

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

The Littlest Yak



ABOUT THE BOOK

A little yak yearns for **BIG** things in this rollicking, rhyming picture book that celebrates individuality, unique talents, and the importance of not growing up too fast.

Gertie is the littlest yak, feeling stuck in her smallness. She wants to grow UP with the hugest of hooves and humongous horns! Because there isn't anything a **BIG** yak can't do. So, Gertie devises a growing-up plan. She eats her veggies, exercises every day, and reads lots of books.

Still, she isn't any bigger. But when the other yaks come calling for Gertie to help them with a daring and dangerous task, could it be because it's something only a small yak can do?

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ABOUT THE CREATORS

LU FRASER
AUTHOR

Lu Fraser has been helping other people tell stories for years, but she has never been brave enough to share her own—until now. Lu lives in England with her husband and daughter and writes her best stories in a little shed in her backyard. *The Littlest Yak* is her first picture book.

KATE HINDLEY
ILLUSTRATOR

Kate Hindley is an illustrator who has brought many bestselling picture books to life, including *You Must Bring a Hat*. She is also the author of the lift-the-flap book series *Treacle Street*. Kate lives in England.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Setting is when and where a book takes place. Study the cover of the book and discuss the setting. What is the connection between the design of the end pages and the setting? The yaks on the cover are huddled together. What does this illustration say about the way they live?
- The main character is who the book is about. Consider the title of the book and point out the main character in the cover illustration. Take a close look at the yak herd on the first double-page spread. Which do you think are Gertie's parents? Explain your decision. Turn to the next spread. What is unique about Gertie? Describe what she is feeling in the illustration to the far right. How does the text on the next page reveal her thoughts and feelings?
- Conflict in a book is the problem to be solved. At what point do you know the conflict of this book? How is the conflict something inside of Gertie?
- Theme is the message of the book, or what the book is about. What is the theme of this book? How is the theme connected to Gertie's conflict? How do the illustrations help reveal the conflict and the theme?
- Symbolism in a picture book is an image that represents an idea. Look at the illustration where Gertie is in front of a small tree. How might the "little" tree symbolize Gertie's conflict?
- What is a disguise? Explain what Mummy means when she says, "Bigness can come in all sorts of disguises." What does Gertie learn about bigness by the end of the book?
- Discuss the meaning of impatient. How is Gertie impatient to grow up? Explain Gertie's growing-up plan. How is her plan a healthy plan for yaks and people? Why doesn't the plan make Gertie bigger? Note the books Gertie is reading. Some of the books have titles, and others don't. Suggest titles for the books that are missing them.
- Note the bird on the first double-page spread. What is the other small animal shown? Count the times they appear in the book. What is their role in helping Gertie with her growing-up plan? How are they there for her when she achieves the mission her family has assigned to her?
- Gertie shows many different feelings in the book. How does the entire yak herd respond to Gertie's feelings? Point out text and illustrations where Gertie is sad, happy, loved, and triumphant.
- What is a poem? How is the text of this book like a poem? Onomatopoeia is a word that sounds like the noise of the thing its describing. Find an example of onomatopoeia in the book.
- The illustrations are done in pencil and ink, and the color is applied by computer. Study the illustrations carefully. Point out the pencil and ink drawings. How does the illustrator show motion? Name all the colors used in the book. Explain the meaning of unity. How does using shades of one color provide unity to the book?
- Look closely at the yak herd. What do you notice about them? Draw a connection between the clothes they are wearing with the colors used throughout the book.