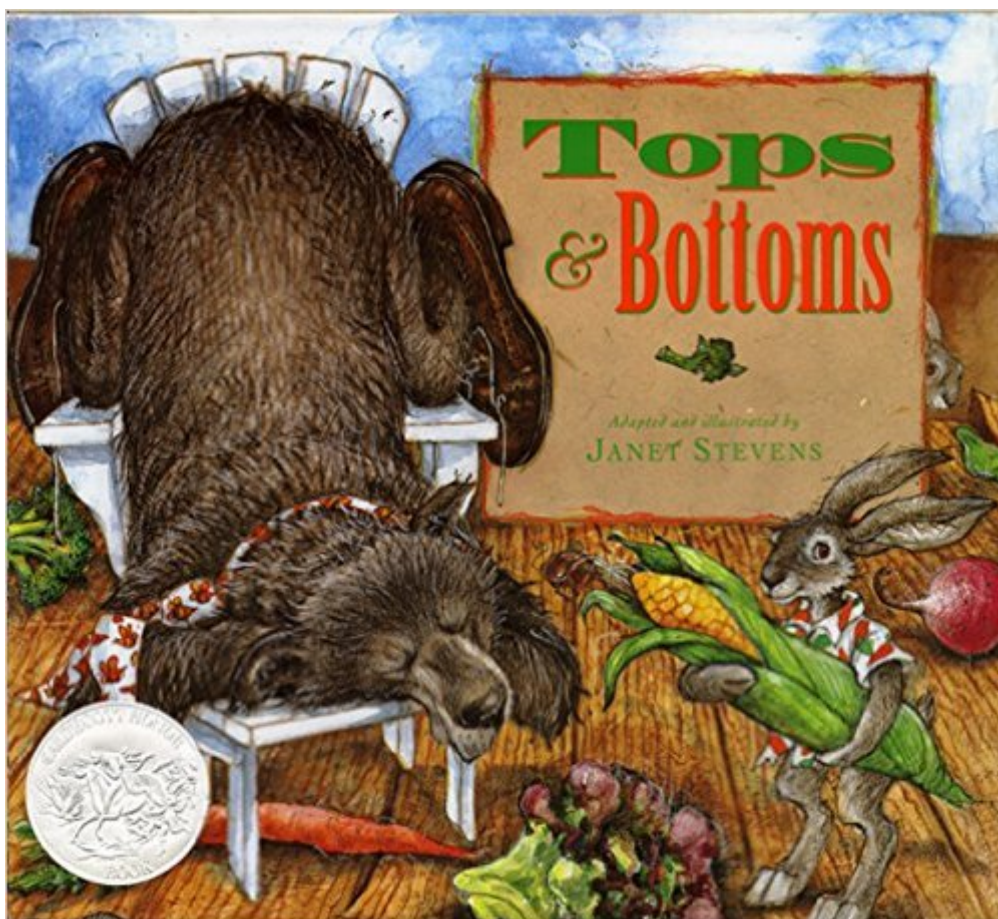


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# Tops & Bottoms (Caldecott Honor Book)



## Synopsis

Hare solves his family's problems by tricking rich and lazy Bear in this funny, energetic version of an old slave story. With roots in American slave tales, *Tops & Bottoms* celebrates the trickster tradition of using one's wits to overcome hardship. As usual, Stevens' animal characters, bold and colorful, are delightful. . . . It's all wonderful fun, and the book opens, fittingly, from top to bottom instead of from side to side, making it perfect for story-time sharing. [Booklist](#) This title has been selected as a Common Core Text Exemplar (Grades 2-3, Stories)

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 580L (What's this?)

Series: Caldecott Honor Book

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Harcourt Brace; 1st edition (March 29, 1995)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0152928510

ISBN-13: 978-0152928513

Product Dimensions: 10 x 0.4 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (136 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #7,893 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural](#) #20 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Rabbits](#) #70 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Bears](#)

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

When I first picked up the charming, "Tops and Bottoms" picture book by Janet Stevens, I was initially certain that this was a kind of Brer Rabbit tale. It had all the markings of it. Animals in clothing tricking one another out of food of one sort or another. The hero was a hare and the villain a bear. But on reading this book I was in for a shock. A staple of the Brer Rabbit tales is the idea that sometimes luck and laziness go hand in hand. Brer Rabbit is forever tricking the other animals into doing his work for him rather than the other way around. But in "Tops and Bottoms" we have a very familiar message to contend with. Hard work pays off. The book is drawn in a rather original format. Rather than holding the book with the spine horizontal, instead this tale can only be read with the

spine completely vertical. Pictures are long here, rather than wide, and the result is an eclectic new way of telling a tale. It's enormously effective. In this story, a lazy bear owns most of the land. One day, Hare decides its time to buy some of his own land back. He strikes up a deal with the prematurely hibernating neighbor and the two become business partners. If Hare does all the work, Bear can chose the part of the crop he prefers. Either the tops or the bottoms. It soon becomes clear that Bear is no match for the sly hare. After all, when Bear chooses the tops, Hare plants carrots. When Bear understands his mistake he chooses bottoms and Hare plants lettuce and celery. And when Bear demands both the tops AND the bottoms, Hare plants corn and gets the middle. In the end, Bear learns the benefits of hard work (and staying on top of things) and Hare has enough money from the crops to own his own land again.

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