

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 and kindness
- Peer pressure
- Respecting and learning from similarities and differences
- Self-acceptance
- Personal awareness and responsibility
- Empathy and respect
- Rhyming and song
- Community
- Patience
- Problem-solving
- Living things and their features in connection to their environment
- Literary devices
- Manners



TARSIER SINGS HIS SONG

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

In the fourth installment of the series, join endangered Tarsier (affectionately called Tarsie by his friends) on the island of Sulawesi, Indonesia. When his nightly duet continues to go unanswered, his friends teach him a happy song to change his tune. It's a story about friendship, perseverance and staying true to yourself while being open to learning from creatures different from you.

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 Sulima, and grandfather, Petro Kozin, are known Ukrainian artists.



REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

1. Tarsier Sings His Song explores many topics essential in today's society. It opens the discussion about friendship, empathy, embracing differences and learning from them, plus the power of turning a bad mood around!
2. Great variety of literary features such as rhyming, diverse vocabulary and song.
3. Direct connection to other subjects such as language arts, science, music and social studies.
4. This fun story is a gentle way to introduce children to the topic of endangered animals which can be upsetting.

VOCABULARY

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

special	fun
quietly	gratitude
cheerful	rude
choice	duet
kind	heart
share	peep
lightning	whispered
bounced	barely
munch	scuffled
juicy	beneath
yummy	crucial
crops	focus
urge	absurd
puffed	squeaked
version	swoop
screached	marched
dare	note
loves	ode
sometimes	hypnotic
echoed	bounded



THEMES TO EXPLORE

ENDANGERED ANIMALS

This story features endangered Tarsier and introduces the critically endangered Celebes crested macaque, the vulnerable bear cuscus, and the vulnerable knobbed hornbill. The fact page at the end of the book provides facts and how to draw the animals.

FRIENDSHIP AND KINDNESS

Bear cuscus sees that Tarsier is sad and does an excellent job of cheering him up with a happy song and getting him out walking and meeting new friends. When Tarsier doesn't take Bear's advice to give up his nightly duet, Bear accepts Tarsier's choice and is still there for him the next day.

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

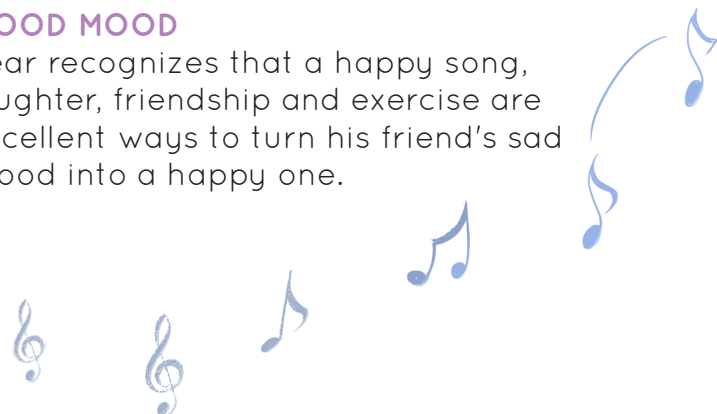
Hornbill wants to teach Tarsier to flap his wings while he sings. At first, Tarsier resists because he doesn't have wings. Once he gives in and flaps his arms, he realizes it helps make his singing voice louder.

PERSONAL AWARENESS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Tarsier is endangered and needs to have a family to help tarsiers survive. He may not realize why he has to sing his song, but something inside tells him not to give up. He listens to his instincts and perseveres despite Bear's advice.

TOOLS TO TURN A BAD MOOD INTO A GOOD MOOD

Bear recognizes that a happy song, laughter, friendship and exercise are excellent ways to turn his friend's sad mood into a happy one.



READING THE BOOK

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

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?
Have you ever heard of a Tarsier before?
Does the picture remind you of any other animals?
How does the choice of colours make you feel?
Do you recognize any symbols?



PAGE 1

This page teaches you how to pronounce the names of the animals because most people have never heard of them. Even the author had to learn to pronounce their names, so she thought this would help everyone. Different countries have different accents. Because a Canadian author wrote this book, the pronunciation is for a North American accent. If you are somewhere else, how would you say the names differently?

PAGE 2 & 3

Ivan Sulima, the illustrator, drew himself and the author Terri Tatchell. Do you see any clues that he may have drawn that give you an idea why they like writing about animals?

PAGE 4 & 5

1. What does this first illustration tell you about where the Tarsier lives?
2. Do you see any other creatures in the illustration?
3. The picture shows that the Tarsier has yellow eyes, but the poem says his eyes are blue. Do you think the illustrator and author got confused, or could the word blue mean something other than colour?
4. Do you think the Tarsier is cute?

PAGE 6 & 7

1. The bear cuscus is hanging from the tree by his tail like a monkey! Bears don't have monkey tails, do they? When you get to the fact page at the end, you will have to remember if any facts explain why the illustrator would give the Bear a monkey tail!
2. The Tarsier is very polite, isn't he? What words does he say that show us he is polite?
3. Do you notice the Tarsier's toes?
4. Tarsier comes down "like lightning from his tree." What literary device is the author using, and what is she trying to tell you? Can you think of a simile to describe how you got out of bed this morning?
5. The author hid an extra rhyme in the last stanza of this spread. Can you find it?

PAGE 8 & 9

1. Bear is eating fruit that he loves to munch. Tarsier thinks about eating ants and bugs and flies. Do you think the author includes actual animal facts to help us learn about the animals while enjoying the story? What do you love to munch?
2. Can you see any extra creatures the illustrator has added in for you to find?
3. This is the first time we hear a song from the story. What kind of a voice do you think Bear sings in? Is he making a joke in his song? Do you think the farmers really grow crops for him?



PAGE 10 & 11

1. Before Tarsier sings, he puffs up his chest. How does he do that? Try puffing up your chest before you sing. Does it make singing easier?
2. Tarsier's song is about munching and crunching and snatching flying things! He's cute, but that doesn't sound very cute, does it? Do you think the author is trying to tell you another animal fact? Keep that in mind when you get to the fact page at the end of the book!
3. A Hornbill joins the pair and sings about munching snakes and lizards! The snake doesn't look very happy, does he?
4. The animals roll around together in laughter. Have you ever rolled in laughter?

PAGE 12 & 13

1. The singers make their way to the beach and meet Macaque. He hugs them and loves them, and kisses the air. Is the author telling you something about this creature? Remember to check on the fact page!
2. Macaque sings about getting fruit on his face, but he still thinks he looks cute. Do you think he's cute? Do you ever get food on your face?
3. What creatures do you see on the beach?
4. The words tell us that the animals laughed and sang, but what else does it look like they are doing in the picture?

PAGE 14 & 15

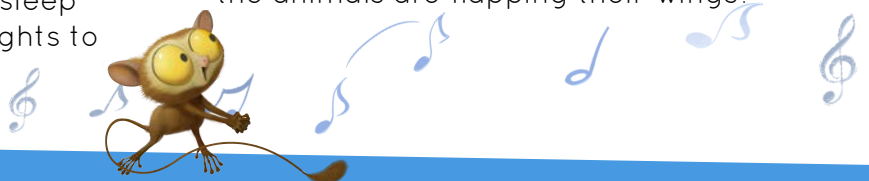
1. Do Bear and Tarsier look tired on this page? How has the illustrator shown you that with their body language?
2. Bear assumes that because he taught Tarsier his happy song, Tarsier won't sing his song anymore. Is Bear right? Has anyone ever guessed something about you? Have you ever assumed anything about anyone and been wrong?
3. Tarsier must have felt uncomfortable about disappointing Bear after all the effort he put in. How do you think Tarsier did at breaking the news to Bear? He shows appreciation for Bear's efforts and explains why he still needed to sing his song.
4. How do you feel about how Bear responded to Tarsier? Do you think when he went to sleep he wished he would have kept his thoughts to himself?

PAGE 16 & 17

1. This spread shows two different times. Night and morning. Do you like seeing two times on one page, or do you prefer the whole spread being one scene?
2. Do you like the colours the illustrator used to show what time of day it is?
3. The illustrator used music symbols to show Tarsier is singing. What else about how he drew the picture shows you Tarsier is singing?
4. Tarsier "shrugged it off." What do you think the author means by that? Do you ever shrug things off? Did you ever wish you had?
5. Tarsier sings with whispered words that barely meet the air. What does the author mean?
6. How do you feel when Tarsier doesn't hear an answer back? How do you think he feels?
7. Tarsier jokes that Bear was snoring. Is he breaking the ice from the night before with a joke?
8. Bear wants to have fun and shake Tarsier's song's big frown. Can a song have a frown? What literary device is the author using?

PAGE 18 & 19

1. Hornbill wants Tarsier to flap his "wings." Tarsier is polite but explains he doesn't have any wings to flap. Does he have something else he could flap?
2. Tarsier is worried he will look "absurd" until he sees his friends flapping their arms. Do you think he realizes that sometimes it doesn't matter if you look absurd if it's fun! Do you ever look silly when you have fun?
3. Bear notices that when Tarsier flaps his wings, it makes his voice louder. Tarsier is excited because he thinks his love will now hear his song. Tarsier has learned many things here, hasn't he? First, you can learn valuable things from creatures different from you. Second, having fun can also be productive! And third - flapping your arms makes you sing louder. Try it now!
4. What does the illustrator do to show you the animals are flapping their wings?



PAGE 20 & 21

1. Now, Macaque's turn to teach the group something. He wants them to kiss the air between each swoop. Is the author giving us an animal fact here? Remember to check on the last fact page!
2. What symbol does the illustrator use to show a kiss in the air?
3. Do you see another creature swimming with our group? Is he singing too?

PAGE 22 & 23

1. These illustrations are dark and rainy. Does this help change the mood of the story? What does the mood feel like?
2. Tarsier is so tired from his fun day he forgets to sing! Then he sings the same old way until he remembers what he learned that day. Can you remember the two things he learned?
3. Does the illustrator give you a clue in the illustration?
4. This is the first time we get to hear what Tarsier sings! What do you think of Tarsier's song? Can you imagine him singing it night after night and never hearing an answer? Do you like that the author saved his song until now? Or do you wish you had heard it at the beginning of the story? Why might she have kept it until now?
5. Although the colours are dark, does Tarsier look hopeful in the rain?

PAGE 24 & 25

1. Tarsier's friends are all listening to see if he hears an answer back. Do they look worried? Hopeful? Encouraging?
2. The author uses a word here that you might not know: ode. An ode is a poem meant to be sung. When you come across a word you don't know, it is good to find out what it means and write it down. Then try to use it that same day! The word will belong to you forever. Use "an ode" now!
3. When Tarsier finally hears an answer back, she says, "then only time will tell." What does she mean?

PAGE 26 & 27

1. Tarsier is so excited to get an answer back to the song he forgets to do something important! What is it?
2. Bear thinks a thought that may be true but isn't particularly kind. This time he just thinks it to himself and says only kind things to his friend. Do you think he learned his lesson from the last time he said something to Tarsier he might have regretted?
3. We get to see Tarsier with his true love in this spread. Tarsier is a *he*, and his true love is referred to as *she*. This was an intentional choice because the topic here is endangered animals, and we need them to make more tarsiers, so they don't go extinct. Some students may want to discuss this choice further.

PAGE 28 & 29

1. This page jumps ahead in time. The author says, "that was then, and this is now," to direct you there. What does the illustrator do to help you know this is later?
2. Even the crab has a family. Do you remember seeing him earlier in the story?
3. The last line says, "to love and sing and teach." Have you ever learned anything through singing while you feel loved? Have you ever taught anyone anything with a song and love? Can you think of anything you could teach someone with a song and love?

PAGE 30 & 31

1. This fact spread has all sorts of animal facts that are also presented in the story! Can you find some of them?
2. What facts are there that weren't in the story?
3. Can you draw the animals?
4. Can you draw the animals in a new scene? What symbols could you use to show what is happening in the scene?



POST-READING ACTIVITIES

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



ENDANGERED ANIMALS

Split the classroom into groups and let them brainstorm how they will help save Tarsier, Macaque, Bear and Hornbill from extinction.

TELL YOUR STORY

When have you been patient for something that you just know is worth waiting for? Write your story down and draw a picture of when it finally came true!

DRAWING

Draw all four animals from the back of the book. Show them having fun in a different way from what happened in the story. Maybe they are playing a sport or riding bikes!

DRAW A MAP

Draw a map of where Tarsier, Bear, Macaque and Hornbill all live on Sulawesi Island! Do any other animals live on the island? Any people? Are you there visiting?

THINK DIFFERENTLY

Choose a significant event from the book and explain how you would have handled it differently.

THREE WISHES

A genie appears in Tarsier's world! What three wishes does he ask for? The first one may be easy, but what are the other two?

CREATE A PLAY

Act out the story! Record your performance and send it to the author! Extra points for costumes!

DEAR TERRI

Students write to the author Terri Tatchell with ideas for future books! Or even better, send her your drawings or any questions you may have. You could even invite her to do story time for your classroom!

enquiries@endangeredandmisunderstood.com

WRITE A MOVIE

Do you think Tarsier's adventure would make a good movie? What scenes aren't in the book that would make the film more interesting? Would you show the Tarsier who finally answered his song just barely hearing him many nights before? Would Bear and the other friends have met and planned out the whole day to help Tarsier cheer up? Would you keep the same ending as the book? Would it be a movie or a tv series? What other adventures could the animals have?

WRITE A POEM

The rhyming words of this story make it fun to read. Can you think of a story you want to tell and then write it as a poem? Does rhyming make your story go in another direction? Do you get new ideas from looking for words that rhyme?

WRITE A STORY ABOUT AN ENDANGERED ANIMAL

What other animals are endangered? What type of story could you tell about them? Write the story and draw a book cover for it.

RE-WRITE A SONG YOU KNOW

Take a song you already know and substitute new words for old words. When you replace words, you have to make sense and remember the new ones. It takes focus and concentration! Twinkle Twinkle Little Star is a good one!