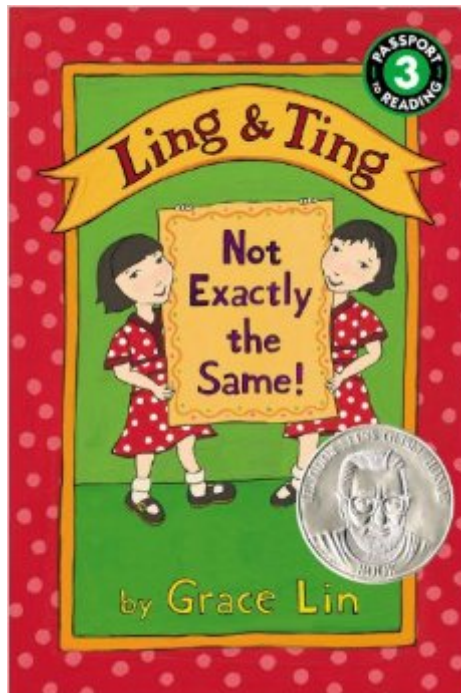


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# Ling & Ting: Not Exactly The Same! (Passport To Reading Level 3)



## Synopsis

Ling and Ting are twins. They have the same brown eyes. They have the same pink cheeks. They have the same happy smiles. Ling and Ting are two adorable identical twins, and they stick together, whether they are making dumplings, getting their hair cut, or practicing magic tricks. But looks are deceiving--people can be very different, even if they look exactly the same.

## Book Information

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Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (28 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #46,770 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in Â Books > Children's Books >

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Women

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

## Customer Reviews

If you want to gauge the merit of a children's author it's easy as pie. Simply hand them a piece of paper and a pencil. Sit them down in a comfortable chair in front of a table. Now ask them to create a good easy-to-read book for children. I am personally convinced that this is probably the most difficult thing you can ask an author to do. Harder than asking them to write a romantic vampire novel. Harder than a child-friendly mystery series. Easy books (I should say GOOD easy books) are an acquired talent. Some authors whip them out so easily it shocks the senses (see: Mo Willems' Â Elephant and Piggie Â books). Others struggle with the format. When I heard that author Grace Lin, master of the novel, the early chapter book, and the picture book, was trying her hand at

the easy reader format I was concerned. Past success is no indication of future talent. Could she pull it off? She could. Grace Lin has given us *Ling & Ting: Not Exactly the Same!*, a book in the same vein as your *Frog and Toad* or *Amelia Bedelia* tales. Which is to say, a future classic. Six very short stories tell tales about these twin girls. Ling and Ting look alike and sound alike (and sometimes even dress alike) but they are not exactly the same, in spite of the world claiming the contrary. Case in point is the story "The Haircuts" which tells the tale of how calm Ling gets her haircut without any fuss or bother, whereas fidgety Ting cannot sit still. One particularly unfortunate sneeze later and her bangs are so eclectic that the reader has no difficulty distinguishing between the girls for the rest of the book (one wonders what Ms. Lin will do if she expands this book into a series). Other stories discuss making dumplings, going to the library, using chopsticks, magic tricks, and silly storytelling. The writing is simple, to the point, and pretty darn good. The jokes are a particular strength. Lin can show unfortunate haircuts, which some kids will find funny on the one hand. At the same time her dialogue can be very amusing (particularly to adult readers). For example, Ting comes in to see Ling wearing a big magic hat. She asks why she is wear it. " 'It is a magic hat,' Ling says. 'I am wearing it because I can do magic.' 'You can?' Ting says. 'Can you use your magic to get a smaller hat?' " 'I'm a sucker for that kind of thing. And in writing these stories Lin has to be amusing in as few words as possible. No mean task, but she does a fine job. Ling and Ting also seem to exist in that ideal grown-up free world where a kid can walk to the library on her own and no one bats an eye. They create their own dumplings and have picnics without the presence of any other living being, older or otherwise. Really, the only other person who even makes an appearance in this book is the barber at the story's start. I can see a lot of kids digging this bizarre near grown-upless world. The art is less complicated than Grace's usual fare. It's not as if Ms. Lin's artistic style is usually chock full of hidden details. But to match the simple words in Ling and Ting Grace has given the book very straightforward illustrations. Clear black outlines. Bright colors. Look carefully and you'll also see a whole host of tiny details snuck in here and there. For example, anytime the girls are casually holding a book while they talk to one another, that book is usually a previous Lin title. When Ting traipses off to the library, Ling is left at home reading *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*. And when the two settle down to have a picnic under the great blue sky (with milk and ubiquitous chocolate cupcakes at that) copies of *The Year of the Rat* and *The Year of the Dog* are strewn about, open midway. And one of the book's details is even subtler than that. Take a gander at the dedication page. Once there you'll find that Grace has thanked seven different pairs of twins. Clearly she's done her research. Ah, Grace Lin. What will you do when there are no more worlds to conquer? I guess the world of board books and teen novels

remain (extra points if you combine the two). I would still like her to write her customary middle grade fare, but she can certainly do an easy reader or two if she puts her mind to it. And let's face it, the easy reader section of any library tends to be a little white. Now we've some diversity and a new series that's going to appeal to a bunch of kids still grasping simple sentences. Best that you buy it yourself. Lin can do what few others have mastered. For ages 5-8.

I was lucky enough to get an early copy of LING & TING. It's a delightful set of stories that illustrate the differences and affections between twin sisters. My four year old connected beautifully with the book. While not a twin, she delighted in the character's differences and related them to herself. Now when we do her hair and she fidgets she is "being just like Ting" or when she's being particularly tidy, she identifies with Ling. It's been a great addition to our library.

Ling and Ting toting popcorn and drinks in preparation for the entertainment to follow. One sister says, "Shh! It is starting!" and the other says, "Oh no! Are we late?" --- an appropriately delightful introduction to these tales, which are liberally and charmingly illustrated by author Grace Lin. In the first story, a visit to the barber for a haircut reveals how much the twins look alike (at least, temporarily) and how much they are different from each other. The girls themselves are constantly pointing this out. When the people around them say, "You two are exactly the same!" they reply, "We are not exactly the same." Because Ling can sit still, her haircut is quite different from antsy Ting's, who gets a little something extra in her new hairdo. In the next story, a magic trick goes awry...which not only is good for a laugh, but sets up the punchline for an amusing joke later on. As Ling and Ting collaborate on a batch of dumplings in another story, Ling rolls out the dough while Ting mixes up the filling. They muse that the little pastries are supposed to resemble old Chinese money. So they take extra care with their dumplings. They make a big batch, hoping that will mean lots of money. Like the young cooks themselves, the dumplings made by one girl are not quite the same as the ones made by her sister. Putting her imagination and humor on display, Ting invents nicknames for their "not exactly the same" products. Story four is called "Chopsticks." One sister has no problem using chopsticks. She comes up with funny solutions for her struggling sister (glue? tying food on?), who finds her own solution, which manages to be unexpected, wholly rational and humorous all at the same time. A story about a library quest ties in to the magic trick tale in a couple of different and satisfying ways. The final story is rightfully called "Mixed Up." Readers will take as much pleasure as Ling does in unraveling the scrambled-together storylines from the previous tales as narrated by creative Ting. Although Ling corrects her sister on many plot points, she admits that

the way Ting sums up the conclusion is perfect:"...They were not exactly the same," Ting says, "but they always stayed together.""Well," Ling says, "at least you got the ending right."With the story over, we get another little bonus on the closing page of the book. Savvy readers will know by the clue in the hairstyle that Ting is asking her sister "Was that the end?" Ling replies, "No, this is!"The appeal of this winning early chapter book is its pairing of the irresistible fascination of identical twins with a celebration of individuality. Readers are sure to delight in tons of humor, a bit of Chinese-American culture, and adorable illustrations in these good-natured, lively tales. It all adds up to an enjoyable read for youngsters (or the lucky adults who read to them). --- Reviewed by Terry Miller Shannon

At first my daughter did not want to read it because she just does not like to read. Once she started she could not put it down, and has read it over and over, again. When, I say, hey, this was a book that you said was too hard. She just laughs. I hope there will be more books to come. :)

My three year old granddaughter loved this book. It was just right for a story for her mommy to read to her. I will likely look for others in the series. We were familiar with Grace Lin because my older granddaughter had LOVED "Where the Mountain Meets the Moon"

This is one of the first chapter books my five year old has read on her own! It's at about the same level as Frog and Toad, but more modern and with female characters. My daughter stayed up late reading it and told me all about it in the morning.

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