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EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

INCLUDES COMMON CORE
STATE STANDARDS CORRELATIONS

FUR, FINS, AND FEATHERS

ABRAHAM DEE BARTLETT AND THE INVENTION OF THE MODERN ZOO

Written and illustrated by **CASSANDRE MAXWELL**



From the time he was a little boy, Abraham Dee Bartlett loved animals. He was fascinated by anything with fur, fins, or feathers.

Abraham Dee Bartlett knew from a young age that he wanted to spend his life working with animals. But in Victorian London, there weren't many jobs that provided an opportunity to do that. Still, Abraham spent years gaining knowledge and pursuing his dream until he eventually became superintendent in the London Zoo. Driven by his compassion for the animals, Abraham dramatically improved the conditions of the zoo to ensure that the animals could be happy and healthy.

With charming illustrations and engaging back matter — including a timeline, author's note, and further reading list — Cassandre Maxwell's book brings to life the little-known story of the man who helped to create the modern zoo.

ABOUT *the Author and Illustrator*

CASSANDRE MAXWELL has written and illustrated six books for young readers and currently works as an adjunct professor at Cabrini College. She lives in Pennsylvania. Visit her website at www.cassandremaxwell.net.

PRAISE FOR *Fur, Fins, and Feathers*

Abraham Dee Bartlett and the Invention of the Modern Zoo

"The combination of interesting details, attractive illustrations, and direct narration make this introduction to a (most likely) little-known historical figure accessible and appealing . . . Sure to spark the interest of animal-loving children, this engaging portrait will also please history buffs and Anglophiles."

— *Kirkus Reviews*

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8½" x 11" ❖ 34 pages ❖ Ages 5–9

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TO ORDER

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If you have any suggestions for using *Fur, Fins, and Feathers* with young readers, we would be happy to hear from you.

Eerdmans Books for Young Readers

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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505

Discussion guide written by Debbie Gonzales



EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

- ❖ Vision
- ❖ Diligence
- ❖ Patience
- ❖ Humanitarianism
- ❖ Animal Care

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Before reading the book, describe the illustration on the front cover. Explain what the man is doing. Discuss how the animals and children surrounding him seem to feel about the man. Identify the setting. Tell the story behind the action in the front cover illustration. Predict what this story is going to be about. **(RL.1, RI.1)**

Observe the illustration in which Abraham Dee Bartlett is working on the hippopotamus in the Museum of Natural History. Explain how his job at the museum helped to prepare him for the work he would do later in his life. Tell how reading helped to prepare him as well. **(RL.3, RI.3)**

Tell how Bartlett's ability to be patient and care for creatures helped to save the red panda's life. **(RL.3, RI.3)**

Explain how Abraham Dee Bartlett "listened carefully to what the animals told him." Identify moments in the story where Bartlett's ability to "listen" grew. Discuss how he came to understand the needs of the animals. **(RL.3, RI.3)**

SPEAKING AND LISTENING / WRITING

Consider the quote, "Ladies must take notice that Mr. Bartlett is not responsible for bonnets or feathers stolen by the monkeys." Imagine a scenario in which a monkey steals a feather or a bonnet. Write a brief narrative paragraph depicting the scene. Illustrate your work. **(SL.2, W.2)**

Study the illustration depicting the tiger in the menagerie cage. Describe the crowds' emotional reaction to the tiger. Discuss how the tiger might feel about being trapped in the cage. Write a brief narrative from the tiger's point of view expressing his feelings at this moment in the story. Illustrate your work. **(SL.4, W.2)**

Summarize the life and work of Abraham Dee Bartlett. Explore an aspect of his story that interests you. Discuss how his love for all creatures made the world a better place for both humans and animals. **(SL.3)**

VOCABULARY USE AND ACQUISITION

The term *menagerie* is defined as being a collection of wild animals kept in captivity for exhibition. A *habitat* is defined as being a place where animals naturally or normally live or grow. Contrast a menagerie and a habitat. Identify which of the two best serves an animal's needs and why. **(L.4)**

To *sedate* an animal means to administer medication intended to calm them. Explain why Wallace, the ferocious lion, needed sedation. Describe the danger Bartlett faced when he clipped the lion's claw. **(L.4, RI.7)**

Define the word *fascinated*. Examine how Bartlett's childhood fascination with animals helped to define the man he would become. Consider how this lifelong fascination benefitted others. **(L.4, RI.2)**

Synonyms for the word *invention* are creativeness, discovery, and genius. A genius is someone who is wise and intelligent. Identify ways that Abraham Dee Bartlett was creative. List his discoveries. Discuss Bartlett's genius. **(L.4, RI.2)**





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CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

Turn to the illustration in which young Bartlett is depicted playing with the lion cubs. The text states that he felt sorry for the animals because they had no space to explore, no place to hide, and nothing to play with. Search through the story and discuss how he ultimately found a solution that could provide these things for his zoo animals.

(RL.5, RI.5)

Describe the action in the illustration featuring Abraham Dee Bartlett and the rhinoceros with the horn that grew downward. Observe the details, objects, and tools featured in this illustration. Tell the story depicted in this illustration. **(RL.35, RI.5)**

On the last page of the book, read the brief story that describes Bartlett walking into the giraffe-house wearing soft slippers. Explain how his ability to “listen to the animals” guided Bartlett’s understanding of the giraffes’ response to his quiet approach. Discuss how his interpretation of their needs reflects his caring nature. **(RL.5, RI.5)**

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

Fur, Fins, and Feathers was written and illustrated by Cassandre Maxwell. Describe the tools an author uses to tell a story. Identify ways that illustrators tell stories, too. Examine Ms. Maxwell’s illustrations. Discuss her special cut-paper collage artistic technique. **(RI.7, RL.7)**

Explain why people called Abraham Dee Bartlett “Papa.” **(RI.2, RI.7)**

Turn to the timeline in the final pages of the book. Access an online timeline creator (ReadWriteThink.org is noted below). Record the main events of Abraham Dee Bartlett’s life, the London Zoo and world events as instructed by the online timeline creator. When the *Fur, Fins, and Feathers* online timeline is complete, observe and discuss the life and times of Abraham Dee Bartlett. **(RI.2, RI.7)**

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/timeline_2/

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

Barrington-Johnson, J. *The Zoo: The Story of the London Zoo*. London: Robert Hale Limited, 2005.

Bartlett, Abraham Dee. *Wild Animals in Captivity: Being an Account of the Habits, Food, Management and Treatment of the Beasts and Birds at the Zoo*. Compiled and edited by Edward Bartlett. London: Chapman and Hall, 1899.

Krull, Kathleen. *What’s New? The Zoo!: A Zippy History of Zoos*. Illustrated by Marcellus Hall. New York: Scholastic, 2014.

Spelman, Lucy. *National Geographic Animal Encyclopedia*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2012.

