**Title:** Prudence Wants a Pet by Cathleen Daly and illustrated by Stephen Michael King. Published by Roaring Brook Press, 2011

**Summary:** Prudence is a little girl with one big wish. She wants a pet. Since her parents keep saying no, she starts finding her own pets. First it is a branch. She names it Branch and takes it for walks, but her dad keeps tripping on it, so it has to go. Then she finds Twig (which is a twig) but he gets lost in the wash. Next is Formal Footwear (a shoe), but it just doesn’t live up to her expectations. Maybe her baby brother will? Unfortunately, baby brothers don’t eat grass or live in boxes. Then it’s on to an old tire, but it was too tiring to lug around. Her parents let her have some Sea Buddies, but they were boring and didn’t even have faces. Eventually her parents get her a real pet for her birthday.

**Awards:** None yet, but was nominated for the Washington Children’s Choice Picture book award in 2013, was nominated for the Golden Sower award in 2013-14.

**Reviews:**

“Sweetly illustrated by Stephen Michael King (Leaf), 'Prudence' deftly combines funny and cute, and has a resourceful heroine too.” —*The New York Times Book Review*

“A classic theme feels fresh as a squiggling kitten.” —*Starred, Kirkus Reviews*

“Small pen-and-ink and watercolor illustrations on a white background reveal a time progression in vignettes that are spread across the pages. The humorous consequences of Prudence’s experiments make this a lighthearted read about never giving up on one’s dreams.” —*School Library Journal*

**Websites:**

Author: [http://cathleenadaly.blogspot.com/](http://cathleenadaly.blogspot.com/) and [https://twitter.com/cathleenadaly](https://twitter.com/cathleenadaly)


**Discussion Questions:**

BEFORE they read:

1. What kinds of animals are usually kept as pets?
2. What are some responsibilities of having a pet?
3. What kind of pet would you want?
DURING the reading:

1. (after the twig pages) What do you think Prudence’s next pet will be?
2. What do you think is in Prudence’s Birthday box?
3. What do you think she will name her kitten?

AFTER the reading:

1. Was there anything you ever wanted that your parents said no to? Did you ever get it?
2. Which of Prudence’s pets was your favorite? Why?
3. What other things could have been pets for Prudence?

ACTIVITIES:

- Reading/Oral Language: Have students read related books, or a nonfiction book about the pet of their choice.
- Writing: Have students write a story about a pet they had/have/wish they had.
- Math: Do some research to discover how much a pet (choose individually or do this as a class) would cost per week/month/year (works on multiplication and addition).
- Science: Learn about Brine Shrimp (Sea Monkeys)(perhaps have some in class).
- Social Studies: Take a look at the things people keep as pets in other cultures around the world
- Art: Draw a picture of the silliest pet they can imagine.
- Drama: Act out the book using classroom supplies as “pets”
- Cooking Food: Can people eat grass? Do some research on what plants are edible and which ones are not.
- Technology: Adopt a Virtual pet as a class, and take turns “taking care of it” each day
- Music: Learn the song “How Much is that Doggy in the Window”

RELATED BOOKS:
A Pet for Petunia by Paul Schmid

Gilbert Goldfish Wants a Pet by Kelly DiPucchio, Illustrated by Bob Shea

Wanted: The Perfect Pet by Fiona Roberton

OTHER BOOKS by Cathleen Daly:
Flirt Club
Emily’s Blue Period Illustrated by Lisa Brown

OTHER BOOKS by Stephen Michael King
Leaf
Mutt Dog!
Never Ever Before
Patricia
A Special Kind of Love

WEBSITES for further Activities:
1. An award site that offers a writing activity
   http://childrenschoiceaward.wikispaces.com/Prudence+Wants+a+Pet

2. A Pre-K site with pet related activities http://www.prekinders.com/pets-theme/

3. Has a Summary review and discussion questions http://www.sweetonbooks.com/all-titles/675-prudence-wants-a-pet.html

4. MowWow Animals: A Curriculum in Humane Education:
   http://www.mowwow.org/lesson_level_two/L2_lesson_three.html
   An entire lesson plan on Pets and Working Animals