

OKAPI LOVES HIS ZEBRA PANTS



ABOUT THE SERIES

Endangered & Misunderstood is an ongoing series of picture books that takes a different approach to the serious subject of lesser-known endangered animals, with an emphasis on laughter, adventure and relatable themes. Proceeds from the sale of each book go directly to help conservation of the featured endangered animal.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The third book in the series features endangered and misunderstood Okapi and his quest to find a zebra. A story about resilience, self-acceptance, community and finding joy in our similarities as well as our differences.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Terri Tatchell is a Canadian writer known for Oscar and BAFTA nomination work on 'District 9'. Her love for animals (she has 3 dogs, 8 horses, and a parrot) and allegory have united in the creation of the 'Endangered and Misunderstood' series, giving the underdogs of endangered animals a lyrical voice filled with laughter, adventure, and relatable themes.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Ivan Sulima graduated from the book graphics department of the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute and has worked as a children's book illustrator since 2010. His father, Kostyantyn Sulyma, and grandfather, Petro Kozin, are known Ukrainian artists.



RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower Primary: preschool - G3

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- English, Creative Arts
- Social Emotional Learning
- Intercultural Understanding
- Science and Endangered Species
- Social Studies

TOPICS AND THEMES

- Endangered Animals
- Friendship
- Anxiety
- Identity
- Bullying/Teasing
- Forgiveness
- Respecting similarities and differences
- Self-acceptance
- Managing strong feelings
- Empathy and respect
- Rhyming
- Community
- Resilience
- Problem solving
- Making a plan
- Living things and their features in connection to their environment



REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

1. Okapi Loves His Zebra Pants explores many topics that are important in today's society. It opens the discussion about friendships, empathy, resilience and finding joy in our similarities as well as our differences.
2. Great variety of literary features such as: rhyming, diverse vocabulary, and use of parenthesis.
3. Direct connections to other subjects, such as Language Arts, Cognitive Therapy, Science, and Social Studies.

VOCABULARY

Below are vocabulary words in the book that can be used as a starting point for vocabulary study.

zebra	herd (animal herd)
zipper	absurd
chuffing	gorgeous
tale	dawn
tail	stubborn
peered	leopard
tugged	beneath
stripes	pride (lions)
screached	splashed
notice	spray
mask	unique
furry	seek
poke	nasty
coarse	fright
quite	thrilled
teasing	beak
parrot	vivid
vowed	tossed



THEMES TO EXPLORE

FRIENDSHIPS & BULLYING

The chimp Okapi meets pokes fun at Okapi's striped legs, so Grey teaches the chimp a lesson in order to make him realize his actions are hurting others. By noticing this relationship, students will be able to see that they can speak up if close friends are being rude to others. Is there another way Grey could have helped the chimp understand how he was making Okapi feel instead of teasing him back? Is there a better way to make a friend than how the chimp introduced himself? What would they do if their friend was purposely made fun of others for their own benefit? What role do you play as a friend? What does it mean to be a good friend?

ANXIETY & WORRIES

Even though the chimp apologizes for teasing Okapi about his striped legs, Okapi feels anxious through the night and has trouble sleeping. Sometimes it's hard to let go of our worries. Grey suggests that if Okapi cannot let it go, to try and shift the focus of his mind and think about all of the things he likes about his striped legs. Do you sometimes have worries? What are some things you can do to relax and help shift the focus of your mind to more positive thoughts?

SELF-ACCEPTANCE

Okapi is teased about his striped legs by a chimp. Now he feels very self-conscious about his appearance. Some things about ourselves we cannot change. Okapi cannot change his striped legs. Develop an understanding of the types of things (like behaviour) we can change and things we cannot. We should accept and love ourselves, regardless of what others think!

ENDANGERED ANIMALS

Page 29 and 30 are fantastic pages that touch on endangered animals and what the students can do about it!

RESPECTING SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES

By the end of the story Okapi is able to appreciate that his stripes are similar to the zebras, but also uniquely his own. Grey also spots the beak of the stork which is the same colour as her tail. At the end of the story, all the animals have something in common - not one is wearing clothes. We all have special qualities that are unique to us as individuals, and we have similarities too. It's important to respect our similarities and differences and celebrate who we are while allowing others to do the same. What are some things you have in common with your classmates? You all wear clothes... what else?



READING THE BOOK

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

FRONT COVER

1. Front cover

Take a look at the front cover of the book. Read the title together. What do you think the story will be about?

What do you see? What kind of clues are there that tells you what the book will be about? What kind of animal is on the front cover? Can you predict where the story takes place, who the characters are and the plot of the story?

Have you ever seen an Okapi before? What do you remember about them? Does it remind you of any other animals? Do you like the illustrations? Where do you think the story is set? How does the choice of colours make you feel?

PAGE 4 & 5

1. What does the first page tell you about the Okapi?
2. Look at where the Okapi is. What kind of community does he live in? Which country do you think he lives in?
3. What kind of character do you think the Okapi is? Is he kind? Funny?
4. Have you ever seen an Okapi? Examine his look. Does he look like a zebra? A giraffe?

PAGE 6 & 7

1. What do you think of the Okapi's stripes? Look at his legs. Why do you think his legs are striped? Will it help him survive?
2. Look at the chimp. See how he hangs from the trees. Look at his hands and his feet. Do you think they help him climb?
3. Look at Grey perched in the tree. What physical attributes help her sit in her tree.
4. How would you feel if someone teased you and made a joke at your expense?
5. Is it ok that the chimp is teasing Okapi?
6. Have you ever seen a parrot or chimp in real life?

PAGE 8 & 9

1. Why did Grey swoop down from her perch?
2. What made her tease the chimp?
3. Do you think the chimp meant to hurt Okapi's feelings?
4. Do you think it's right to tease someone if they tease you?
5. How do you think the chimp felt after Grey teased him? How would you feel if you were the chimp?

PAGE 10 & 11

1. What can we tell from the picture that gives us a hint how the chimp is feeling? Look at how he sits on page 10. Look at his face expression. Compare that body language to his face on the next page when he leaves Okapi and Grey
2. Do you think it's important to apologize if you hurt someone's feelings?
3. Do you think there was a better way for Grey to teach the chimp a lesson and help him understand how he was making Okapi feel instead of teasing him back?

PAGE 12 & 13

1. What does it mean to "take something to heart"?
2. Grey tells Okapi the chimp was poking fun because he didn't know a better way to make a friend. Is there a better way to make a friend? How would you make a new friend?
3. What does it mean to be a good friend?
4. Grey suggests that Okapi shift the focus of his mind to more positive thoughts. What are some things you can do to shift the focus of your mind until your thoughts are kind?



PAGE 14 & 15

1. Okapi has trouble falling asleep because he was bothered by what the chimp said. Have you ever had trouble falling asleep? What helped you go to bed? Counting sheep? Reading stories?
2. Examine the illustrations. Now compare them to the previous two pages. Notice how the illustrator transitions the story from day to night with the use of colours. What are some daytime colours? What are some nighttime colours or shade?

PAGE 16 & 17

1. How many elephants can you see in the pages?
2. Can you find Grey on page 16? Hint: look at the elephant spraying water.
3. What are some physical attributes the elephants have that are different from Okapi and Grey? Do they have trunks? Do they have tusks? What do you think they use trunks and tusks for?

PAGE 18 & 19

1. There are lots of scary creatures along their journey. Can you point out some animals that might scare Okapi?
2. Why does Okapi keep down wind beneath a lion pride?
3. What advantage does Grey have that she can scout out ahead? Hint: she uses her wings for this.

PAGE 20 & 21

1. What are some other fun facts you know about Hippos?
2. Where do hippos live? Does the illustrator give a hint? Do you think Hippos can swim?
3. Where is Grey in the photo?
4. How many hippos can you count in the pictures?
5. Do you think the animals are having fun splashing in the water? How can you tell?

PAGE 22 & 23

1. Do you see the zebras in the image? Where are they? Hint: look in the bottom right corner of page 23.
2. Have you ever seen a gorilla? What are some physical similarities the gorilla and the chimp we saw earlier in the story have? Do you think they both can climb trees? Do they have similar hands?

PAGE 24 & 25

1. How many zebras can you count?
2. What kind of bird do you think is in the grass with the zebras?
3. What do you think the zebras are doing?

PAGE 26 & 27

1. What realization does Okapi come to on page 25?
2. Do you think Okapi realizes his stripes are special?
3. Why is Okapi excited to see the zebras?
4. What similarity does Grey have with the stork? Her tail feathers have a similar vivid red colour to the stork's beak. Anything else? Do they both have feathers? Wings?

PAGE 28 & 29

1. How many zebras can you count? How many birds?
2. What about the image tells you that Okapi is happy?
3. What is something all the animals have in common?
4. What is something you and your classmates all have in common?





POST-READING ACTIVITIES

Please head over to engangeredandmisunderstood.com to download free activities and crafts!



ENDANGERED ANIMALS

Split the classroom in groups and let them brainstorm how they are going to save Okapi and Grey from extinction.

DEAR DIARY

Try to place yourself in the shoes of one of the characters and write a diary entry of a key moment from the story. Try to choose a moment in the story in which the character has plenty of interaction and emotion to share.

HOW TO GUIDE

Take a lined piece of paper and write a guide on how you would take care of an Okapi if he was your pet!

DRAW: PLAYING WITH FRIENDS

Draw the Okapi playing with his friends. Write underneath what they are playing!

FICTIONAL FRIENDS

Who of all the characters would you want for a friend? Why? What would you do or talk about together?

DEAR TERRI

Students write to the author Terri Tatchell enquiries@endangeredandmisunderstood.com Ideas for future books, poems or drawings of their own or questions about being an author.

DRAWING

Try and draw the okapi and the African grey parrot from Page 29 and 30!

ACT IT OUT

Act out a scene for an alternative way the Chimp could have introduced himself to make new friends.

BIOGRAPHY

Write a biography of one of the characters who most interests you.

SING ME A SONG

Write a song/ballad about the story, a character, or an event in the book.

