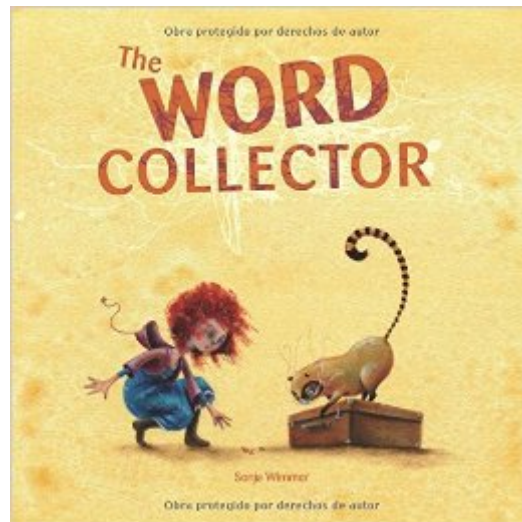


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# The Word Collector



## Synopsis

Luna is passionate about words. She loves their light and becomes tickled with laughter from them. But one day she realizes that, little by little, the beautiful, gorgeous, and fun words are disappearing from the world; so she decides it's time to act. A poetic tale about the magic of words, this delightful story invites readers of all ages to enjoy the power that positive words can have.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 720 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Cuento de Luz (April 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 8415241348

ISBN-13: 978-8415241348

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 0.4 x 9.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (13 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #47,247 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Early Learning > Basic Concepts > Words](#) #14459 in [Books > Reference](#)

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 2

## Customer Reviews

What is the ultimate goal of the picture book import? When someone takes the time to bring over and translate a work for children, they're expecting that book to be able to say something universal. They want the book to be enjoyable to child readers regardless of nationality, which, when you sit down and think about it, is a pretty lofty goal. Yet this year I've been seeing some absolutely amazing translations in America for kids. From the Colombian "Jimmy the Greatest" to the Norwegian "John Jensen Feels Different" to the French "My Dad Is Big and Strong, But . . ." this has been an amazing year for international children's literature. Now Spain enters the ring with "La Coleccionista de Palabras" or "The Word Collector". A heady infusion of striking images and playful content, author/illustrator Sonja Wimmer brings us a fantastical tale that has something to say to us today, yesterday, and tomorrow as well. What do you collect? Coins? Stamps? Stickers? Have you ever considered collecting words? Luna, the heroine of this little tale, does exactly that and the job fills her days. Whether they're magic words or delicious words or humble words, pretty much if they

are words she is interested. The trouble only comes the day that Luna reels in her nets to find just a paltry smattering of words, hardly enough to satisfy. It seems the people of the word just aren't using the beautiful words out there anymore. So what's a girl to do when the world grows forgetful? She packs her suitcase with every word in her arsenal and sets off to right a great wrong, that's what. This is not a book for lazy people. It demands that you work at it. You can't just sit back and have the text come to you as you flip through the pages. Some spreads seem fairly straightforward with the words traveling in a single straight line. Other times I felt like I was reading Bob Raczka's "Lemonade" again, picking out the words and sentences where I could find them. Your first indication that this isn't the usual fare comes on the fourth or fifth pages of the story. After reading that there was a girl named Luna who lived in the sky we encounter this luminous (most of the pages are luminous, by the way) image of a red haired child Madonna of sorts staring into a glass container of softly glowing letters like a kid with a firefly jar. When I first encountered this picture I was amazed that Wimmer had the guts to create a wordless spread this early in the storyline. It was only after a close examination that I realized that the letters were words and, more to the point, were continuing the story. After that I was ready to encounter sentences that ran backwards or swirled in goldfish bowls or fell from balconies. For those folks who find the book too difficult, they may be pleased to learn that the full text appears in plain old black and white at the end of the book. That is, if you want to do it the easy way. Wimmer's style reminds me not a little of illustrators like Emily Gravett, mixing ephemera into her art, causing the reader to just want to read every tiny hidden detail and each revealed letter. Yet when it comes to the medium and the paints, Wimmer strikes me as very much along the same lines as fellow Spaniard Ana Juan (though Wimmer is originally from Germany, I believe). Both artists appreciate the pulsing beauty that can be found in the everyday. What makes Wimmer's style entirely her own, however, is how unafraid she is to shake up her perspective and angles. One minute we're just a hair's breath away from Luna's face and the next we're on a balcony with her staring down to a distant suitcase below. Next we're looking up at the underside of dragonfly bellies and the undercarriage of a red hot-air balloon, turning the page to find ourselves in the midst of a very silly but energetic brawl. The figures in these images, you will forgive me, are clearly not drawn in the United States. That's just a statement of fact. You can tell. And there is something enjoyable in their goofy flesh that will engage Yankee children as easily as those across the Atlantic. Silliness, thank goodness, is universal. Translator Jon Brokenbrow does a fine job of capturing the dreamlike qualities of the book without losing any of the magic. Picture book translation is a difficult art, and with a plot like this one (girl gives away words and people are happy) there's a danger of crossing over from "poetic" into "simpering". Fortunately for all parties involved

he walks a careful line, never indulging in excess sentiment. What I can't quite figure out is how they managed to translate the book and retain the art. The remarkable thing about "The Word Collector" is the very fact that the words are PART of that art. Change the letters and doesn't that mean that you need to redo the images as well? I don't know how they did it but by and large every necessary word is changed for English speakers. There was only one image that didn't quite look translated to me. In the upper right-hand corner of one two-page spread we see a clown face made out of letters that seem to spell out PALARBAS LOCAS. So it looks as though the phrase "crazy words" got missed. Interestingly they do show up in that black and white section at the book's end. Though I've compared the artist to other illustrators and the book to other titles, truly "The Word Collector" is most similar to Roni Schotter's old picture book "The Boy Who Loved Words" if only because illustrator Giselle Potter shares Wimmer's love of breaking up text in artistic ways. Consider too pairing it with the recent William Joyce title "The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore" for a celebration of words both on and off the page. A title that leaps and spirals with energy, let's hope we're lucky enough to see other books by Ms. Wimmer float across the pond to our side, and soon. Luminous luminous luminous. For ages 4-8.

The Word Collector  
Written and Illustrated by Sonja Wimmer  
The opening sentence states that, "Luna was an extraordinary little girl." This is also true of this work, an extraordinary little story; with a very BIG message! The author/illustrator, has used her writing and illustrating skill, to deliver a poetically delivered moral tale of how easy the adult world forgets the importance of the words they use on a daily basis; and how with all the stresses and demands of modern life, things can change and become grey, as Luna the heroine of this story tells us "But one day, everything changed. Little by little, the beautiful, magnificent, and fun words began to disappear. What happened to them?" The clever style in which the words are jumbled on the pages, makes it a little fun adventure for the reader to trace the tale, it adds both to the enjoyment and understanding of the importance of the need to search ourselves to use Luna's words that are "Magic words" "Delicious words" "Humble words" and most importantly "Funny words that tickle you palate when you say them" The images used are themselves a joyful story even without the words. There are so many wonderful illustrations, you can keep going back and flicking through to discover more little creative jewels within the covers of this work on the importance of everyday words. The illustration of Luna gazing into a jar of glowing words is simply beautiful and no doubt will adorn the wall of many children for many years. This story is of the type that when this generation of children are adults, this will be one of 'the books' of their childhood memories, and the kind that even without a copy nearby, they will

be able to tell the story of this book to their children; (Hopefully they will remember the name Sonja Wimmer when they talk of Luna `the word collector' for giving this story to children and adults alike!)  
Thank You!

I so very much wanted to love this book. The illustrations are gorgeous and I love the story about the power of words. But what is the point of a book that you cannot read? I had to go cross eyed in several places to make sense of the twisted writing. I understand the author wanted to be creative here, but there is a fine line between creative and too creative. When the words of a sentence are jumbled up in a jar, children will not be able to read the words. When you have to move your eyes up, down, across and zig zagged to read a sentence, you are not spending time enjoying the story and the illustrations. who read this? I mean, wants to sentence (translation: I mean, who wants to read a sentence like this?) a like Five stars for beautiful illustrations and a good message. Minus two stars for making it all so difficult to enjoy.

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