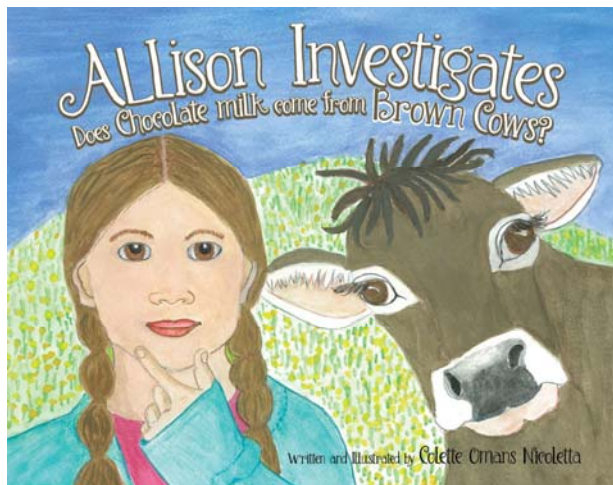


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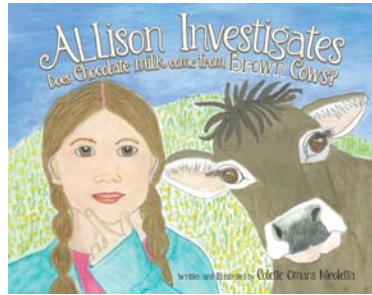
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A Little Girl's Love for Cows Inspires a New Children's Book



(Chanhausen, Minn.) - Some little girls grow up with a love for dolls and stuffed animals. Others can't get enough of clothes, shoes and makeup. For Allison Nicoletta, 10, of Chanhausen, Minn., it is cows she talks about all the time.

"Ever since she was a baby, Allison has been fascinated by cows. She has always had cow stuffed animals, cow toys, cow rain boots and a cow umbrella." I think that's because every time her dad poured milk when she was a toddler he would say, 'Moo,'" says her mom, Colette Nicoletta, laughing.

As she got older, Allison's love for cows served as an inspiration to her parents. "I think it's neat that she's so curious about the world around her," says Nicoletta.

Case in point, Nicoletta vividly remembers a conversation the family had when Allison was four-years-old. "While we were driving to the Wisconsin Dells, my husband said to Allison, 'Chocolate milk comes from brown cows.' Allison said, 'Really? Is that true?' When we returned home, she had to find out."

Over the next two years, Allison and her parents visited the Minnesota Zoo and various family farms to learn all they could about cows. They also spent time at a milk processing plant in Woodbury, learning how milk makes its way to market.

Their investigation and what they learned is the basis of the new children's book, Allison Investigates, written and illustrated by Allison's mom, who is an art teacher at Victoria Elementary just outside the Twin Cities Metro in Minnesota.

The story begins with young Allison asking readers if they know where her favorite drink, chocolate milk, comes from. She takes them along as she investigates to find the answer. Allison visits a farm where she learns all about cows and how to milk them. She then follows the milk truck to the processing plant where she learns about pasteurization and homogenization.

Allison Investigates is Nicoletta's second children's book. Her first, There's a Frog on My Forehead, received the Mom's Choice Gold Award in the category of Children's Picture Books – Basic Concepts.

“This book is not only a gift to my daughter, but to the children I see every day,” says Nicoletta, who explains that she teaches in a community surrounded by family farms. “I see cows every day as I drive in to work. They are wonderful animals.”

As for the main character in the book, yes, Allison is still interested in cows, and she still loves chocolate milk. Another one of her loves, cheese. Nicoletta hints that may be the subject of the next book in what she hopes will become The Allison Investigates Series. “There are so many investigations we have done. We definitely have enough material.”

Allison Investigates was published by Beaver's Pond Press and is available for purchase through Nicoletta's website: www.colettenicoletta.com, as well as Amazon.com. A Spanish version of the book, Allison Investiga, is also available. Books can be purchased separately for \$17.95 each, or together in a package that sells for \$24.95.

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About the Author

Colette Nicoletta is an elementary school art teacher who fulfilled her dream of becoming a published children's book author and illustrator in 2008.



Her first book, There's a Frog on My Forehead, received the Mom's Choice Gold Award in the category of Children's Picture Books – Basic Concepts. Using 26 different animals and places on the body, the tale takes readers on a fantastic journey through the alphabet - and the human anatomy - with animals acting as tour guides.

The success of her first book led to a second. Allison Investigates celebrates her oldest daughter's inquisitiveness. It was published by Beaver's Pond Press in 2011. A Spanish version of the book is also available.

Colette Nicoletta lives in Chanhassen, Minn., a Western suburb of Minneapolis, with her husband, two young daughters and a cat named Matilda.

Title: ***ALLISON INVESTIGATES***

Author: Colette Nicoletta

Pub. Date: 2011

Publisher: Beaver's Pond Press Books
Edina, MN

1-800-901-3480

Cost: \$17.95

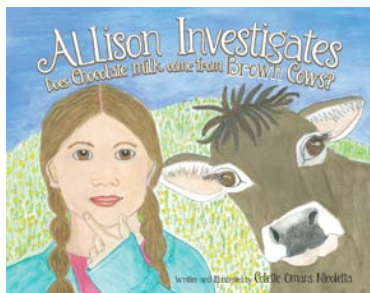
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More information about the book can be found at
www.ColetteNicoletta.com

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“The important questions in life are the ones that need the answers. *Allison Investigates: Does Chocolate Milk Come from Brown Cows?* is a fun read from Colette Omans Nicoletta, who provides both the story and art. Allison through her story learns about dairy farming and what goes into it to solve her chocolate milk mystery and learn a good deal on top of that. *Allison Investigates* is a fun read for elementary school students, highly recommended.”

— **Midwest Book Review**

“Colette Omans Nicoletta pops on the Children's Literature scene with a very well written and illustrated first story – *Allison Investigates: Does Chocolate Milk Come From Brown Comes?* and it is bound to be a favorite of both parents/grandparents and children ages 4 - 8. Though the title of the book sounds funny to adults, it merely represents one of the many questions children have about life and things around them but are too often embarrassed to ask. This reader would hope that the character of Allison will be the featured investigator of other Big Questions for many more books by this very charming author.”

— **Grady Harp, Los Angeles, Calif.**

“This great book by debut author, Colette Omans Nicoletta brought a huge smile to my face. Reading the book took me down memory lane and stirred my brain into relishing once again the many happy times I experienced with my children's many questions about life.”

— **Amazon.com review**

“Colette Nicoletta’s illustrations bring a brightly colored and charming appeal to *Allison Investigates*. Her paintings are clearly well-researched and create an informative atmosphere that will surely appeal to children who are visual learners or love animals. Allison herself is a great character, but the cows rightly shine as the true stars of this book.”

— **Christina Rodriguez, professional children’s illustrator, Minnesota SCBWI Illustration Coordinator**

“Allison investigates is a delightful rendering of the endless questions and inquisitive nature of children about the foods they eat and where foods come from. As the intrepid Allison discovers the truth about chocolate milk, readers join her through the whimsical drawings of Colette Nicoletta. This book is a blissful blend of factual information in storytelling!”

— ***Vanessa Behun, 2nd grade teacher, Victoria Elementary School***

“Chocolate milk comes from brown cows is a myth almost all children hear. *Allison Investigates* delightfully sets the record straight. Children are introduced to the process of how milk gets from the farm to its consumers, and will delight in the handsomely illustrated cows. This story expertly blends facts with fiction and will be a valuable addition to classroom units on farms.”

— ***Renee Boraas, Media specialist***

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About Colette Nicoletta, author *Allison Investigates & Allison Investiga*

(Chanhassen, Minn.) – Colette Nicoletta has always had a love for reading, but it hasn't always come easy. "I struggled with reading as a young child due to a problem with mild dyslexia," she says, "but my father, who was an English professor at Temple University in Philadelphia, was very patient with me and we kept working at it until I got it."



When her own children were born, she and her husband immediately began sharing their love of reading with the girls. Today, Allison, 9, and Emily, 7, are avid readers their parents describe as smart, articulate and creative. "It's a real blessing," says Nicoletta, who is an art teacher at Victoria Elementary in Victoria, Minn., a farming community West of Minneapolis.

Because she is surrounded by animals, they have served as inspiration for the children's books Nicoletta has written and illustrated. Her first book, *There's a Frog on My Forehead*, uses 26 different animals and places on the body to take readers on a fantastic journey through the alphabet - and the human anatomy. It received the Mom's Choice Gold Award in the category of Children's Picture Books – Basic Concepts.

The success of her first book led to a second. *Allison Investigates*, which celebrates her oldest daughter's inquisitiveness, was published by Beaver's Pond Press in 2011. A Spanish version of the book is also available.

Colette Nicoletta lives in Chanhassen, Minn., with her husband, two daughters and a cat named Matilda. She is hard at work on book number three, which will feature an investigation launched by her youngest daughter, Emily.

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To arrange an interview with Colette Nicoletta, contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, RMA Publicity at 952-240-2513 or via e-mail: rachel@rmapublicity.com

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Ask Colette Nicoletta, author



1. Why did you write about chocolate milk?
2. Why do you feel it is so important to encourage children to ask questions?
3. As an art teacher, you teach more than drawing and painting. You teach creativity. Talk about that a bit.
4. Why is reading and writing so important for children?
5. How is your book being used at the school where you work?

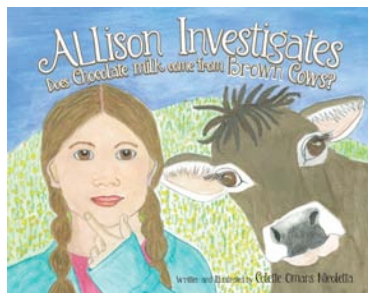
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Encouraging Creativity in Kids is the Name of the Game for a Minnesota Art Teacher

By Rachel M. Anderson, Freelance Writer



(Victoria, Minn.) – Just like all teachers, Colette Nicoletta is on a mission to make a difference in the lives of her students. However, her focus is a bit different than most of her peers. Her job isn't to teach kids how to read, write or spell, or locate places on a map. She is an art teacher at Victoria Elementary in Victoria, Minn., and her job is to teach her students how to be creative.

“To me, creativity is about more than just being good at painting and drawing. I tell the kids everyone has the ability to be creative. You can be creative when playing baseball, when riding your bike, when playing on the playground. For me it takes all kinds of different forms.”

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, she's right. Learning out how to be creative is one of life's most important lessons. In the report, “The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development,” first published in 2007, researchers comment on how creativity “plays a key role in allowing a child to develop to their unique potential.”

Creativity is credited with allowing Isaac Newton to discover gravity when that apple fell from a tree, and helping Albert Einstein come up with the Theory of Relativity. It may also one day lead to a cure for cancer.

Teaching creativity has always been a cause near and dear to Nicoletta's heart. She credits her father, who was an English Professor at Temple University in Philadelphia for more than 30 years, with getting her started. “When I was growing up the study was one of my favorite rooms in the whole house. From floor to ceiling there were books and it had this wonderful wood smell. When I spent time with my Dad, it would be with books My dad gave me this wonderful love of reading and of literature of all different kinds and I thank him for that!”

Nicoletta's father died of colon cancer in May 2010, but not before seeing his daughter's first children's book get published. She both wrote and illustrated *There's a Frog on My Forehead*, a story that simultaneously teaches little ones their A-B-C's and human anatomy. The book received the Mom's Choice Gold Award in the category of Children's Picture Books – Basic Concepts last year.

The success of her first book led to a second. *Allison Investigates*, which celebrates her oldest daughter's inquisitiveness, was recently published by Beaver's Pond Press. A Spanish version of the book is also available.

The story begins with a young girl named Allison posing the question, "Where does chocolate milk come from?" She then brings readers along on her adventure to find out. The story moves from Allison's kitchen to a neighbor's farm where she learns about all the different types of cows that provide America's milk supply and how the milking process is done. She then visits a milk processing plant in Central Minnesota to get more of her questions answered.

Thanks to its colorful illustrations and simple text, the book is engaging to children in kindergarten, first and second grades, but Nicoletta says she went to great lengths to make sure it would appeal to older kids as well. "I included a lot of information so that second through fifth graders would get something out of it as well," she says.

Among the information provided, what cows eat every day, how much water they drink, how much milk they are capable of making, the types of cows and how milk is processed. "Sharing my book with the kids has offered a number of important lessons, not to mention it's a wonderful way of getting them interested in storytelling," says Nicoletta.

"I learn from my students every single day. I like to think that I teach them, but they teach me too, especially since I have the gift of getting to see them all the way from kindergarten through 5th grade, the changes, the growth, it's such a blessing," says Nicoletta.

Allison Investigates is available in both English and Spanish. The books retail for \$17.95 apiece, or \$24.95 for both, and can be purchased through Nicoletta's website: www.ColetteNicoletta.com, as well as Amazon.com.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is being offered to you copyright free and cost free. If you wish to publish it as is, please contact me for photography. I can also put you in touch with Colette Nicoletta if you wish to do a story of your own. – Rachel M. Anderson, RMA Publicity, 952-240-2513; rachel@rmapublicity.com

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