



NIGHT ANIMALS

AUTHOR: GIANNA MARINO

ILLUSTRATOR: GIANNA MARINO

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Night Animals](#)

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

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

This is a nocturnal comedy about nighttime fears. As the story begins, Possum is hiding in the woods when a friendly skunk comes along. Possum spreads a fear of "night animals" to the skunk, then a wolf, and a bear. It takes a calm bat to explain to this clueless crew that they **are** night animals. It has a surprise ending. ([amazon.com](#))

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Gianna Marino has been creating art since she could hold a brush. She was born in San Francisco and spent her early years galloping horses through Golden Gate Park. Her explorations expanded after graduating from high school Gianna worked several jobs at once: apprenticing a muralist, a jewelry designer, a product designer and driving horse carriages through the park. She has traveled extensively in Africa, Asia, the South Pacific and Europe and has been part of a sailboat crew on the high seas. Gianna finally landed a full-time freelance gig designing toys for children, but after several years she left for good and began painting, illustrating and writing books. She now resides in Northern California, where she works full time writing and illustrating. About her writing, she says, "Each book is different when I start. Some begin with the text, some an idea and scribbles. In both cases, there is a lot of back and forth between the words and pictures. I love trying to get rid of as many words as possible to let the pictures do the talking. Since *Night Animals* is mostly told with pictures, I worked on sketches and then changed the text bubbles until they gave the right feeling on each page and helped move the reader through the story."

([giannamarino.com](#)) and ([hidingspot.blogspot](#))

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

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

- (cover) What animals might this book be about? Which one is on the cover? How do you think he feels?
- The cover is pretty dark, except for the letters and the possum. What do you usually do when it's dark?
- What do you know about skunks, possums, wolves, bears, and bats?
- (end papers) Check out the eyeballs in the dark.

NIGHT ANIMALS

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Nocturnal animals
- Nighttime fears
- Day and night

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?"

DURING THE STORY

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

- (pp. 1-2) The talking/speech bubbles let us know who is talking.
- Is Skunk afraid? Who is afraid? Where is he hiding.
- How does Possum let everyone know to be quiet? Can you tell me what sound he's making? (shhhh)
- How can you tell who is talking in the dark? Let's figure out which animals are in the hiding space.
- Who do you think is making the "aaarrrroo" sound? Who is worried now?
- What can we tell by looking at their faces?
- What happens to possum?
- I see more eyes. I wonder why.
- Guess who is coming. What's happening with other animals?
- Anyone recognize S-T-O-P?
- Why can we see bat and tree branches?
- Why is it funny for skunk, possum, wolf and bear to be afraid of night animals?
- What do you think the tent is for?
- What might happen next?
- Who said "Hoo, Hoo, Hoo". What's happening to Possum? Who do you think is watching him?
- Did the animals stop being scared?

AFTER READING

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

- What things did you think were funny in the book?
- Would you have guessed these animals would be afraid of noises in the woods?
- Was the book scary? How did the author/illustrator help us to feel a little scared?
- What did you learn about night animals?
- Do you remember the fancy word for animals that are active at night? (nocturnal)
- Was this a made-up story or one about real animals? How do we know?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- If you are afraid of the dark, put your hands over your eyes.
- What do they imagine?
- What helps them feel better?
- Are they nocturnal?
- Maybe talk about dreams vs. nightmares

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- **Bat Sonar Game:** One student is the bat and the rest are mosquitoes. The bat wears a blindfold. The mosquitoes scatter, but make little squeaking noises to simulate the bat's echoes bouncing off their bodies. The bat flaps around trying to catch a mosquito by following the sound of the squeaking. When the bat catches a mosquito, the round ends. The mosquito that was caught becomes the new bat.