

Meerkat Choir

By Nicki Greenberg

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\$24.99

**PICTURE BOOK OF
THE MONTH**

The meerkat choirmaster will only allow meerkats in his choir. But singing is fun and all the other animals want to join in too. A wonderfully funny picture book about the folly of excluding others from your group.



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Meerkats
- Exclusion
- Inclusion

Discussion Questions & Activities:

- Before opening *Meerkat Choir*, look at the title and cover design. Discuss what students think the story might be about and the clues in the picture that make them think that. Ask questions such as:
 - ◇ Do you think this is going to be a funny or sad story? Why do you think that?
 - ◇ What do you know about meerkats?
 - ◇ How many meerkats can you count on the cover?
 - ◇ What role in the choir might the meerkat on the far right have?
- Read the story through once and ask students the following questions to help them explore the story's main themes:
 - ◇ Do you think the choirmaster was being nice to the other animals when he said the animals couldn't join the choir?
 - ◇ How do you think the animals felt about being excluded?
 - ◇ What should the meerkat choir members have done when the choirmaster said the other animals should go away?
 - ◇ Did excluding the animals make the choir better?
 - ◇ How do you think the meerkats felt when they were accepted by the multi-animal choir?
 - ◇ Who do you think is happier at the end of the story, the choirmaster or the multi-animal choir?
 - ◇ Hands up anyone who has seen someone being excluded in the playground. What do you think you should do if you see someone being excluded?
- *Visual literacy:* Ask students if anyone can see a sound. When they say no, encourage them to think about how Nicki Greenberg has captured the sounds the animals make when they sing in the story. What colours and lines does she use to show the bird singing? How do these differ from the lines and colours she uses for the snake, bats and giraffe? What sort of sound do you think the bird makes compared to the meerkats? Is it light and pretty compared to loud and squeaky? How has she shown the sort of sound made when ALL of the animals are singing?
- Turn to the last page of the story featuring the choirmaster sitting alone and ask students to describe his mood. What in the picture tells them how he is feeling? Now look closely at his sign. How has the sign changed from earlier in the story and what do students think this sign now tells us about the choirmaster?
- Ask students to come up with ideas about what might happen next in the story if it continued past the last page. Might the animal choir approach the choirmaster again? How might the choirmaster react this time?
- Ask students to find three interesting facts about meerkats and put them on a cardboard poster. A good starting point for research is <https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/animals/general-animals/meerkat-facts/>