



Barbara Reid



When she was younger, Barbara Reid never thought about taking up illustration as a career. But as fate would have it, one day while she was in high school, she passed a room advertising the Ontario College of Art and Design. It inspired her, and she went on to study at the college in Toronto.

As a child, Barbara often found herself recreating the pictures from books she was reading, when the illustrations from those books weren't what she had envisioned. At the end of stories she enjoyed, she found she hated parting with the characters she had gotten to know. So she would keep the characters alive by illustrating them in her own stories.

When Barbara illustrated her first project, *Mustard*, by Betty Waterton, she was her own harshest critic. She enjoyed illustrating the book, but thought that there was room for improvement. She went on to illustrate *The New Baby Calf*, the first book to use her Plasticine™ sculpture illustrations.

Each illustration starts off as a pencil drawing. Then Barbara molds out her drawing using Plasticine™. You might think that her illustrations

might be quite delicate, but they're actually rather heavy. Some of her final pictures have weighed up to three kilograms! And how does she make sure that the illustrations aren't damaged? She uses pizza boxes. Each illustration has its own box. (Which makes you wonder how much pizza she actually eats!) Each spread can take a long time to complete — large two-page spreads can take more than seven days to finish. Then Barbara's husband, Ian Crysler, photographs the illustrations. It's these photographs that appear in the finished book.



Barbara is best known for her vibrant Plasticine™ illustrations in such picture books as *The Party, Gifts, Have You Seen Birds?* and *Sing a Song of Mother Goose*.

Barbara Reid was born in Toronto, Ontario, where she currently lives with her husband and two daughters.

