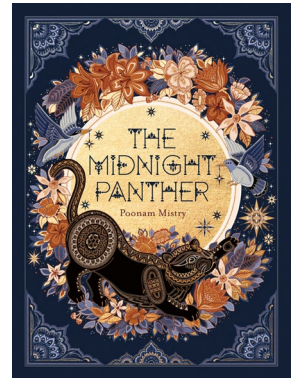




The Yoto Carnegie Shortlist 2024 Shadowing Resources

Activities for The Midnight Panther Illustrated by Poonam Mistry



General Activities for all books

- Lego Fun: Create a scene from one of the books using Lego or other building materials/toys.
- Shadowing Scrapbook: Document your journey through the 2024 Shadowing period. This can be used to record books and activities discussed in each session, as well as offer a creative space for reviews, reflection and anything else you might like to add.
- Take the title or first line from each of the shortlisted books and create a poem or story by combining them with words and phrases of your own.
- Carnegie Washing Line: Cut out shapes of clothes (e.g. socks, tops, trousers etc) using cardboard and write quotes from the Medal for Writing books and pictures from Medal for Illustration and hang on a washing line with pegs to display. Group members could do this as an activity in the session if time allows or asked to do at home and then to bring to the next session.
- Think of some questions you would like to ask the shortlisted authors and share them on social media using the hashtag **#YotoCarnegies24**
- When Worlds Collide: Select two characters, each from a different shortlisted book. Imagine what they would say to each other, if they met. How would they behave? You could improvise this, or write a script or short story that describes the encounter. E.g, Erik from Crossing the Line meets Growls from Steady for This.
- Carnegie Touch and Taste:
 - Touch: Curate a selection of items inspired by the shortlists, place them into a drawstring bag and have shadowers try to identify each item using touch. As time goes on, and shadowers become more familiar with the shortlisted books, you can expand the game to include guessing the title of the book based on the collection of items in the bag.
 - Taste: Mine the shortlisted titles for references to food and use this to spark discussions about food they like and dislike. You could encourage everyone to bring a snack each week, focusing each session around one of the titles. Alternatively, you could throw a shortlist celebration party and have everyone contribute a dish inspired by one of the shortlisted books. and then offer them to try different foods from the shortlisted books. Make sure you have a conversation about allergies and dietary requirements well in advance!
- The Shadowing Tree: ask shadowing group members to write very short reviews or info about characters on leaf shaped cutouts or sticky notes. The cutouts could be hung on an artificial tree, or a real one, depending on your setting, whilst sticky notes could be arranged on a poster and displayed in the library.
- Think about who would play the main characters in a film or TV adaptation of one or more of the shortlisted titles. Create a cast list and explain your choices.

- Rewrite the ending of one of the shortlisted books. What have you changed, and why? Does it alter how you feel about the story?
- Have a go at creating spine poetry by using the titles of the shortlisted books as phrases/words. Share your creations online using the hashtag **#YotoCarnegies24**
- Create your own playlist to accompany a shortlisted book - you might want to highlight a particular theme, tap into the geography or time period of the book or create a playlist that reflects a particular character.
- Choose a character from one of the shortlisted books and reinvent them in the art style of your choosing. You could create your character digitally, draw them by hand, paint them or even make a sculpture. You could try creating the same character in a variety of styles - Manga, Pop Art, Disney - using different materials.
- Create your own book trailer for one of the books, or work together to make a trailer for the entire shortlist. This could be a TikTok style 'sell' of the book or a more traditional thematic video.

Book Activities

1. Poonam's art is influenced by Kalamkari textiles and Madhubani paintings. Research these creative styles. Visit <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/bihar%E2%80%99s-madhubani-art-decorates-its-environment-dastkari-haat-samiti/PwXsEPdZEYELg?hl=en> and <https://craftatlas.co/crafts/kalamkari> for ideas.
2. Poonam is inspired by nature. Consider the different patterns we see in nature - for example, the spots on a cheetah, the rings on a tree trunk. How many can you list? How many can you recreate on paper?
3. *The Midnight Panther* enjoys being at one with the stars. Research the different constellations you can see in the sky. Experiment with some star gazing of your own.
4. Act out the plot of *The Midnight Panther*. Take it in turns to have a go at playing the different roles- Leopard, Tiger, Lion, Panther.
5. *The Midnight Panther* feels happiest when roaming at night. Investigate nocturnal animals found in India and list five fun facts you've discovered about them.
6. Put together a powerpoint or slideshow about the animals featured in *The Midnight Panther*. Research the different strengths of each one and take your investigation further by exploring different types of big cat. How many can you find? Where do they live? What similarities/differences do you notice?
7. Invent your own big cat, and draw it in Poonam's signature style. Give it a name, a place to live and its own set of strengths and vulnerabilities. Create a poster or leaflet about your big cat.
8. Poonam's illustrations are inspired by folklore, and stories of Hindu Gods and Goddesses. Search your library, read and share some Indian folktales in your group.

Title: The Midnight Panther

Illustrator: Poonam Mistry

Publisher: Templar Books

These notes have been written by the teachers at the CLPE to provide schools and settings with ideas to develop comprehension and extended provision around Yoto Carnegie-shortlisted picturebooks and illustrated texts for children of all ages. They build on our work supporting teachers to use high-quality texts to enhance critical thinking and develop creative approaches in art and writing. We hope you find them useful.

These notes have been written with children aged 5–11 in mind. However, this is a sophisticated picture book which has scope for it to be interpreted in different ways with pupils of different ages.

Reading the book and close reading of illustration:

- *The Midnight Panther* is a story about self-worth, identity and individuality. The text picks up the distinct rhythms and language of traditional tales, and the distinctive visual style makes the story stand out. Extended time should be given for children to closely read the illustration, considering how the text and images work together to tell the story.
- Begin by looking at the front cover illustration, with the title covered. *What do you see? What does it make you think about? How does it make you feel? What makes you feel this way? Look more closely at the figure at the bottom. What do you think this creature is? What do you think you know about it? Now, focus on the potential setting: What does the background design suggest to you? Where do you think the story might take place? Uncover and read aloud the title, The Midnight Panther. What do you notice about the way in which the text is presented? Why do you think gold foil may have been used? Does the title give any further suggestions about the story that lies ahead? Does it confirm or change anything you were already thinking? From what you have seen, what do you think might happen in the story?*
- Now, share the front endpapers: *What can you see here? How do you think these illustrations relate to the front cover? Look at the colour palette, style and use of repeated patterns. What does this make you think of? Do the shapes remind you of anything? What mood does the illustration create? Why do you think these particular colours have been chosen? How might they relate to the title and front cover illustration and your initial ideas about the story?*
- Share the publisher and title pages and the first three spreads up to ‘found himself alone’. *What do you find out about the ‘little panther’ from these pages? How do the illustrations reinforce what we learn from the text? How do the illustrations show that ‘the forest was full of life and wonder and its beauty was like no other’? How does the spread of the ‘tall, mossy trees’ make you feel? What makes you feel this way? What is the impact of seeing things from Panther’s point of view?*
- Now share the next spread of four vertical panels, showing Tiger, Lion and Leopard alongside Panther. *What do you notice about how the three big cats are portrayed, and how they make Panther feel? What do their facial expressions and body language convey? Children might comment that Panther is shown as smaller and walking away, ‘into the book’. The three cats’ unkindness imposes a structure on the story’s development, as Panther seeks to copy Lion’s mane, then Tiger’s stripes, then Leopard’s spots. Share each episode in turn, up to “‘I don’t belong anywhere,” he said’, allowing time and space to closely read the illustrations and reflect on how they tell the story of each attempted imitation, using feathers, pollen and leaves in turn. How do the illustrations of the birds and their feathers, the ginger flowers and the leaves help you to understand how Panther has tried to take on the attributes of the other cats? Discuss the way that Poonam has given Wind, Rain and Sun human features and a voice. Why do you think these three natural forces have been personified? The children might observe that this gives them a voice to express that Panther does not need to be like the other cats.*

- Remind the children of the word 'Midnight' in the book's title and the star-filled endpapers before reading on from 'Darkness began to fall' and on to the end of the book, allowing time and space for the children to reflect on what they see. *What is the effect of the shift to night from day? The children might comment that moonlight — personified by Moon — helps Panther to see his 'wonderful, velvet fur [...] the colour of night'. How do you feel after reading this section? What makes you feel this way? Did you predict that night would reveal the Midnight Panther?*
- After reading, encourage the children to share their thoughts. *What did they like and/or dislike? What did it make them think? Do they have any questions about the book? How did it make them feel? How does the way the story is told — through the language and rhythm of traditional tales and the unique visual style — deepen their engagement with and understanding of the story?*

Engaging in illustration:

- Poonam Mistry says of her style: 'Inspired by my Indian heritage, I use geometric, repeat patterns and shapes — layered to mimic the intricate details found on Kalamkari textiles and the embroidery on traditional Indian garments. I use pen, ink and thick cartridge paper, then adjust the composition of these on Photoshop while adding colour and further details.' Revisit a range of spreads to see how she makes use of repeated patterns, both in full-page spreads like the endpapers, the depiction of Wind, Rain, Sun and Moon, but also in smaller panels.
- She calls her style 'a celebration of pattern from around the world', and beyond Indian folk art as her main inspiration, she is also influenced by William Morris wallpaper designs, Aboriginal art and African textiles. Discuss some of the different techniques that they might use to create repeating patterns, such as hand painting, block printing, stencilling, collage, zentangle, etc.
- Show how to create an outline of Panther, copying his pose as shown on the spread "Now I am just as dazzling as Leopard," he said.' Use black paper and soft pencil (2B–4B is ideal), showing how to break Panther into simple shapes (body, head, ears, tail, legs) so you have an outline. Provide the children with a range of triangle, teardrop, star and leaf shapes of varying sizes cut from paper in different shades of light colours from magazines. Invite the children to create their own collage inside Panther using the different shapes. Work alongside the children to create your own Panther. Provide white, copper, gold and silver Sharpie pens and invite them to add dots, dashes and shapes as inspired by the illustration style to capture Panther 'gleaming brightest in the dark'.
- Give space for the children to pin up and share their drawings, allowing them to look at the similarities and differences in their work and to talk about what is effective in their own work and that of others.

This sequence of activities was designed in partnership with CLPE, a UK-based children's literacy charity working with primary schools to raise the achievement of children's reading and writing by helping schools to teach literacy creatively and effectively, putting quality children's books at the heart of all learning. Find out more about their work, and access further resources and training at www.clpe.org.uk.