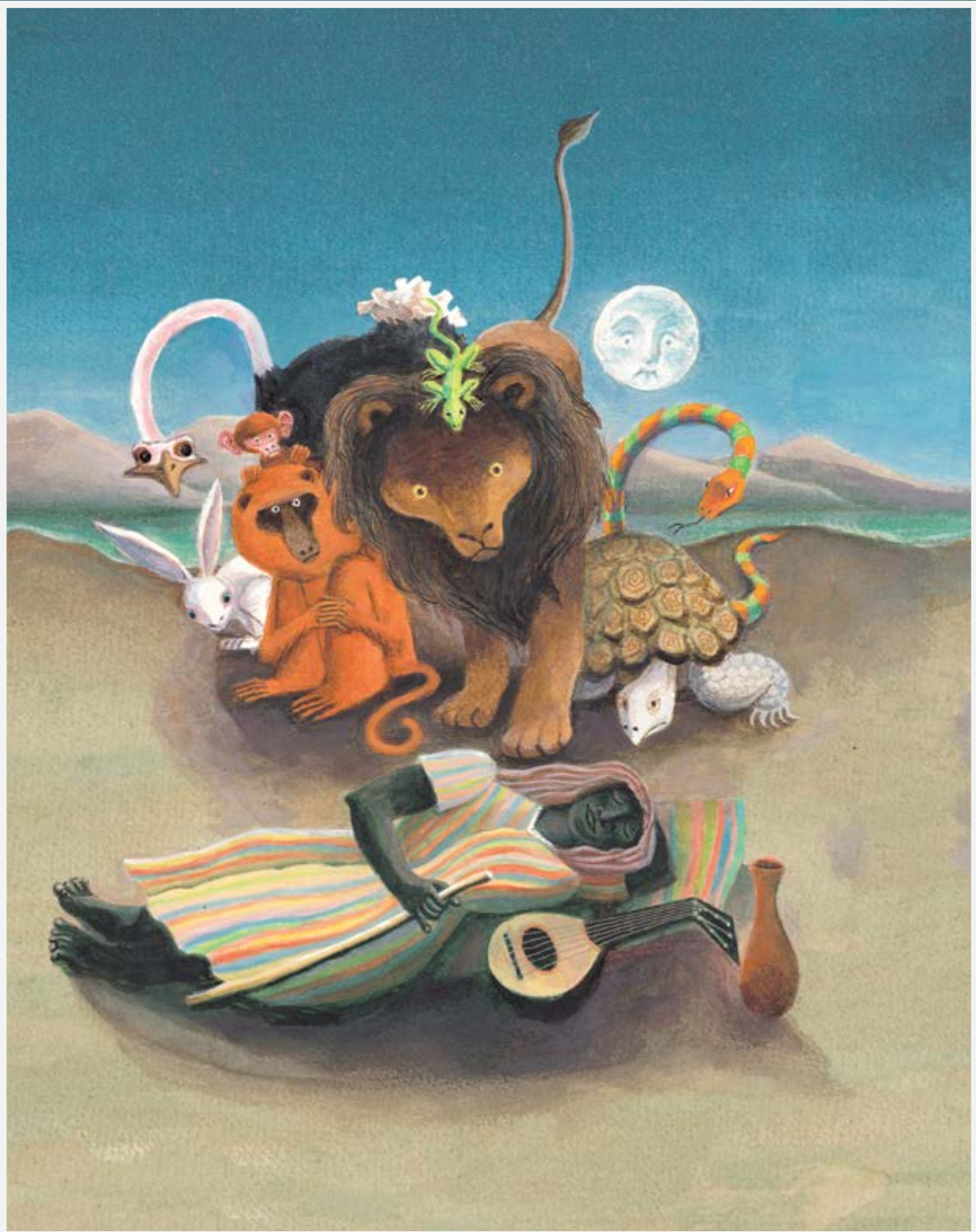




THE SLEEPING GYPSY

M O R D I C A I G E R S T E I N

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

THE SLEEPING GYPSY

MORDICAI GERSTEIN

Caldecott Medalist Mordicai Gerstein creates an elegant, beautifully illustrated story about the characters in Henri Rousseau's painting, *The Sleeping Gypsy*. Includes Author's Note.

Guided Reading Level: P

Grade Level: 3

Interest level: 2-6

Instructional Standards in This Guide:

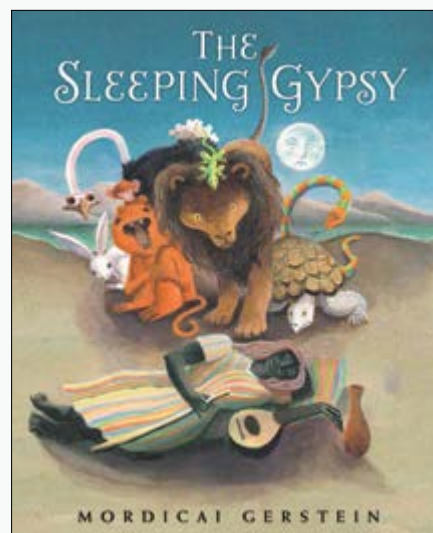
RL.3-4.1- 7, 10/ RL.4.9

RF.3-4.3-4

W.3-4.1-8, 10/ W.4.9-9a

SL.3-4.1-6

L.3-4.1-6



978-0-8234-2142-8 • Ages 4-8 • E-book available

BEFORE READING

1. Read and discuss the title and the cover illustration.
2. Ask students to generate questions about the picture and create a chart.
3. Write the word "Prologue" on the board. Discuss how a prologue can provide background, establish the tone of the work and more.
4. Read the Prologue of *The Sleeping Gypsy*. Discuss how the Prologue helps readers understand what the story is going to be about. From whose point of view is the Prologue told?
5. Who was Henri Rousseau? What is he known for? Explore the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) website where the original painting of *The Sleeping Gypsy* resides.
6. What is Mordicai Gerstein's purpose for writing *The Sleeping Gypsy*?
7. How does the cover illustration differ from the actual painting, *The Sleeping Gypsy* by Henri Rousseau?
8. Write a sentence about what is happening in the painting.
9. What do you wonder about when you look at *The Sleeping Gypsy*?

DURING READING

1. Read the story uninterrupted. As you reread the story, discuss:
 - How specific aspects of the illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in the story.
 - How specific illustrations create mood and emphasize aspects of the characters and setting.
 - The style of the author's writing. How does Gerstein choose to arrange the sentences?
 - What kinds of comparisons are made that add layers to the meaning of the story?
2. Explore nonliteral words and phrases found in the story.

3. Answer the following questions, using words and phrases and illustrations from the book.
 - What is the **setting** of the story? Where does the story take place?
 - Who are the **characters** in the story? Describe their traits, motivations and feelings.
 - How do the **characters' actions** contribute to the sequence of events/**plot**?
 - What is the **structure** of the story? Describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
 - How does Gerstein use **parallel plots** within the story?
 - At what point in the book do you realize that this is the imagination/dream of Henri Rousseau?
4. Read the Author's Note. Discuss how *The Sleeping Gypsy* painting impacted Mordicai Gerstein.
5. Find an example of irony in the Author's Note. How do circumstances turn out differently from what is anticipated? Why is the action unexpected?
6. What can you learn by reading the Author's Note? Why do you think authors write notes to the reader at the end of a book?

AFTER READING

1. Review and answer the questions generated by the class in Before Reading.
2. Answer each question using specific details from the book.
 - Who is the girl in the painting?
 - Why is she sleeping under the full moon in the desert?
 - Is that a guitar next to her?
 - Will she play it?
 - Will the lion stand there and sniff her and wander off? Or will he eat her up?
 - What does each animal think of the girl in the desert?
 - Describe why the lion is the only animal left in the picture.
3. Create a story map of the tale, using words and illustrations.
4. Write your own interpretation of what is happening in *The Sleeping Gypsy* painting by Henri Rousseau.
5. Write a paragraph explaining the irony in the story. How do circumstances turn out differently from what is anticipated? Why is the action unexpected?
6. Go back to the story. Find examples of figurative language and explain the literary device used by the author (metaphor, simile, hyperbole).
7. Research Henri Rousseau. Write a biography of his life and accomplishments. Create a presentation including primary and secondary sources as well as visual aids.
8. Create a painting in the style of Henri Rousseau. Include jungle scenes: lush foliage, wild animals, bright colors.

GROUP PROJECT

As a class, research *The Sleeping Gypsy* to discover its universal meaning. What are some of the interpretations? How does the painting connect to modern-day issues and topics, such as diversity?