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Books Reviewed:

[Mrs. Wobble the Waitress and Mr. Biff the Boxer](#) [1]

Books Reviewed:

[Mrs. Plug the Plumber and Mr. Cosmo the Conjuror](#) [2]

Books Reviewed:

[Miss Jump the Jockey and Master Salt the Sailor's Son](#) [3]

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Reviewer:

[Jill Bennett](#) [5]

News to Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

0

Happy Families is a new series of easy-to-read stories for those just able to read on their own. With most of the books at this level originating in the States, it is good to see British publishers producing their own material. All the stories are written by Allan Ahlberg who seeming preoccupation with the supposed limitations of potential readers has resulted in a slightly stilted style: 'The children did not like to see their mother cry. It made them cry. It made their father cry too,' 'He will biff him,' said Betty Biff.' 'Now I cannot ride in the race,' he said.' Throughout the series there is an undue avoidance of contractions which destroys the natural flow of the text and does NOT make for easier reading.

Of the six **Mrs. Plug the Plumber**, in which quick-witted Mrs. P. scares the pants off a would-be footpad and is rewarded with a trip round the world, **Mr. Biff the Boxer** who thanks to the efforts of his family, ends up fighting fit for the charity match, and **Mrs. Wobble the Waitress**, whose clumsiness is turned to advantage, seem to me the best stories. Interestingly, the latter two are illustrated by Janet Ahlberg. The other three, in spite of lively, amusing illustrations (and a guest appearance of What-a-Mess, immediately spotted by my children), do not quite take off as real stories. Despite this, the length of the books (24 pages) and the cartoon-like pictures make them highly attractive to readers at the 'in-between' stage and well worth buying.

Running Order:

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