

# Elephant Adventure

by Julia Wall

illustrated by Andrew Burdan



## Book Summary

When Juanita travels with her parents to an elephant orphanage in Sri Lanka, she's prepared for a boring – and smelly – two weeks. Things take a turn in this realistic narrative when Juanita becomes involved in stopping an animal smuggling operation.

## Investigation Tools

- What's the Background? – Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage, page 29
- Looking Closer – Asian Elephants, pages 30–31
- Making Connections – Animal Smuggling, page 32

## Features of the Book

- Narrative fiction
- Plot with setting, characters, problem, and resolution
- Told in the first person
- Factual information
- Theme of animal protection

## Purpose

*Elephant Adventure* can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills and understandings:

- S** making, revising, and confirming predictions;
- S** asking questions;
- S** identifying the author's purpose and point of view;
- S** considering how the actions of some people put animals in danger of extinction.

## The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Making, revising, and confirming predictions
- S** Asking questions
- S** Identifying the author's purpose and point of view

## Introducing the text

Before showing the students the book, ask them what they know about elephants and where they come from. Draw out the fact that there are two kinds of elephant: Indian and African. If possible, point out India and Africa on a world map.

Hand out the books and read the title and blurb together. Tell the students that this lesson will focus on making, revising, and confirming predictions. Discuss the information that readers use when they make a prediction. Help the students to understand that predictions are not just guesses. They are based on the students' own knowledge and experience, combined with clues in the text. Model the kinds of questioning that can help them to make predictions. For example,

- What kind of story will this be? What information have you used to make predictions about the setting, the characters, and the plot?
- What is an elephant orphanage? How could it be threatened?
- Why might an author write a story set in an elephant orphanage?
- What knowledge did you use to make that prediction?

Tell the students to write their predictions down at the start of each chapter so they can confirm or revise them as they read.

## Reading and discussing the text

Turn to the contents page and discuss any predictions that can be made from the chapter headings.

- *From what you know about stories and the clues on the cover, what might the “summer surprise” be?*

Ask the students to read to the end of page 5.

- *What was the surprise? How does Juanita make her decision?*
- *Find Sri Lanka, to the south of India, on the world map. What do you know about the climate in that part of the world?*

The students can share their knowledge and use it to predict what life might be like there for Juanita.

Ask the students to read to the end of Chapter 2, checking their predictions for Chapter 1 and making new predictions for Chapter 2.

Discuss the setting and the characters. Help the students to ask questions to make further predictions, using what they know about the structure of mystery stories as well as clues in the text.

- *What do you think the author wants us to learn about the Myers family?*
- *What can you infer from the interaction between Logan and his mother?*

Have the students read to the end of Chapter 3. Review the plot and discuss the possibilities for plot development. Once again, the students can make, confirm, and revise predictions as they read. Ensure they can justify their predictions with reference to their own knowledge, the clues in the text, and what they know about story structure.

The students can read to the end of the story (page 28), noting their predictions as they read. If necessary, provide support for students who have difficulty following the plot.

- *Did the story end the way you predicted?*
- *What knowledge and experiences helped you to make accurate predictions?*


- *All authors have a purpose and a point of view. What might they be for this author?*
- *What do you think the author was trying to say?*

The students can read the last pages for further information about elephants and smuggling.

## Revisiting the Text

The activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson, during later reading sessions as mini-lessons, or as independent activities.

### **S** Asking questions

 Discuss the levels of questions that the students could have about this book, for example, questions that require them to recall, questions that require them to infer, and questions that require them to evaluate. Examples of these three levels of questioning are included on the blackline master. The students can use the blackline master to record their responses to these questions and then write another set of questions for a partner to answer.

### **S** Considering how the actions of some people put animals in danger of extinction

This book provides one example (fictionalised) of how people can endanger animals. The students can read about the Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage on page 29, then investigate other actions that people have taken to protect animals. They can investigate how one such action has helped protect animals. Examples of actions could include volunteers working to protect sea turtles during the nesting season and programmes that help protect crocodiles in the wild.