Max is looking for words that rhyme. His dragon is in his wagon or was, for now its tail has left a trail, which Max follows. He finds an umbrella on the ground? Found, ground? he says, while his older brothers mock him for believing in dragons and sitting under an umbrella when it isn't even raining. But Max believes in possibilities and when he can show his brothers not only a dragon in the stormy clouds but also a dinosaur, they begin to come round. When Max demonstrates the power of his rhyming words to tame the dinosaur and the dragon and make the rain come, he wins them over completely.

With amusing wordplay and beguiling illustrations, Kate Banks and Boris Kulikov celebrate language and imagination in a collaboration that is bound to be oodles of fun for everyone.

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Max's earnest search for rhyming words, sends him through a croquet game, rainstorm and adventures with his dragon. Initially an annoyance to his brothers, Max keeps up his lines, "If my dragon isn't faster, there'll be a big disaster" until brothers Karl and Ben are contributing too. When the dragon is threatened there is only one thing to do--create another rhyme to save the day.

As a speech-language pathologist I like to offer tips to build your child's language and literacy:

What a delightful introduction to poetry and rhyme! Since the understanding of rhyme is a precursor to reading, it is important to play with rhyming words with your child. Read the rhymes to a younger child,
emphasizing the changing first sound (the "f" in faster and "d" sound in disaster), and then just repeat the two words: faster, disaster. With a child 4 years old and up, create your own one-liners. Start them off with a phrase such as "I can't wait or I'll be (late)." Look at a fun illustration and create rhymes based on the pictures. Throw out a word and see how many rhyming words you and your child can generate. A first or second grader can write his own poem based on a favorite activity, imaginary friend, or object. Sometimes starting with an illustration will help generate the language.

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