



SHHH! I'm sleeping! by Dorothee de Monfreid

Publisher: Gecko Press

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Pre-schoolers and parents will smile when they read this comical board book. It showcases the familiar bedtime antics of young ones trying to settle down to sleep.

The elongated shape of the book is perfect for the bunkroom setting for the story. There are two tiers of four bunks in the room, reminiscent of a school camp. The characters sharing the room are dogs of various breeds, shapes, and sizes.

Seven shadowy shapes are snuggled under the covers while snores float from one bed. It looks a peaceful scene, except for the wide-open eyes of the occupant in the bed above the snorer.

Eventually, the non-sleeper turns on his bed light and calls out to his friend in the opposite bunk. This starts a humorous chain reaction.

With each turn of the page, another dog stirs and flicks on the bed light. Soon the bunkroom is alive with activity as the occupants get glasses of water, borrow a toy, change beds, climb up and down ladders, and share a story. Meanwhile, the snorer is oblivious to the bustle going on around him.

The author/illustrator makes clever use of bold colour to lighten the night-time scenes. Each character's personality is defined clearly through their appealing faces and body shapes. Readers will enjoy the background changes - especially the snorer's restless tossing and turning.

Another splendid book from the innovative New Zealand publisher, Gecko Press.

**Reviewed by children's book author,
Jean Bennett**

