Chicken Big

- **Bibliographic information:**
  Author & Illustrator: Keith Graves
  Publisher: Chronicle Books
  Publication date: 2010

- **Summary:**
  From the day Chicken Big is born, everyone knew he was not a normal. All of the chickens tried to figure out what kind of animal he actually was. The littlest chicken said that Chicken Big was an elephant and then he was a squirrel. As the story goes on the eggs are stolen from the hen house and Chicken Big is the one who saves the eggs. He is then accepted by the other chickens as one of their own.

- **Awards:**
  Washington Children's Choice Picture Book Award in 2010
  Indies Choices E. B. White Read-Aloud Award, Picture Book Honor 2011

- **Review:** *Booklist* called this book "a sort of mash-up of *Chicken Little* and *Blind Men and the Elephant,*" and that does seem about right. Adults may find the brainless little chickens a little too dopey, but kids get a kick out of their propensity to panic and preposterous guesses as to what Chicken Big truly is. Grave's illustrations are a lot of fun, and Chicken Big's exasperation with the antics of the little chickens is pretty hilarious. In fact, *Booklist* predicts this book will elicit "loud requests for repeat readings from delighted audiences." *Booklist*- [http://www.the-best-childrens-books.org/Chicken-Big.html](http://www.the-best-childrens-books.org/Chicken-Big.html)

- **Author Information:** [http://www.keithgravesart.com/main.html](http://www.keithgravesart.com/main.html)

- **Discussion Questions**
  **Pre-reading questions:**
  - What do you think the big chicken will do in this story?
  - What do you think of when you look at the cover of the book?
  - Have you ever seen a live chicken?

  **Questions while reading:**
  - Which chicken are you most like?
  - Why don't the other chickens accept Chicken Big?
  - How do you feel when you are left out?
  - How will they get their eggs back?

  **Post-reading questions:**
  - Why do you think Chicken Big was born so big?
  - Why did the chickens keep listening to the smallest chicken?
  - Have you ever judged someone before you got to know them?

- **Curricular Activities**
  - **Reading/Oral Language:** Read the traditional *Chicken Little* folk talk and create a Venn diagram comparing it to the *Chicken Big* story.
Writing: Create your own improbable story by looking at a common animal as if you have never seen it before. Pair-share to see if your partner can guess the animal.

Science: Hatch eggs in the classroom.

Social Studies: Discuss folk tales and why people tell them.

Art: Students can create a story board of the story’s main components.

Music: Do the chicken dance. Watch Chicken Count at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=REAXGhFJcXQ

Related Books:
- The Chicken of the Family, author-Mary Amato, illustrator-Delphine Durand
- The Princess and the Pig, author-Jonathan Emmett, illustrator-Poly Bernatene
- Chicken Little by Stephen Kellogg

Other titles written by the author:
- Frank Was A Monster Who Wanted To Dance
- Pet Boy
- Three Nasty Gnarlies
- The Unexpectedly Bad Hair of Barcelona Smith
- Uncle Blubbafink's Seriously Ridiculous Stories

Other books illustrated by the author:
- Armadillo Tattletale
- Boo-Hoo Moo, Boo Who?
- Too Many Frogs

Websites for Further Enrichment:
- Mrs. Kilburn's Kiddos: Down On The Farm
  http://mrskilburnkiddos.wordpress.com/thematic-units/down-on-the-farm/
  Provides ideas for farm field trips and activities teachers can do with their students when studying the Farm and related topics.

- Chickens at Enchanted Learning
  http://www.enchantedlearning.com/themes/chicken.shtml
  Read silly chicken jokes, play fun games that involve chickens, and read chicken stories. There are also chicken coloring pages, too!

- DLTK's Crafts for Kids: Chickens (Hens and Roosters) Activities
  http://www.dltk-kids.com/animals/chickens.htm
  Crafts for the classroom.