vaccaro Seeger book. I have a few hens and my friends' kids seem to know me as the woman who has chickens, so it's a perfect gift for me to give at baby showers or early years birthday parties. I loved this book so much I immediately checked out all Seeger's other books that my public library had in its collection. Turns out she is a wonderful author and illustrator of concept books. This one illustrates the "First-Then" concept. The illustrations are simple yet beautiful, and the pages are nice and thick for younger hands that haven't learned how to gently turn pages. Just a heads up: Don't expect it to answer the timeless question: "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?!"

As others have written, this is an extremely clever book with outstanding illustrations. I would even say that each page is a piece of art. If you value early introduction to science, nature, and critical thinking then this is a must have book. The tie-ins are ingenious and the book comes full circle by the end. And the incorporation of the cut outs is equally remarkable. It's hard to explain. Read it and you'll see what I mean. Importantly, it's not too wordy so it's a pleasure to read. When I read it to my 2 1/2 year old daughter, I let her finish the second part of the "then the...." refrain. She enjoys it as much as I do which says it all. Buy it and read it to your kids.

You can never go wrong with this author's books. Thoughtful story with stimulating artistry. My grandchildren always appreciate receiving one of Laura Vaccaro Seeger's books.

this book is a fabulous read! every other page has a cut out which gives your child the opportunity to predict what the next part may be (i.e. first the egg then the chicken!) but the story is also great for elementary children. the prediction is fun, but the story continues into the writing and illustrating process (i.e. first the word then the story). i loved that it ended in such a creative way - as a teacher,

i'd love to use this model and have students create their own "first the..." books. an excellent book that i would recommend to both parents and teachers.

I see why this won awards! Wonderful book for young readers!!

It's obvious why this book was awarded the Caldecott. The illustrations are absolutely brilliant and lead children through the text in a way that promotes higher order thinking. The story itself is extremely satisfying in that it comes full circle and implies the question, "which came first?" What a wonderful teaching tool to have in your toolbox.

I'm really pleased with this book. It has only a simple word or two on each page, the illustrations are very bright, and it is a quick little science lesson that goes full circle. I actually bought it for my 18 month old granddaughter but have found that every time I read it to her, her 3 and 4 year old siblings come running and listen to every word, too. It's sure to be a family favorite.

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