



Title: The Watcher

Author/Illustrator: Jeanette Winter

Themes: Nature, Patience, Preservation

Vocabulary: Snatch, Poachers, Extinct

Hear the book read aloud here: [The Watcher](#)

Volunteer readers should review the Author's Note at the end of the story for relevant background information beforehand.

★ 2nd Grade Common Core Reading Standard ★

Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.

I. INTRODUCTION (PREP QUESTIONS)

- Ask students to make predictions about the story, using text clues and picture clues from the cover illustration. Ask them why they think the author called this book *The Watcher*. Ask students to think about what “life with the chimps” might mean for someone named Jane Goodall. Ask them to decide if they think the book will be **fiction**, a made-up story that is not true, or **nonfiction**, a true story, and why.

II. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

DURING READING

- Pp. 1-2: Read; ask students to cite evidence as to how Jane, at 5 years old, was already a “watcher” (she had spent hours and hours in the henhouse “watching” chickens). Ask students for evidence as to how Jane felt after spending hours and hours (excited: she came running in to tell her mother).
- Discuss what we learn about Jane as a child. (focused; patient; determined; loves animals)
- Point out **henhouse** as a compound word. Ask students what a **compound word** is (two little words stuck together to make a bigger word). Remind students that they can understand the meaning of a **compound word** by thinking about what each of the little words means alone.

Point out each compound word in the following way: say **entire** compound word; then hold up your **right fist** while you say the **first little word of the compound**; then hold up your **left fist** widely separated from the other fist while saying the **second little word of the compound**; finally, bring your fists together while repeating the actual compound word. This is a visual scaffold to help students understand the composition of compound words.

- Pp. 3-4: Read; ask students to cite more evidence about what we continue to learn about Jane. (she watches ALL animals; extraordinary patience to devote to watching for days and weeks)
- Ask students to decide what kind of a word *bookcase* is (**compound word**). Use previously-indicated compound word fist procedure to demonstrate its meaning.

- Pp. 5-6: Read; discuss how Jane’s new interest in Africa arises (reading books) and how her actions show her commitment to realizing her dream (working while dreaming about animals and Africa). Ask students what kind of work *safekeeping* is (**compound**) and have them do the fist procedure with you.
- Pp. 7-8: Read; ask students to infer why Jane was on a boat (no airline service then). Have students discuss significance of the sentence, “As Jane stepped onto dry land, she closed her eyes in joy.”
- Pp. 9-10: Read; discuss Jane’s luck in discovering this work opportunity. Have students cite previous evidence from the story that confirms why this is a perfect professional match for Jane.
- Pp. 11-12: Read; have students discuss significance of the sentence, “She knew she was Home.”
- Pp. 13-14: Read; point out the hidden chimps in the illustration. Ask students to infer why the chimps are hiding.
- Pp. 15-16: Read; have students define **cautious** using picture and context clues.
- Pp. 17-18: Read; note the passage of time before the chimps finally allowed themselves to be seen. Discuss Jane’s strategy with them and ask why Jane proceed in this way. Ask students what kind of word *background* is (**compound**) and have them do the fist procedure with you.
- Pp. 19-22: Read; have students contrast Jane’s observations to human behaviors. Ask students why Jane is keeping such careful written records of her observations.
- Pp. 23-24: Read; ask students the significance of Jane’s note that the chimpanzee had TAKEN BANANAS FROM MY HAND. So gently. No snatching. (trust) Discuss the surprising behaviors Jane observed for the first time. (an animal making a tool; a chimp eating meat)
- Pp. 25-30: Read; identify various observations Jane made.
- Pp. 31-32: Read; model a think-aloud after p. 32, “Wow, this is such a shock that Jane is leaving Gombe, and it says she is *sadly* leaving. I wonder why she is leaving? I don’t think it is for a good reason because she loved her work with the chimpanzees so much. This page gives me the uh-oh feeling.” Ask students to predict possible reasons for this event.
- Pp. 33-34: Read; discuss the various tragedies. Help students understand **poachers**. Model a think-aloud, “Now I understand why Jane was sadly leaving. She was sad because she could not stay to continue the work that she loved and she was also sad about the terrible things that were happening to the chimpanzees. She was so worried that they were in danger and maybe would become extinct.” Ask students about the significance of the statement, “They needed Jane to speak for them.”
- Pp. 35-39: Read; ask students what it means on the last page when it says that Jane opened a window for us to the world of the chimpanzees

III. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

POST READING

- Why do you think the author wrote this book? What lesson can we learn from reading about Jane Goodall? How was Jane brave?
- Have students describe Jane’s initial work while in Africa (observing animal behavior). How did Jane’s work change at the end of the book (left Africa to crusade for preservation of chimps/habitat). Ask students if they think the change in Jane’s mission was as important as the first part of her work? Why or why not?