

CREATIVE CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



FURTHER READING

ALSO BY JANELL CANNON

- Stellaluna
- Verdi
- Crickwing
- Trupp: A Fuzzhead Tale
- Little Yau: A Fuzzhead Tale

- OTHER BOOKS ABOUT ACCEPTING DIFFERENCES IN YOURSELF AND OTHERS:**
- The Cow That Went OINK* by Bernard Most
 - I Wish I Were a Butterfly* by James Howe, illustrated by Ed Young
 - Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, illustrated by Leslie Staub
 - The Worm Family* by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Stacy Innerst



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



CATHY CANNON

Janell Cannon worked for many years developing summer reading programs for children as part of the California public library system and now devotes herself full-time to creating books for young readers. *Stellaluna* won the 1994 American Booksellers Book of the Year (ABBY) Award for children's books. Ms. Cannon lives in Southern California.

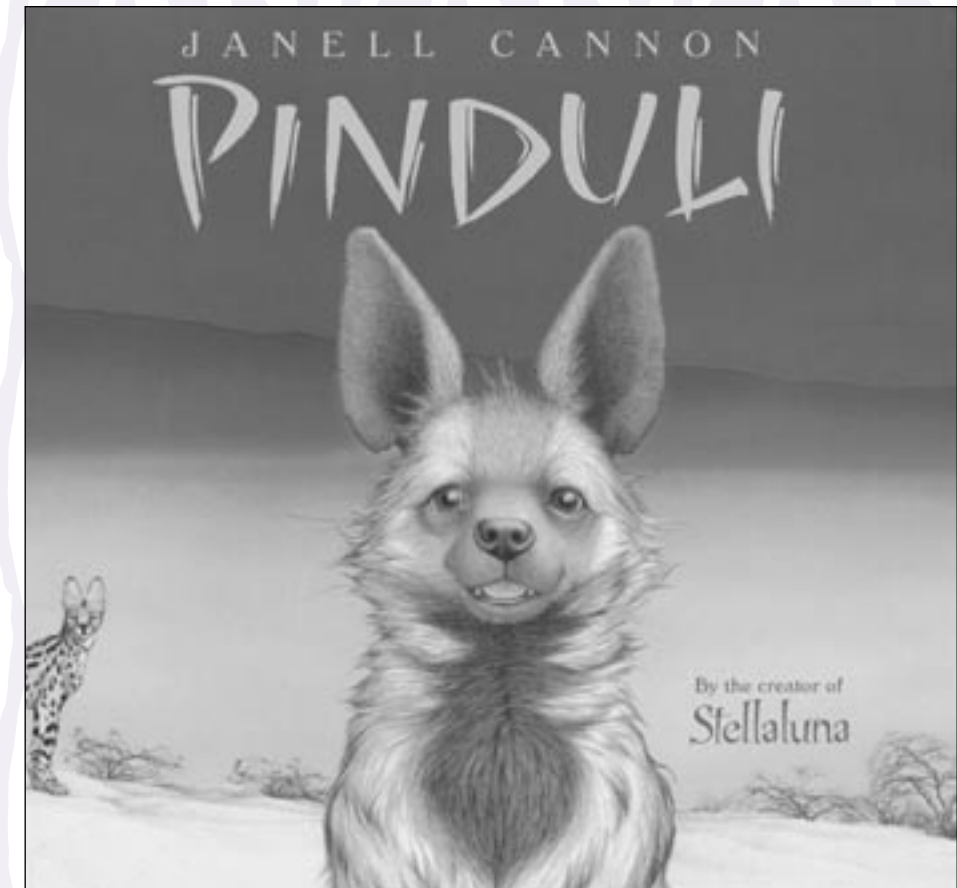
The activities in this guide were written by Mary Lou Meerson, an educational consultant from San Diego, California.

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PINDULI
 BY JANELL CANNON

Pinduli's mama has always told her that she's the most beautiful hyena ever. But Dog, Lion, and Zebra don't think so. Why else would they make her feel so rotten about her big ears, her fuzzy mane, and her wiggly stripes? Poor Pinduli just wants to disappear—and she tries everything she can think of to make that happen. Yet *nothing* goes her way. Nothing, that is, until a case of mistaken identity lets her show the creatures of the African savanna how a few tiny words—bad or good—can create something enormous. Young children will respond to Pinduli's endearing character in this triumphant story about self-image, self-acceptance, and treating others with respect.

Educators and parents throughout the country recognize the value of enriching the teaching of traditional subjects such as reading, writing, math, and science through the use of trade books. Trade books enliven the learning process by offering rich language and quality artwork that enhance the students' understanding of the topic.

The activities that follow offer challenging and enjoyable ways to use *Pinduli* by Janell Cannon with preschool- through early elementary school-age children. Parents, teachers, and librarians are invited to follow any or all of the guidelines to introduce the children in their lives to the wonderful world of reading books.

PREPARING TO READ

- Share the front of the book jacket and ask the children what kind of animal they think is depicted. If they think it might be some kind of dog, share the back of the jacket. What clues are there? Can they identify the other animals pictured? Considering this information, where do they think this animal lives? If no one knows the animal's name, tell the children this is a hyena. Ask if they have heard that name before, or if they know anything about this animal.
- Make a T-chart on chart paper or on the chalkboard. Head the left column: What We Already Know, and the right column: What We Learned. Fill in the first column with information from the children or from the book jacket. Encourage the children to observe details carefully, such as the ears and the coat of the hyena.
- Discuss the concept that people with good manners do not make personal comments about others. For instance, the fact that a person has unusually large ears, or wears clothes that are not considered "in style," does not call for a comment.
- A familiar children's rhyme says: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never harm me." Discuss this saying. Is it true?



WHILE READING

- Give the children plenty of time to examine and discuss each illustration. Have the children look at the line drawings on the left-hand page of each spread as well as the full-color illustrations.
- Fill in the What We Learned column of the T-chart as you read.



AFTER READING

- Have the children look at their T-chart and discuss the things they learned. Do they need to change or correct any of the items in the What We Learned column? Are there things they still want to know about hyenas? Discuss how they can find more information.
- Each animal said it had said something mean because someone else had said something mean first. Is this how the children feel when someone is mean to them?
- Discuss Pinduli's decision to give a task to the other animals. Why did she include the part about leaving behind part of every meal? Was this a fair decision?
- Ask the children if they think that the teasing stopped after the visit of the Great Spirit? Why or why not?
- Read aloud *I Wish I Were A Butterfly* by James Howe, illustrated by Ed Young. Have the children compare the "lessons" to be learned from each book.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

LITERATURE

- Read aloud other books by Janell Cannon, such as *Stellaluna* and *Verdi*. Have the children discuss why they think Ms. Cannon chose a bat, a snake, and a hyena to write about. What do these animals have in common?
- Talk about the concept of talking animals. Writers have always made animals "humanlike" by enabling them to talk in stories and giving them distinct personalities. Share some other stories that feature animals, such as Aesop's fables or the tales of B'r'er Rabbit.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Discuss the superstitions that some people have, such as being afraid of the number 13 or of ghosts. Have the children talk about some others. How do they think such beliefs get started? How are they passed on?

LANGUAGE

- Point out the variety of action words the author uses: *spied*, *spotted*, *dashed*, *trailed*, *yelped*, *scoffed*, *galumphed*, *poofed*, *circled*, *strolled*, etc. Discuss the meaning of each word and how the words are different from words like *saw*, *said*, or *walked*. With older students, you can have the same sort of discussion about descriptive words or phrases: *sleepy* animals, *exquisite* and *mysterious* smells, *wheezing* laughter, tongues *lolling*, *rumbling* voice, *straggly unpleasant* haziness, etc.
- Write on the chalkboard the last sentence from page one: "Pinduli promised to stay close and *trotted* away." Have the students suggest other verbs that could be substituted for *trotted*, such as *ran* or *scampered*. List as many possibilities as you can. Encourage the students to think about alternatives for action words in their own writing.

SCIENCE

- Talk with the children about nocturnal animals. Make a short list of animals that hunt mainly at night. Discuss the reasons that certain animals move about at night rather than during the day. Be sure to include the climate of some regions as a factor. Extend the children's understanding of this by talking about humans who take siestas in hot climates.
- Many of the animals in this story feed on *carrion*. Find the definition for this word in a dictionary and discuss it.
- Talk with the children about the dogs in this book. Explain that these are *feral* (or "wild") dogs, not the tame types that can become family pets. (Depending on where you live, the children may be familiar with feral cats.) Discuss the safety issue of never approaching an unfamiliar animal, no matter how "cute" it looks.

SCIENCE AND ART

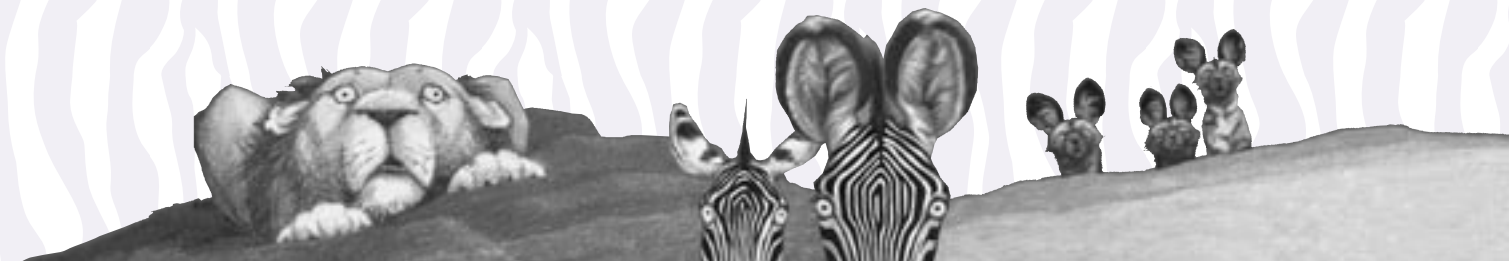
- Have each child choose one of the animals from the book and make a poster report that includes a picture and information about habitat, food, and any other interesting facts.

ART

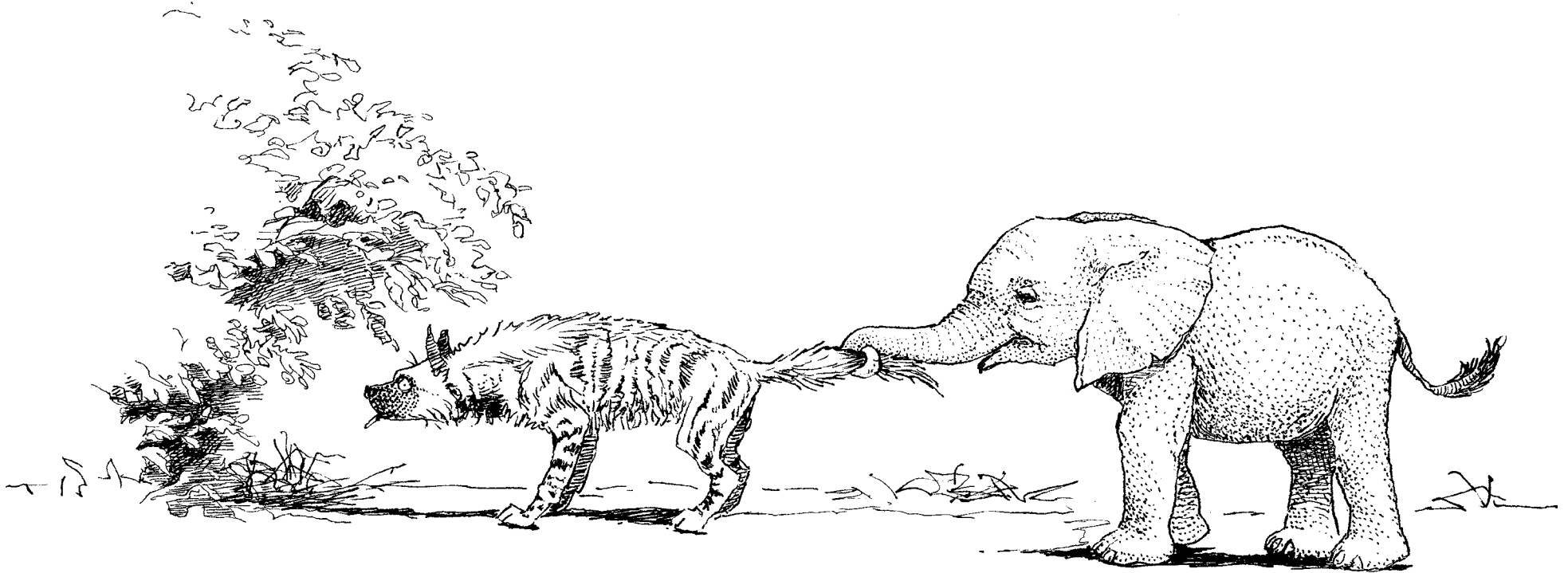
- On long sheets of butcher paper or newsprint, have the children work together to create a mural of any scene from the book. Have them try to include as many animals as possible.

WRITING

- Have each child choose a family pet, or a school pet, and then have each student write a short imaginary conversation with the animal.
- Have the children imagine that they are like Pinduli and can tell the more fearful animals what to do. What would the children choose to do? Have them write about, discuss, or draw a picture of how they would have handled the situation.



Color Pinduli!



PINDULI

JANELL CANNON

0-15-204668-2 • Ages 5 to 8

Available wherever fine books are sold.

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