



MARGARET FERGUSON BOOKS

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A Quieter Story

by Liza Woodruff

“Vibrantly rich and delightfully entertaining . . . A charming tale of ‘be careful what you wish for’ for young children.” —*School Library Journal*

About the Book

A kitten insists that his little-girl owner write an adventure story suitable for a TIGER and learns that you should be careful about what you wish for when the story becomes too scary.

When a little girl starts to write a story about her kitten playing with yarn, he doesn't like it one bit. He wants a story for his alter-ego TIGER—one that has pep and pizzazz—so the girl creates an adventure that the kitten jumps into. As the story gets scarier and scarier, he realizes that what one wants and what one needs are sometimes two different things. This time, he needs a quieter story.

Classroom Discussion Questions

Cover Examination—What does the cover of the book say about the girl's imagination? Why do you think part of the cover art is in color and part is in gray and white? Explain why the kitten is sitting on top of the girl's head.

Movement—Take a look at the endpapers. The kitten is playing with different colors of yarn. How many colors do you see? Discuss how the unwound yarn leads the reader to the next page.

Look at the open book on the rug. How does it reveal the main character in the girl's story?

Character Participation—How does the kitten participate in writing the story? Discuss the use of speech bubbles. How do the kitten's thoughts make the girl create such a wild adventure? Why are the kitten's thoughts in red? As the adventure gets wilder, the only part of the girl that we see are her hands. How does this show how fast she is working?



Illustrations Within the Story—The kitten thinks the story needs “pep!” and “pizzazz!” The girl gathers her art supplies. What are the supplies that she uses? The first part of the adventure that she creates is at night. Is the kitten comfortable in the dark? Explain how the white space adds contrast and makes the darkness seem scary.

Fear—At what point in the story does the kitten begin to feel afraid? The vipers are bright colors and swing from the trees. Discuss how the illustrator makes them seem like they’re moving. Look at the page with the hyenas. What do the kitten’s eyes reveal? Why is there a question mark after “Hungry hyenas?”

Visual Imagery—Robots chase the kitten. The arms of the largest robot spills onto the second page. How does this make him seem larger? How do his teeth make him seem scary? The robots

are running to the right. How does this make the reader want to turn the page?

Visual Interpretation—When does the girl realize that her story is too scary for the kitten? Follow the kitten’s paw prints on the last double-page spread. How does the kitten create a mess when he runs to a hiding place? Note the blue yarn on the last page. Explain how the yarn brings the girl and the kitten together for a quieter story. Note the book on the floor. Why is it closed?

Illustration Analysis—The illustrations are created using watercolor, colored pencil, pen and ink, block print, and Photoshop. Discuss these techniques. Point out examples of these techniques in the book. For example, is the rug a block print? Is the paint on the wall done in watercolor? How do you think the illustrator created the robots?

Guide created by Pat Scales, retired librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina.

About the Creator



Photo Credit: Eden Wright

Liza Woodruff is both the author and the illustrator of *A Quieter Story* and has illustrated numerous children’s books, including *Emerson Barks*, which she also authored. She is also a bookseller at The Flying Pig Bookstore and lives with her family in Vermont.

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