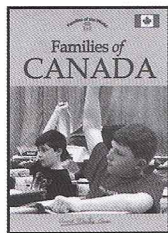


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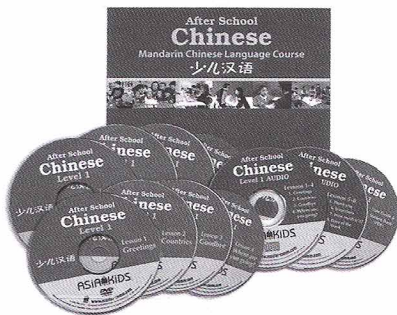
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The Money Mammals: Saving Money Is Fun ★★★

(2006) 30 min. DVD: \$19.99. Snigglezoo Entertainment. PPR. Color cover. Closed captioned.

Share and save, and spend smart, too! That’s the motto of the Money Mammals, a rockin’ band of four furry puppet friends. Joe the Monkey and his friend Piggs the Bank just received their allowance (of “one coin”—no actual dollar amounts are used here, which keeps things simple) for doing chores. Joe and Piggs really want to buy the latest cool trading card, but they also need to save up their money to get a birthday present for their good friend and bandmate, Clara J. Camel. Can the pair resist the temptation of “want”? Plenty of catchy songs (such as “Saving Money Really Rules!”) keep the story moving along, while also teaching basic financial concepts to kids, including the idea of cost per item, wants vs. needs, giving gifts, and saving strategies. DVD extras include a 12-minute segment of interviews with the show’s producers—aimed at parents—on allowances, fiscal responsibility, and ideas for teaching money values to very young children. Affordable, fun, and handsomely produced, this is recommended. Aud: K, E, P. (E. Gieschen)

One Tiny Turtle ★★★

(2005) 9 min. VHS or DVD: \$49.95. Nutmeg Media. PPR. Color cover. ISBN: 0-9761981-7-7 (vhs).

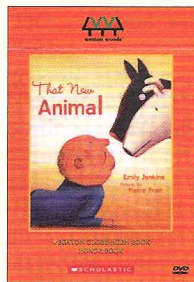
Narrated by Scott James Hybl, this iconographic adaptation of author Nicola Davies and illustrator Jane Chapman’s 2001 picture book explores the life cycle of the Loggerhead turtle (named for its helmet-like noggin). Similar in format to *The Emperor’s Egg* (reviewed in VL-3/06), also illustrated by Chapman, *One Tiny Turtle* follows a

baby turtle from its “nursery” (a sort of net of seaweed and driftwood), through its growth into a massive reptile protected by an armor-like shell as it embarks on a long migration, and its eventual return home to the same beach where it was born (drawn by current and sound, among other factors) in order to nest, after which the newborn baby turtles instinctively know how to “wiggle from their shells” and make their way into the sea, thus beginning the cycle anew. Concluding with a “Did You Know?” fact segment (turtles need to come to the surface for air, babies take six weeks to hatch, etc.), this is an informative overview of the life of an endangered species. Recommended. Aud: K, E, P. (J. Williams-Wood)

Princess Natasha: Season One ★★★

(2006) 72 min. DVD: \$14.98. Anchor Bay Entertainment (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

Aired on the Cartoon Network (and originally created as an America Online webisode series), this animated compilation follows the exciting escapades of the titular royal, a monarch of the fictional European country of Zoravia, who poses as an Illinois exchange student in order to stop her dastardly vice-principal/transplanted uncle from plotting to take over her dad’s throne back home. Sound confusing? No problem: each roughly six-minute segment recaps the situation to bring new viewers up-to-date, and the tech savvy Natasha (equipped with a bevy of super-cool spy-gear) follows updates from Zoravia while keeping a close watch on evil Uncle Lubek (who left the country before his undercover niece was born, so he doesn’t recognize her). Along with her bespectacled sidekick Oleg, Natasha thwarts Lubek’s continuous schemes (including using a climate control machine to alter the home country’s



That New Animal ★★★1/2

(2006) 9 min. VHS: \$60, DVD: \$59.95 (study guide included). Weston Woods Studios. PPR. Color cover. Closed captioned. ISBN: 0-439-84923-3 (dvd).

Poor Marshmallow and FudgeFudge. Life was grand for the family dogs until “that new animal” arrived. Now, “no one has thrown a stick in a long time,” and if they whine or bark, the pair are reprimanded, while the newcomer’s cries bring immediate loving attention. Based on Emily Jenkins’ 2004 picture book—illustrated by Pierre Pratt—and perfectly narrated by the author, the iconographic-animated *That New Animal* humorously explores the sometimes negative feelings brought about by a new addition to the family (“Maybe we could eat it,” says FudgeFudge; “we’d get in trouble” cautions Marshmallow). Bounced out of the spotlight, the dogs naturally act out (FudgeFudge chews up board books and dolls, while Marshmallow pees on the carpet). Things come to a head, however, when Grandpa arrives and wants to hold the baby and the dogs intervene because—despite all of the drawbacks—“it’s our animal.” Backed by a solid soundtrack from Scotty Huff and Robert Reynolds, *That New Animal* is a wonderful piece, perfect for children who are welcoming new siblings, as well as dog lovers of all ages (and be sure to stick around for the credits to hear cute audio outtakes of Jenkins working on her canine voices). Highly recommended. Aud: K, E, P. (R. Pitman)