



# COUNTING LIONS

AUTHOR: KATIE COTTON

ILLUSTRATOR: STEPHEN WALTON

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Counting Lions](#)

**\*\* REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! \*\***

## OVERVIEW

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Exquisite charcoal drawings of ten endangered creatures—lions, elephants, giraffes, pandas, tigers, chimpanzees, penguins, turtles, macaws, and zebras—startle the viewer with their size and astonishing detail. A poetic text notes each creature’s particular qualities and behavior, while providing a quiet counting exercise and a reminder that these animals must be cherished and protected. ([amazon.com](#))

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katie Cotton studied English at Oxford University and worked in education before becoming Editor at Templar Publishing in London. She has loved reading and writing since she was young.

### ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Stephen Walton, award-winning artist, works as Supervisor at the Bury Art Museum, Manchester, UK. He studied geography at Manchester University and has a love of the natural world. He uses his photographs to draw from.

## THE READ ALOUD

### BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- I wonder how the illustrator created the pictures.
- Where would you find the animal on the cover?
- How do you think the illustrator created the picture?

### DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content:

- (p.4) I wonder what “Two gorillas breathe the same breath.” means.
- (p.6) I notice the author used alliteration (the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words). Can you find some on this page?
- (p.9) As I read this sentence, beginning with, “Many miles are covered in...” can you tell me what ceaseless means?
- (p. 12) Why is the “rugged world of rock” the only home for the Ethiopian wolves?

## COUNTING LIONS

### TOPICS & THEMES:

- Endangered species
- Alliteration
- Metaphors
- Cause & effect

*Tips for every book!*

### POWER PHRASES:

*I WONDER...*

*I NOTICE...*

*TELL ME MORE...*

### DIGGING DEEPER:

*“Tell me more, why do you think that?”*

*“How do you know that?”*

*“Why do you think they feel like that?”*

*“Interesting, did you notice anything else?”*

- (p.16) What do you notice on this page? (alliteration)
- (p.19) Why do you think zebras are always watchful?

## AFTER READING

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Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read.:

- What was your favorite page in the story?
- What was your favorite animal?
- What animal would you like to add to the story?

## BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE?

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- What was your favorite page in the book?
- What animal do you think you are most like? Why?
- If your favorite animal could talk, what would it tell us after reading the book?

## COOPERATIVE LEARNING

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- With a partner, choose an animal that you learned about in the book. Think of a question to present to the class. Have the class guess the answer. Example: When I am very little, I do not leave my mother's side. Who am I?

## SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

### 1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

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- Can you think of two reasons the author wrote this book?
- What makes the book nonfiction?
- What is the reason that some animals are born and raised in zoos or wildlife parks?
- What is the author's purpose in writing the book?
- How was the physical size of the book important?
- Why is it important for third grade students to learn the author's message?
- Re-read passages from About the Animals section. With the children work out some causes and effects and the reasons these animals are endangered.

### Suggested Optional Activity:

- Get the children to write down the names of six of the animals in the book and describe the cause and effect of why it is endangered. You could ask the children to present this as a chart or in picture form.

### 2. WRITING ACTIVITY

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- Ask the children to choose their favorite endangered animal and write 3-5 sentences using alliteration to describe their animal. They could also draw a picture to go with this.

### 3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

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- Experimenting with charcoal! Taking inspiration from the book, give the children an opportunity to experiment with charcoal. Start off with a piece of paper where they can just try different markings and rubbings and experiment with rubbing out before attempting to draw an endangered animal (either from the book or another that they know about). Sourcing pictures of animals from magazines etc. can be helpful for this so they all have something to copy from.

## COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA. RI. 3.1, 3.2,3.4,3.7,3.8