

Lord of the Forest



Author: Caroline Pitcher
Illustrator: Jackie Morris
Age: 5-7
Format: Hardback
Size: 365 x 270mm
Price: £20

Before you start:

Vocabulary

As you read this book, there may be vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the children and to which you will want to make connections with children's prior knowledge of vocabulary and concepts as well as supporting understanding through visual images and repetition during the meaningful context of book talk discussions:

- Slither
- Tribe
- Shudder
- Gekko
- Mist
- Scimitar claws
- Stealthy
- Quills
- Mahout
- Tigress
- Mowa tree
- Simmered

Illustrations

The illustrations in this book are stunning and many children will use them to guide their inference skills whilst reading the text.

Other books by Caroline Pitcher and Jackie Morris

You may want to make other titles by Caroline Pitcher and Jackie Morris accessible in the classroom reading area for enjoyment and to support inter-textual comparison.

Title

Share the title of the book with the children before showing them the cover.

Discuss some or all of the following questions:

- What does Lord of the Forest mean to you?
- What might this book be about?
- What characters are you expecting to meet in this book?
- Where do you think the book might be set?
- What might happen in this book?

Some children may share that 'King of the Jungle' is the lion and try to use this knowledge to make new predictions about *Lord of the Forest*. Encourage children to justify their predictions with reasons.

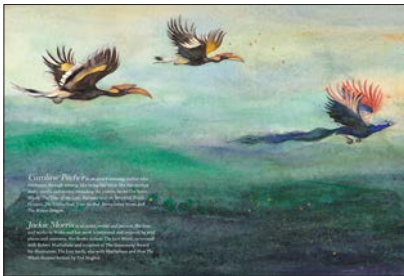
Front cover

Then share the front cover of the book and discuss if seeing the illustration. Is what the children expected?

Many children will now predict that the tiger is the 'Lord of the Forest.'

Continue to support the children to give reasons why the writer and illustrator have chosen this front cover.

- When you first saw the front cover, what did you notice straight away?
- Can you tell how the tiger is feeling from his eyes and facial expression?
- What is the illustrator telling us about the tiger?
- Why do you think the illustrator chose to show only the tiger's face and not his body?
- Do you think the tiger is trying to communicate with us/ tell us something as the readers?



Endpapers

Share the next page with the children and read the information about Caroline Pitcher first. What have you learned about the writer? Children may comment that the writer has written many books with animals in the title.

Then share the information about Jackie Morris. What have you learned about the illustrator? Children may comment that the illustrator is inspired by wild places and creatures.

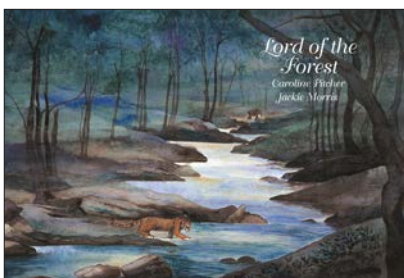
Using what you know, why do you think Caroline Pitcher and Jackie Morris worked together on this book?

Encourage the children to think about how writers and illustrators work together.

Discuss the illustration in the background of these two pages. What mood do you think Jackie Morris was trying to create here?

Children may need some support and guidance. Support them by discussing:

- The colours used
- Artistic techniques
- The background
- The choice of birds
- Their direction of flight
- Any opinions regarding the birds' expressions and what the possible relationships could be between the three birds depicted.



Title page

Share the next double-page -page spread with the children and ask them to discuss everything they can see with a partner. Encourage the children to look all around the pages and observe the setting and background too.

Share the children's ideas and direct discussions around the tiger:

- What is the tiger doing here?
- Do you think the tiger knows that the elephant is there?
- Do you think that the elephant knows that the tiger is there?
- Is it a tense or calm scene – how can you tell?



Pages 2 & 3

Turn to the next double-page spread and read the text to the children.

Acknowledge that although there is only one short sentence, we can 'see' so much more in the picture.

Display/write the words/phrases from the text: 'fluffy'; 'small' and 'eyes tight shut'. Ask the children to find evidence for these words/phrases in the illustration.

Ask the children to work in pairs to annotate what else they can see in the picture.

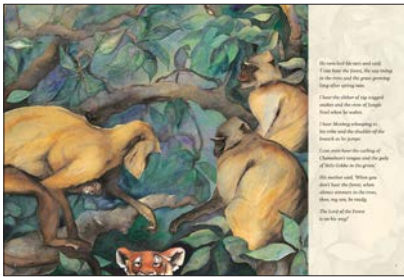
Give the children time to write their own words and phrases to describe/label what they can see.

Encourage them to think of words that may describe the relationship between the tigress and her cubs. Children can share their ideas together.

Extend this task by asking the children to talk as the tigress:

- How might she be feeling?
- What hopes and dreams might she have for her cubs?

Re-read the title, *Lord of the Forest*, and invite the children's further predictions for the book.



Pages 4 & 5

Turn to the next double-page spread and invite the children's immediate responses.

- What does it make them feel or think about?
- What do they notice about this spread?
- How is it different to the previous page?

Highlight how the writer has not filled the whole spread with the illustration but left part of the page blank for the text. Why might the writer and illustrator decide to do this?

Children may recognise that the tiger is smaller on this page and not even his whole head is seen. Discuss why this may be.

- Are the monkeys the focus or is Tiger still the focus?
- What makes you think that?
- How does the illustrator's use of scale give us an understanding of Tiger?
- How does this relate to the title?

Read the text to the children and ask them to summarise the text in two or three sentences.

Give more experienced children time to work in pairs and share their summaries with each other.

Now revisit the text and ask:

- What do we learn about Tiger from this page?
- What does his mother reveal to him?
- Are there any words or phrases that you want to discuss?

Children may benefit from reading about or seeing a picture or film of jungle fowl, chameleons and geckos. They may want to explore these animals further in wider research. Make books and suitable digital texts or websites accessible that will enable this.

Write 'Tiger's Hearing' on the board and ask the children what the writer tells us about this. Encourage the children to use the text to justify their opinions.

Discuss what the sap is in the forest (perhaps support with a picture or film) and discuss Tiger's super sense of hearing. Share how Tiger can also hear the grass growing.

Write 'When you don't hear the forest, when the silence simmers in the trees, then, my son, be ready' on the board.

Discuss what 'the silence simmers in the trees' means. Explain how writers choose specific words and phrases to impact the readers.

Children may understand 'simmers' in the context of cooking which can lead to an interesting discussion on how words can be used in different contexts.

Write 'Who is Lord of the Forest?' on a large sheet of paper and explain to the children that they will use the text to predict and rule out suggestions.

Offer some time for children to pose their predictions and scribe on the shared sheet.



Pages 6 & 7

Share the next double-page spread and read the text to the children. What does the writer tell us on this page?

Some children may recognise that the text shares a very similar message to the previous page; that Tiger has great hearing and his mother warns him about the 'Lord of the Forest' coming when all is silent.

Children may discuss that this is a warning, as Tiger's mother is keen for him to understand it. Others may identify Tiger playing with his brothers as the main point as it shows his playful and young side.

Focus on the illustration and the colours used by the illustrator:

- The beautiful pink flowers
- The tigers' stripes
- The background colours used to contrast the water and the deer
- The way she has depicted the splash of water

How does this illustration support the meaning of the text on the spread?

Write 'When silence burns and time stands still' on the board and discuss the writer's choice of words.

Revisit the phrase 'silence simmers' on the previous page and discuss this similarity and extension of theme.

Explain how Tiger's mother is emphasising the silence related to the 'Lord of the Forest'.



Pages 8 & 9

Share the next double-page spread and discuss the illustration and what it suggests.

Highlight how Tiger could be the key focus of the pages again.

- How has the scale of Tiger changed?
- What is the significance of this?

Read the text to the children discuss what it makes them feel and think about. Which words tell us about Tiger and how he has grown and developed?

Invite the children to mark descriptive words and phrases and write them on the board, e.g. 'prowled', 'stalked', 'powerful paws', 'scimitar claws' and 'eyes were worlds of wildness'.

- How do you think Tiger's mother feel about her son possessing these attributes?
- How might this differ from the viewpoint of other animals and why?
- How do we know?
- What do you notice about their behaviour?

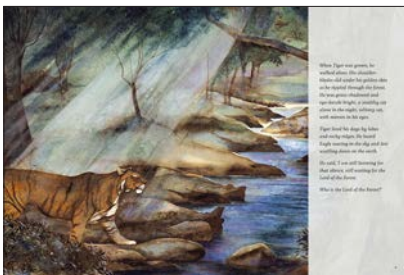
Draw attention to how the illustrator manages this in the illustrations and whether the children think that Tiger is aware that other animals see his 'prowling', 'stalking', 'powerful paws' and 'scimitar claws'?

Consider what 'eyes were worlds of wildness' means.

- Is Tiger wild?
- Is being wild a good or bad thing?
- Does it depend on the context?
- What do you think Tiger is thinking?

You might invite children to write as Tiger at this point in the story, sharing and justifying their ideas with the wider group.

Display these on a working wall to refer back to at different points of the story.



Pages 10 & 11

Display the next double-page spread without revealing the text. What do we notice about Tiger on these pages? Encourage the children to refer to his size and scale, how he is positioned and the background to support their ideas.

Children may identify that he has grown and developed but may also focus on more child-led ideas. Collect and talk through all their contributions.

Read the text on this page to the children and ask them what new information we learn about Tiger from these pages. Which words or phrases provided the newest information?

Discuss the meaning of word stealthy, drawing on familiar vocabulary to support greater depth of understanding.

Explore why Tiger may move with slow, deliberate and cautious movements?

Children could role play Tiger's movement and compare it to his way of moving or behaving as a cub to help them understand how his physical image and his behaviour has changed.

- Why do you think Tiger is solitary now?
- Why can't he stay with his family?
- What might mirrors in his eyes mean?

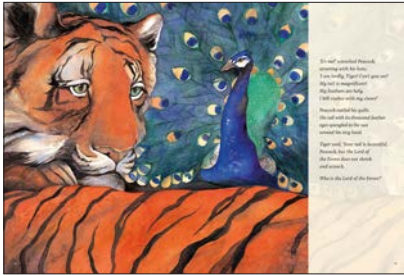
Display a table on the board to complete with the children. Use the text and work as a whole class.

Physical changes for Tiger	Character changes for Tiger

Although Tiger has changed in some ways, something has stayed the same because he says 'I am still...' What is Tiger still doing or being?

Discuss the impact of the word 'still' on us as a reader, that it implies the passing of a length of time.

- What do you think being Lord of the Forest means to Tiger?
- Why?



Pages 12 - 13

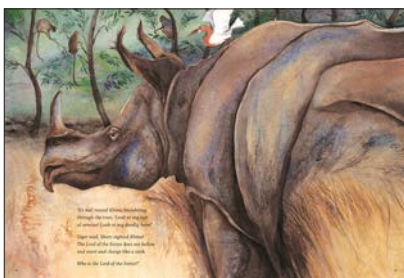
Share the next double-page spread with the children and read the text.

After reading the text, children might enjoy reading the part of Peacock in groups, pairs or individually. Children could perform Peacock's part in their own style.

Identify some individual words or groups of words that tell us about Peacock and how Peacock looks.

Invite the children to look closely at the relationship between the words and the illustration.

Ask the children to think about whether Tiger or Peacock should be 'Lord of the Forest'. How does Tiger know that Peacock is not 'Lord of the Forest'? You may want to remind the children of his mother's warning and her emphasis of 'silence' related to the 'Lord of the Forest'.



Pages 14 & 15

Share the next double-page spread and read the text to the children allowing the children time to respond to this and the illustration.

Children may enjoy re-reading the text in what they think is Rhino's voice, practicing phrased, expressive and fluent reading and sharing their ideas.

Ask the children to consider what they notice about both Peacock and Rhino and what they each think makes an animal the 'Lord of the Forest'.

- Do the children agree?
- Why? Why not?

Encourage the children to revisit and compare each of the spreads to support their ideas.

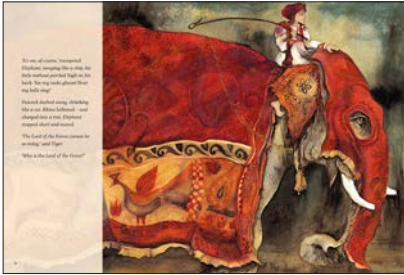
Consider Tiger's view of Rhino and that he calls him short-sighted. What do you think he means by this?

Invite the children to share what they understand about being 'short-sighted' both literally and figuratively, sharing examples to deepen understanding of Tiger's view.

Some children may notice that Tiger is hardly visible on Rhino's pages and they may wish to discuss the significance of this.

Return to the prediction sheet entitled 'Who is the Lord of the Forest?'. Add Peacock and Rhino to the list of animals that we believe is not 'Lord of the Forest'.

Ask children to make predictions for the next page including which animal(s) may present themselves and why.



Pages 16 & 17

Share the next double-page spread with the children.

The children may identify that Tiger is not seen in this illustration at all and discuss why that might be.

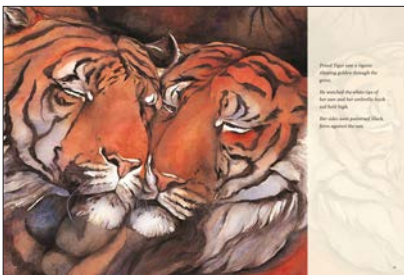
Read the text to the children and support the children to notice the pattern of each new animal claiming to be 'Lord of the Forest'.

Children may wish to discuss the language and imagery associated with Elephant, such as bells, the decorations and the mahout and how this makes the children feel.

You could show some film footage of ornate elephants and how they were and still are sometimes dressed for occasions by humans.

Discuss Tiger's viewpoint.

- What does Tiger's repetition of the question 'Who is the Lord of the Forest?' suggest about him?
- What kind of answer does he expect to find?
- What does he think might happen when or if he ever finds out who is the 'Lord of the Forest'?



Pages 18 & 19

Share the next double-page spread with the children and read the text to them, pausing to invite responses.

- What is happening now?
- Who is Tigress?

Children may need some support if they assume that Tigress is Tiger's mother.

Explore the language on this page and why Tiger is referenced as 'Proud Tiger'.

- What is the writer telling us about Tiger?
- What does the description umbrella-hook tail suggest – what do we imagine?

Focus on the illustration and what the illustrator is telling us in this picture. Draw attention to how close Tiger and Tigress are and what this suggests about them and what they might expect to find on the page turn.



Pages 20 & 21

Share the next double-page spread with the children and read the text, inviting the children's responses.

Explore how Tiger is now the father of his own cubs. Refer back to the description of Tiger on the first spread: 'fluffy and small with his eyes tight shut'.

- Why do you think the writer has used the same language here?
- What might we expect for the cubs knowing what we know about Tiger?

Reflect on the language to describe Tiger more closely now.

- What do the words, 'licked', 'nuzzling' and 'purring' say about him?
- How does this compare to descriptions earlier in the book like 'powerful', 'stalking', 'stealthy'?
- Should we be worried that Tiger has pinned his cubs down?
- Why? Why not?

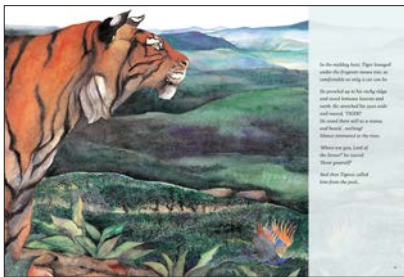
Encourage the children to use the illustration to support their answers/viewpoints.

Look closely at the illustration and who they think is in the background. Why has the illustrator chosen to highlight Tiger with his cubs rather than the cubs with their mother?

Invite the children to anticipate whether there will be more to Tiger's story or if they think that this the end. Will Tiger ever find the answer to his burning question, 'Who is Lord of the Forest?' or does it not matter anymore? Give the children time to discuss their opinions.

Organise a conscience-alley. On one side of the alley are children who think that this is the end and the other side there are children who think that there is more to come. Children face each other and someone walks down the middle while children share their reasons for believing it is or isn't the end.

After a rich discussion, reveal that there is more to the story.



Pages 22 - 23

Share the next double-page spread and focus on the illustration alone, concealing the text.

- What impression of Tiger is the illustrator hoping to show here?
- What makes you think that?

Children may recognise a similar pose to earlier in the book (page 10) and conclude that Tiger is still craving an answer to his question.

Reveal and read the first paragraph of the text only, discussing the children's responses.

- What is Tiger doing?
- How is he feeling?
- What makes you think this?

Discuss the choice of verb 'lounged' which children may associate with familiar meanings like lounging or relaxing.

Also look at 'as comfortable as only a cat can be'. Again, invite the children to draw on prior knowledge and understanding of cats' behaviour and the meaning of the word 'comfortable' in their own experience. This will support them to grasp the idea that Tiger is very calm in this moment.

Reveal and read the next paragraph. How would they describe the mood of this paragraph in comparison to the first?

Encourage the children to look at the language choices and consider what meaning they convey, such as 'prowled', 'stretched', 'roared'.

You might want to draw attention to the fact that even though Tiger roars, he hears nothing and 'silence simmered in the forest'. Discuss what this might suggest.

Re-read the paragraph and emphasise the closing sentence. Where in the book have they heard this before?

Children can now be supported to identify that this is the silence that Tiger's mum had told him about.

Reveal the rest of the text on this page and reflect:

- Why Tigress is calling Tiger?
- Why does Tiger command 'Show yourself'?
- How might he be feeling in this moment?
- How does it make you feel as a reader?

Highlight the use of the ellipsis to show suspense for the reader and also for Tiger. What do you think Tigress will do next?

Explain to the children that the next double-page spread is the last page of the book and to predict what the ending will be.

Give the children a piece of paper, landscape-oriented, with a middle crease to show the double-page spread. Children could illustrate, write or label what they think will be on each of the two pages or across the spread.

Encourage the children to think carefully about what has happened so far and how spreads have been presented in different ways throughout to convey meaning using size, scale, colour, etc.

Reflect with the children if Tiger's story reminds them of any other stories they know in real life or in fiction and how this might influence their ideas.

Invite the children to share and discuss their ideas with each other.



Pages 24 & 25

Share the last double-page spread with the children and read the text to them.

- Is this what you expected?
- Why? Why not?
- Does this remind you of anything you have seen in real life?
- Does this remind you of anything you have read before or seen in films or on television?

Some children may discuss similarities with other stories such as *The Lion King*- where Simba also sees his own reflection as King. Embrace these connections.

Revisit what Tigress says, 'You are the forest. The Lord of the Forest is – you!' How do you think Tiger feels when she tells him this?

Revisiting the story as a whole

The ending

Bring the children back together to discuss the ending of the book:

- Are you satisfied with the ending?
- Is this what you predicted for Tiger?
- What do you think the writer's main message was?
- What was she trying to show us as readers?
- Did Tiger learn anything about himself in this story?

Reflection

Tiger looked in the water and saw his own reflection. This made him realise who he was.

- When you look in the mirror and see your reflection, do you feel you know who you are?
- What does this mean?

Tiger discovered his identity after seeing his reflection in a different way. Tigress encouraged Tiger to see himself in this way.

- Who encourages you to see yourself and your positive traits?
- What do they say about you?

Tigress

Invite the children to discuss the role of Tigress in this story.

- How did she help us to understand Tiger?
- How did she help Tiger to know himself?

You might want to pose some suggestions to the children to prompt thinking and discussion, such as:

- Tigress helped us to see the softer side of Tiger.
- Tigress supported Tiger to be determined to find the answer to his question.
- Tigress revealed the answer to Tiger so that he could see his own identity.

'Lord of the Forest'

Now invite the children to think about what 'Lord of the Forest' actually means.

Encourage the children to revisit the book and the other animals who claimed to be 'Lord of the Forest' as well as thinking about Tiger's traits.

Note ideas before summarising it in a coherent definition as a group.

- How does this relate to the children's experience of real life?
- What do they think makes a good leader?
- Is Tiger 'Lord of the Forest' because he is the most dangerous or does he possess other qualities?

After reading

Perserverance

Discuss how Tiger persevered yet waited to find the answer to his question and invite the children to reflect on similar experiences in their own lives. When we must wait for something, how does it feel and why?

Share the old saying 'The best things come to those who wait' and ask the children for their views. Do they agree with this? Why? Why not?

Artwork

Give children the opportunity to create artwork in the style of Jackie Morris. Children could replicate an image from this book that they feel particularly drawn to or children could draw or paint an image of their own, taking inspiration from Jackie Morris' style and skills.

Writing tasks

There are a range of writing opportunities that can be drawn upon from this text, such as:

- Diary entries as Tiger throughout his journey from cub to father.
- A self-reflection monologue as Tiger at the end of the book to reflect on how it feels to be 'Lord of the Forest'.
- Sequel to the book – what happens next for Tiger, Tigress and their cubs now that Tiger knows his title?
- A narrative episode.

- Writing from the perspective of Peacock, Rhino or Elephant when they discover that the 'Lord of the Forest' is Tiger.
- Tiger's Mother's message to Tiger after discovering that he knows his identity.
- Persuasive letters or speeches to protect the rapidly declining number of tigers.
- Poetry inspired by identity.
- A letter or note to their future self with words of encouragement.
- Further research into animals and writing non-chronological reports.

Songwriting

After an earlier discussion about what being 'Lord of the Forest' actually means, children could write song lyrics with the title 'Lord of the Forest.'

They could use some language from the book in their lyrics such as, 'silence simmers', 'silence burns', 'time stands still' or the question 'Who is the Lord of the Forest?'

They could perform their songs and add some musical accompaniment.

- What style of music will they choose and why?
- How will they create dynamics that support the theme and subject matter?

Identity

There could be an opportunity to discuss our identity – the meanings of our names and our roots too.

Children may enjoy finding out about their family history and who they really are.



OTHER TITLES BY CAROLINE PITCHER AND JACKIE MORRIS OR TO SUPPORT EXPLORATION OF THEMES FROM THE BOOK:

- *The White Fox*, Jackie Morris (Barrington Stoke)
- *Mrs Noah's Pockets* (series), Jackie Morris and James Mahew (Otter-Barry Books)
- *Something About a Bear*, Jackie Morris (Otter-Barry Books)
- *The Ice Bear*, Jackie Morris (Graffeg)
- *The Lost Words*, Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris (Penguin)
- *Fox: Accordion Book No. 1*, Jackie Morris (Unbound)

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sitting. We hope you found them useful.

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