

MAYBE ...

Chris Haughton

Walker Books

Hardback, 40PP, £12.99

ISBN 9781406385526

Themes

- Animals
- Family
- Danger
- Nature

Summary In this delightful picturebook, Chris Haughton bring us a funny, suspenseful and keenly observed cautionary tale about pushing boundaries and indulging your more mischievous, cheeky side (when nobody is looking). Three little monkeys, and their big monkey, are sitting high up on their branch in the forest canopy. ‘Ok, monkeys! I’m off,’ says the big monkey. ‘Now remember ... Whatever you do, do NOT go down to the mango tree. There are tigers down there.’ *Mmm ... mangos!* think the little monkeys. They LOVE mangos. Hmm ... *maybe ...* maybe they could just *look* at the mangos? That’d be ok, right?

Judges’ Comments This clever and engaging text from Haughton is bursting with fun and joy as we follow three misbehaving monkeys who cannot resist temptation. Despite the threat of tigers lurking in the grass, they convince themselves that it will be OK just to venture into the jungle and taste a mango – or two. *Maybe ...* With the author–illustrator’s brilliant use of saturated colours of purple, blue, deep pink, magenta and red, the mischievous monkeys and their jungle environment are skilfully brought to life in this page-turning tale that invites reader participation.

About the Author–Illustrator

Chris Haughton is an Irish designer and author living in London. His previous picturebooks include *A Bit Lost*; *Oh No, George!*; *Shh! We Have a Plan*; and *Goodnight Everyone*, each of which has earned him nominations and wins at the KPMG Children’s Books Ireland Awards. He grew up in Dublin, loving books with pictures and diagrams as a child. When he grew older, he moved to Hong Kong and worked as a teacher with small children. A lot of the time the children didn’t understand his English, so he drew on the blackboard or used picturebooks to help them.



QUESTIONS

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Look at the front and back covers. What are the monkeys thinking on the cover?
2. Why does the word 'Maybe' have '...' (an ellipsis) after it – what could it mean?
3. What do you think will happen between the monkeys and the tigers on the back?
4. Do the tigers seem friendly?
5. What do you think of the colour choice for the cover?

AS YOU READ

1. Where is the mother monkey going?
2. Why does she want her babies to stay away from the mangos?
3. Do you think the monkeys are being careful?
4. Who is watching the monkeys?
5. Where are the mangos?
6. What happens when the monkeys get the mangos?
7. Who is telling this story?

AFTER YOU HAVE READ

1. Why did the monkeys go back up the tree?
2. Did you like how this story ended? Why?
3. Do you think the monkeys were being silly?
4. Did you notice anything hiding in the pictures?
5. How did you feel when you saw the tigers?
6. How many tigers are in the book in total?
7. Would you rather be a tiger or a monkey in this story?
8. Do you think it is a good idea for the monkeys to get the bananas too?
9. What was your favourite page of the book? Why?
10. Do you think the monkeys are always getting into trouble?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER READERS

1. What does this book teach young readers about animals?
2. How did the author–illustrator make you want to turn the page?
3. Is the art style a good choice for young readers? How would you describe it?
4. Did the author–illustrator do anything interesting with the font during the story?
5. How can you tell when a character is speaking?
6. How does the illustrator show you how the monkeys are feeling at each point in the story?
7. Chris Haughton likes illustrating animals because they can be drawn much more exaggeratedly than humans. Do you think the way he draws character expressions makes them more understandable for young readers?
8. What words would you use to describe the monkeys in this book?
9. What benefit do you think there is in having animals as main characters instead of humans?
10. Would you read this book to your younger sibling, if you have one?
11. What age group do you think this book is intended for and why?
12. Do you think older readers can enjoy picturebooks too?
13. Did you enjoy looking at the pictures alongside the text? If you were to take away the words from the page, would you still be able to understand what was happening in the story?

ACTIVITIES

- Write a short review of the book.
- The tigers are very unique looking – they don't look much like real tigers. Chris Haughton loves to exaggerate animals. Draw what a tiger would look like if you could decide what they looked like in real life.
- Write a sequel to this story where you follow the monkeys' quest for the bananas mentioned at the end.
- The monkeys love fruit like mangos and bananas. What fruit do you like? There are so many to choose, it's impossible! Come up with a cool superfruit combining all the different fruits you like. Write down its name, its flavour, its smell, and draw a picture of it.
- Rewrite the book from the viewpoint of the tigers. Consider if they were angry, scared or happy that the monkeys visited their den. Draw some pictures to go with it.

ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER READERS

- Rewrite this story for your age group. What would you change? Try making it into a comic strip.
- The monkeys in this story can talk. Write a day-in-the-life story about a pet from their point of view if they could speak.
- Chris Haughton creates his illustrations by making paper cut-outs and photographing them in place (see the video link in the Further Resources section for a tutorial). Create an illustration of any animal you like using this method.
- Organise a class debate on the following topic: ‘In Sweden, people put banana on pizza. In Ireland, we put pineapple on pizza. Can mangoes or other fruits go on pizza?’

FURTHER RESOURCES

- See the Walker Books book trailer for *Maybe ...* on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gwc6N5AfyGY>
- Watch this Moon Lane TV story-time video of Chris Haughton reading *Maybe ...* on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my_vMpjyEk
- Watch this Candlewick Press video on YouTube showing Chris Haughton creating a character out of paper: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ep22GovHdDg>
- Visit Chris Haughton’s website: <https://www.chrishoughton.com>
- Check out the teachers’ notes for *Maybe ...* from Walker Books: <https://www.walker.co.uk/UserFiles/file/Maybe%20Teachers%27%20Notes.pdf>
- Check out the Children’s Books Ireland *Deliver the Joy of Reading* guide for more recent publications by Irish authors and illustrators: <https://childrensbooksireland.ie/our-recommendations/deliver-joy-reading-reading-guide-2021>