

Tiger Takes the Big Apple Teacher's Guide

Background

Tiger Takes the Big Apple is the fourth in the Project Earth-Mend Series of junior novels, following on from [Tiger Tames the Min Min](#), [Global Cooling](#) and [The Greenhouse Effect](#). As well as being an entertaining read, the novels are intended to inform children about key environmental issues confronting society today. The novels extend the notion of us 'all being in this together' to include animal species as active participants in the way we live our lives. Having many environmental truths being discovered by the animal characters in the book is an undercut of the view of human supremacy over other species. The message is that humans are largely responsible for the mess the Earth is in and that perhaps other life forms are in a better position to find ways to restore a balance, especially those species that have continued to live in harmony with Nature.

A team of extraterrestrial characters plays an important part in the novel. Aside from the attractiveness that beings from Outer Space will have for younger readers, these characters provide an objective view superior to the prevailing human-centric outlook on how we should relate to our environment. This makes it difficult for readers to dismiss the conclusions reached by Tiger and his native companions as just those of animals.

Above all, the Project Earth-Mend Series seeks to *suggest* rather than preach its themes. Readers are invited to participate in the adventures as equals and to discover environmental messages along the way.

Tiger Takes the Big Apple transports the Crew to North America, where they meet and have adventures with native species in Canada like the polar bears and wolves and then into the USA, where they encounter bees teaming up with electric cars, bats, beaver, a bald eagle, raccoons and rats – all of whom have to be educated about and sometimes recruited for Project Earth-mend.

At the climax of the novel, the Crew team up with President Obama and Madonna to make their case before the United Nations, assisted of course by Myrtle Gower and lashings of her magical Greenhouse Ginger Cheesecake before the final showdown with Mick and his Abell 2218 starships who have returned to the Earth to exterminate its polluting species.

Chapter 1 – *in which the Crew receive their next assignment*

1. Do you remember where the Project began back in *The Greenhouse Effect*? Which characters from Book 1 of the Series have remained on, and which ones are your favourites?
2. Do you remember the Abell 2218 robots from *Tiger Tames the Min Min*? Who is their leader? Did you think they had vanished forever after

their encounter with *the* Kangaroo at Uluru?

3. Eudora says that Inter-Galactic Command will have to decide if Earth is worth fighting for if the Abell 2218 starships invade? What would Earthlings have to do to get the Command onside?
4. Have you heard of The Big Apple? Why do some of the characters confuse it with Stanthorpe, an farming town in southern Queensland? Why would a big city be named The Big Apple?
5. There's been a change in Prime Ministers since *The Greenhouse Effect*. Who is Australia's new PM in this book, and can the Crew count on her support for the Project?

Chapter 2 - in which a Polar Bear skids onside

6. The Teleportation Module touches down in a place that Tiger describes as very "white". How do we know that this isn't The Big Apple? Why are polar bears suited to living here?
7. Do polar bears have anything to fear from Global Warming? If so, why can't they just migrate South to survive?
8. The polar bear they meet guides them down to Churchill, a town in the Province of Manitoba. Can you locate Churchill on a map of Canada? Why don't bears and town garbage dump sites mix?
9. Do you think that a Polar Bear Park in Churchill would help the bears and local residents as well as the environment?

Chapter 3 - in which Timber Wolves start a start-up

10. Tiger asks why Yellowstone Park is called *Yellowstone*. Can you help him out?
11. The timber wolves seem to be angry about something. What would that have to do with humans?
12. How does the "Anti-Matter" mirror work? Does it remind you of devices in other books you've read or films that you've seen?
13. What secret activities are going on in Timber Wolf Central? Would they be good for the environment?
14. Before the Crew arrived, the timber wolves had made a deal with Mick. They've given their word, but Tark has a way for them to get out of the deal. What's his plan?

Chapter 4 - in which the Electrics make a beeline for gold

1. Where the Crew land, the ground is completely white. What makes it so?

2. The big race between the electric cars is to be held on an unpaved track. How is that possible?
3. What do bees have to do with the race? Why have them involved?
4. Number 12 decides to enter the race? Did you think he had a fighting chance to win?
5. Have you heard of the expression “slow and steady wins the race”? How does Number 12 apply that advice in his run?
6. How does Number 12’s win benefit the Project?

Chapter 5 - *in which the Crew have to go a bit batty*

1. In many places, bats are protected species. Why?
2. With all the poo in their caves, how do bats avoid harming the environment?
3. How was Mick planning to enlist the bats in his plan to attack the Earth?
4. How does Tark convince the bats NOT to stop eating insects?

Chapter 6 – *of waterworks and other water sports*

1. Who is David Rattenborough in real life? Have you watched any of the series *Life on Earth*?
2. Beavers are well known for building dams. Is this good or harmful to the environment?
3. Martha the beaver talks about a poem by Robert Frost about a path less travelled. Google the lines ‘I took the one less traveled by’, read the whole poem and discuss what it says about beavers and their outlook on life.
4. The beavers are at work on a biofuel plant. What are the advantages of biofuels over other forms of power generation?
5. The beavers also have a plan for a “rain garden” in every backyard. How would that work, and would you like to have a rain garden in your backyard?

Chapter 7 - *in which dreams are dreamt and Syd gets snatched by a bald eagle*

1. Bald eagles aren’t really bald, so why are they called Bald Eagles?
2. What do the cyberworms have to do with Mick and his robots?
3. People who eat meat think that doing so is natural. How does the eagle defend snatching up Syd for his dinner?

4. The eagle explains that his species is in danger because the chemical DDT was used to spray crops years ago. How can it be that DDT is still causing harm long after farmers stopped using it?
5. Why is it especially important to Americans that they save the Bald Eagle from extinction?
6. The Bald Eagle has a lot a respect for Peregrine Falcons. Why?

Chapter 8 - *in which raccoons give them the key to the city – for a price*

1. The Crew finally arrive in The Big Apple. Why is it appropriate that the battle between them and Mick's robots should happen here?
2. Have you heard of Grand Central Park? Why is the park so special for the raccoons?
3. Is all graffiti bad for the environment? Should it be banned? What does the painter Andy Warhol have to do with graffiti?
4. While other animals find it a challenge to live in cities, raccoons seem to do very well. How have they adapted?
5. Do the first names of the chief raccoons remind you of anyone? How do their names fit their characters?
6. How does the raccoons' Gourmet Cleansing Unit fit into their survival plans? And are there any lessons can we learn from it?

Chapter 9 - *in which rats sell out to the only bidder*

1. To get the rats onside, Mick pretends to be the Pied Piper. Who was the Pied Piper, and should the rats have known better than to side with him?
2. The rats argue that they have had "bad press" that has convinced people they are dirty creatures. Do some research on rats to see if the "press" is wrong.
3. Mick has convinced the rats that they will inherit the Earth after the Great Cleansing. How does Tark pick holes in his argument?
4. The rats refer to Tiger as a "domesticated" species. How is that different from the "introduced species" Wanda calls him in *The Greenhouse Effect*?

Chapter 10 - *in which Greenhouse Ginger Cheesecake is on the menu again*

1. Rocky the Raccoon refers to the rats as "bottom feeders". What does he mean by that, and are all bottom feeders necessarily bad?
2. All of you have probably heard of President Obama, but who is

Madonna, and why would she be a good person to argue in favor of the Project at the United Nations?

3. Why is it important that the Crew try to convince the Security Council to act?
4. How does the President characterize his own country's record on combatting climate change, and is this a good way to go about convincing the Security Council members to join the Project?
5. Why isn't it easy for them to persuade the other members?
6. Would *you* have changed your mind about taking action on climate change after one slice of Myrtle's cheesecake, or would you have demanded more than one?

Chapter 11 - *in which first peace lines and then battle lines are drawn*

1. Why does Mick still want to destroy humanity, even after meeting with the President and members of the Security Council?
2. Is he right in his views about humanity and the chances of doing something about climate change?

Chapter 12 - *in which the Project is in the balance*

1. Why is it important that life forms other than humans are involved in the fight to defeat the Abell 2218s?
2. What lessons do we learn from the battle?

Chapter 13 - *in which Greenhouse Ginger Cheesecake goes inter-stellar*

1. Now that Mick and his robots have been defeated, is the Project finished?
2. Is there room for a fifth book in the Series? If you had to write it, what would it be about?