

Sarah & Duck – “Doubles”

Sarah & Duck (CBeebies, Salford, United Kingdom) is a 7-minute daily series for children up to six years old. The program features line animation and a narrator voiced by an adult. Sara, age 7, and her best friend, Duck, are unfazed by spontaneous adventures in their small town (cf. illustration 1). In this episode, “Doubles,” the friends are at home using a computer to watch a very exciting tennis doubles match (cf. illustration 2). Something interrupts the streaming video and Sarah tries to refresh the screen using her mouse. “Oh dear,” says the Narrator. “I think the website stopped working. What are you going to do now?” Sarah thinks she and Duck can finish the tennis game themselves. They get ready to play and go outside. Working together, they make a tennis court on the grass (cf. illustration 3). Then they make a net of borrowed scarves. Narrator mentions they need an umpire to make sure the tennis players follow the rules. Sarah asks shallots in the garden if they wish to umpire (cf. illustration 4). Narrator explains to the shallots to shout when the ball goes outside of the lines. Narrator agrees to be the commentator for the match. Sarah and Duck warm up and begin to play (cf. illustration 5). After the first serve, the ball is on the other side of the court but there is nobody to return it because they are two players short. A boy named John and a flamingo pop their heads in through an opening in the hedgerow. They say hello to each other (cf. illustration 6). After introductions, they begin to play. John and Flamingo are quite good. Duck’s volley goes out of bounds. That’s game, set, match. They take a break and talk while they rest (cf. illustration 7). Sarah admires John’s shoelaces. She gives her wristband to John, who kicks off his shoe. It lands near the shallots and they declare John’s shoe “out!” (cf. illustration 8). Sara and John giggle. Narrator suggests another game, so they start playing all over again.

Sarah & Duck – “Doubles” placed second the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014 award in the up to 6 fiction category.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS’ OPINION

International experts shared their opinions about *Sarah & Duck – “Doubles”* during the discussion sessions at the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014. Several experts discussed the quality of voices, favoring Sarah’s voice over girl’s voices in other programs for this age group. Several liked the style of the narrator in this program and the pace of the dialogue. Some experts liked the use of everyday objects and found items to solve problems and create the scenes. Almost everyone used the word “great” to express their feedback about this program.

“There is a dialogue between the girl and the narrator; maybe because this is a type of inner activity. They are inviting the audience to think about it.” (female expert, Colombia)

“I loved it....the simplicity of the dialogue was lovely. I loved the intro of the boy and the flamingo.” (male expert, United Kingdom)

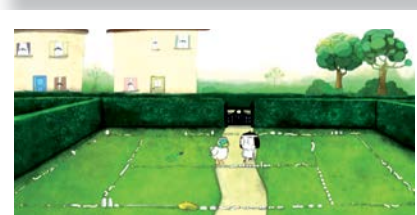
“Usually the narrator is the narrator. In this story the narrator obviously has some connection with the characters. I thought that was an interesting choice.” (male expert, Canada)



III. 1: Sarah and Duck are best friends

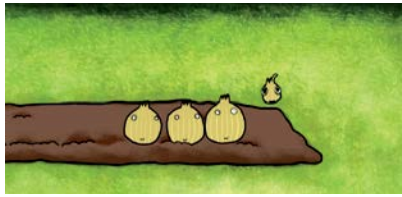


III. 2: Sarah and Duck watch a tennis doubles match on the computer



III. 3: They decide to make a tennis court on the lawn

Screenshots from *Sarah & Duck – “Doubles”* © CBeebies



III. 4: Shallots in the garden agree to umpire the match



III. 5: Sarah serves the first ball over the net



III. 6: John and Flamingo introduce themselves to Sarah and Duck



III. 7: John and Sarah get to know each other while resting between matches



III. 8: Shallot umpires declare John's shoe "out!"

"I liked the way they tried to make their own invention. They also reached the age group because it's slow. It was a good experiment and for me it worked well." (male expert, Chile)

"It's nice that you find a friend to play with and it's easy to get friends. When you show it to the kids, they will find out so many little things in their daily life and really apply the content. That's what a children's program should do." (female expert, Taiwan)

"I thought it was charming and the animation was clever. Good animation and good timing. It made me chuckle." (female expert, United States)

"I liked that it was one of those layered programs that allows adults to walk by and enjoy. I think it is important that it be accessible to parents and grandparents. It's a smart idea." (male expert, United Kingdom)

"I liked how they had the world of new technology and you don't see that very often. I think it would help children relate to the real world." (female expert, New Zealand)

Elizabeth Spezia, PhD student, Southern Illinois University, USA

Screenshots from Sarah & Duck – "Doubles" © CBeebies

Target Audience 8.24

Idea 7.92

Script 8.22

Realization 8.24

Average Score per Category by experts' voters at PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014