

Questions and Suggestions for Further Learning

Mothers and Babies and quite a few dads!

By Sarah Prince

This is my own personal favourite!

This book allows children to see just how similar animals are to us in many ways and shows them all the things Mums and Dads do for their babies.

Which includes putting up with sloppy kisses and giving sloppy kisses back!

Ending with – they love you to the moon and back and a whole lot more besides!

Other features of the book include:

- **A list of the wonderful things Mums and Dads do for their babies**
- **Some stunningly beautiful images of animal parents with their babies**
 - **Silhouettes telling their own little story of a baby elephant**
 - **Soft muted colours for babies and toddlers**
 - **A great deal of love!**
 - **And a great deal of humour!**

Suitable for ages 0-5, this book is the perfect book to share with even the youngest of babies. The text is written with a good deal of fun and humour, so be sure to demonstrate that in your voice as you read. Each page provides activities that most children will have experienced with their mums or dads or even their grandmas and grandpas. **I have tried to include things that every child can relate to, but for teachers and day carers be very careful if you have a child in your care whom you know has suffered severe abuse or neglect, then this is *NOT* the book to share with them.** I wrote it knowing that the parents and grandparents who care enough to buy this book for their babies will not be the sort of parents to abuse or neglect their children.

As with all my 'Questions and Suggestions' pages, I have included dozens of examples here, but don't think you have to ask them all, or do the actions in one sitting. These lessons could last for weeks! **Don't let too many lessons and learning interfere with the fun!** Many questions are aimed at older children, but with babies both ask *and answer* some fun questions along the way.

The front cover

When reading a book to any age child begin with the front cover. Read the title and the names of the author and illustrator, explain how one wrote the words and the other drew the pictures. Although in this case it's just me!

The inside cover

Point out the silhouettes of the butterflies and birds flying about because there's more to come!

The dedication page

Read the dedication page and explain what that is. That authors and illustrators often write the book for someone else, with a child, or a friend, or a loved one in mind. Since this is a book about Mums and Dads, I dedicated this book to my wonderful parents, my very practical and organised father and my delightfully ditsy mother. Luckily I inherited traits from both parents so have moments of being totally together and in the very next breath being a ditsy nutter! There's never a dull moment!

Introducing the silhouettes

The silhouettes in this book tell their own separate story from the book itself. The story is about a family of elephants, Mum, Dad and their easily distracted baby! Be sure to point them out as you read the book. Alternatively 'read' the silhouettes as their own separate little tale.

The introduction

Discuss with the children some of the things their parents do for them and how they show how much they love you. For the 2-5 year-olds talk about when their parents did for them when they were babies and how much looking after a baby needs. Don't forget to point out the silhouette and see if the children can guess who is coming into view!

Cuddling koalas!

Read the text and talk about how happy, safe and warm this little koala looks. Talk about how soft a koala's cuddles must be with all that fur. Talk about how they are both sleeping and ask if the children in your care sometimes sleep wrapped in mum or dad's arms. Talk about hugs and how good they feel. Use words such as *snuggling*, *cuddling* and *hugging* and how they all show someone you love and care for them.

Ask the children what they know about koalas. Have you ever seen a koala? Where do koalas live? What do they eat? Explain how young koalas live in a pouch then ride on mum's back until they can look after themselves. Talk about how funny it would be if we had to ride around on our parents backs! Look at her long sharp claws – what would they be for do you think? Do you have big black claws like that?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. mum's fluffy ears and her big black nose. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Tickle your baby's ears and point out how they aren't fluffy like a koala's. Point to the koala's nose then your baby's and tell them their nose is not like a big flat koala nose!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette of great big daddy elephant!

Safe little cygnets!

Read the text and talk about how these little swan babies are all snuggled up together. Count them together and explain how they are riding on Mum's back, hiding under her wing, as she swims in the water. This will be difficult to explain but point out that mum has her head upside down looking to make sure her babies are safe. That normally she has her head up with a very long neck (demonstrate this with your arm), but here it is all curled around so she can look under her wing. Use words such as *swimming*, *gliding*, *floating* and talk about how the babies have soft down to keep them warm instead of feathers like mum.

Ask the children what they know about swans. Swans are black in Australia, but in other countries they are pure white like this one. Demonstrate with your arm how tall and graceful their necks are so they can dip their heads deep into the water to find food.

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. three little babies, one, two, three, pointing to them as you count. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Stroke your baby's arm and talk about how it is smooth like yours without any feathers!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette and ask is that the mummy elephant do you think?

Berry eating baby birds!

Read the text and talk about what the parent bird is doing. That she is about to feed her babies, but which one will get the berry she has brought. Explain how she will bring a berry to every baby one at a time. Count how many babies there are and ask who will get the first berry? See if the children can guess what else a mummy or a daddy bird might bring for their babies to eat e.g. worms, grubs, or seeds. Ask what yummy things mum and dad bring you to eat. Do you eat berries sometimes? Does your mummy bring you worms or grubs?

Ask the children what they know about birds. Where do they live? Do they lay eggs? Did you come from an egg? Did your mummy lay an egg when you were born? What noises do birds make? Can you make some birdy noises? Use words such as *chirping*, *cheeping*, *squawking*, *screeching* and in the case of a kookaburra, *laughing*! Get the children to do their best kookaburra impersonations!

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. how many babies there are? One two, three! Or point to mum's sticky up feathers on her head! Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Point to your baby's hair (or yours!) and see if it sticks up too! I don't have three babies, I only have one, and that's you! Don't forget to point out the silhouette and talk about how we can only see Dad's bottom now!

Clean and tidy monkeys!

Talk about how funny this baby monkey looks while his mum (or dad!) clean his face. Talk about how monkeys pick fleas and ticks off one another. Does your mum or dad pick the fleas off you? Ask the children what their parents do to keep them clean and tidy. Talk about *bath time*, *wiping faces*, and *changing nappies*. Look at the monkey's hands and how similar they are to our hands. Ask the children if their toenails are black like this monkey!

Ask the children what they know about monkeys. Get them to do their best monkey impersonations! What kinds of monkeys are there in the world? Explain that monkeys and apes are different in that apes do not have tails. Get them to do some big gorilla impersonations and bang their chests with their fists!

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that little monkey's round tummy. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Rub your baby's tummy – is it round like that monkey? Hold your baby's hand and point out how we too have fingers and a thumb.

Don't forget to point out the silhouette and ask who is this coming after mum? He's just a baby!

Secret sharing bears cubs!

Read the text and talk about how happy mum looks hearing her baby's secrets. What do you think he might be saying? Talk about how fun secrets can be e.g. what we bought mummy for her birthday! When you're playing Hide and Seek – 'Don't tell me where you're hiding, it's a secret, I have to guess!'

Ask the children what they know about bears. What kind of bears are there in the world? e.g. grizzly bears, polar bears, panda bears and sun bears. Do we have bears in Australia? Ask the children why bears would need to be so big and furry. Do we need fur to keep us warm? Use words such as *furry*, *woolly*, *hairy* and compare it to our *smooth*, *soft* skin.

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at mum's big paws compared to her baby's. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Put your hand next to your baby's, show them how much bigger it is than theirs. Show them how big your thumb is next to theirs.

Don't forget to point out the silhouette and talk about how this little elephant looks like he is talking to the butterflies!

Sloppy giraffe kisses!

Read the text and talk about how what a sloppy kiss that giraffe baby would give his mum with that big long tongue! Everyone poke out their tongue, is your tongue black like this baby? Do you give sloppy kisses? Explain how babies often kiss with wet sloppy kisses because they can be very dribbly and haven't learnt how to kiss yet! Who do you like to kiss? Does your mummy or daddy kiss you? Use words like *sloppy*, *slurpy*, and *wet*! Of course, if the child you're reading to, is your baby, then make sure you share lots of sloppy kisses together!

Ask the children what they know about giraffes. Have you ever seen a giraffe? Talk about their long necks and their long tongues so they can reach up to high branches and curl their tongue around the leaves to pull them off. What are your tongues used for? What do you like to lick with your tongue e.g. ice creams and lollipops! Not leaves!

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that baby's big long tongue and big brown eyes. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Poke out your tongue and see if your baby can poke out theirs. My tongue is pink, is yours pink too?

Don't forget to point out the silhouette, it looks like baby has been left behind, perhaps that's because he stopped to talk to the butterflies!

Sloppy tiger kisses!

Read the text and talk about how this time it is mummy kissing her baby! If it is your child (or Grandchild) you're reading to, make sure you give them lots of sloppy kisses to demonstrate! Ask the children what kind of animal this is. Talk about how they have stripes so we know it's a tiger and not a lion, or a cheetah with spots. Point out their bright shiny eyes and how they are used to see in the forest at night. Let's see your bright, shiny eyes.

Ask the children what they know about tigers and how they are different to other big cats. Let's hear your best roar! Do you have a cat? Does he give you kisses with his tongue? Is your cat's tongue rough or smooth? I wonder if this tiger's tongue is rough. Who has a dog? I bet he likes to give sloppy wet kisses! Talk about the difference between *spots* and *stripes*, ask the children to point out some stripy things and some spotty things they can see.

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that tiger's great big tongue. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Give your baby lots of kisses (without using your tongue!). We're not like tigers, we don't use our tongues when we kiss, we kiss like this!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette and how the butterflies have come back to talk to the baby elephant again!

Laughing baby hippos!

Read the text and talk about how happy these two look laughing with one another. Ask the children if their mum and dad tell them funny things to make them laugh. Talk about what makes us laugh and how much fun it is to laugh. Talk about what great big mouths hippos have – open your mouth as wide as you can – is it as big as a hippo's mouth?

Ask the children what they know about hippopotamuses. Where do hippos live? Do they live in houses like we do? Talk about how hippos can sleep underwater and how they pop up to breathe but without waking up! Do you sleep underwater? Do you have whiskers on your lip like these two do? Talk about *whiskers*, *moustaches*, and *beards*. Does your daddy/grandpa have a moustache or a beard?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that baby hippos great big mouth! Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Open your mouth and get your baby to copy you. I bet if I tickle you, I can make you laugh!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette and ask where has that little elephant gone?

Wonder seeking crocodiles!

Read the text and talk about how this parent is swimming along in the water with their baby on their head! Explain how parents point out all sorts of things about the world around us and show us all sorts of wonders. How they take you to new places, or to meet new people, they point out different people, animals, flowers, buildings, signs, all sorts of things. But they don't carry us around on their heads like this!

Ask the children what they know about crocodiles. Have you ever seen a crocodile? We have lots of teeth too, but we don't have great big mouths full of super sharp teeth like a crocodile has. And we don't live in the water like these guys do. Talk about crocodiles, alligators and lizards. How they need to lie in the sun to get warm and how they have great big, very strong tails to help them swim. Do you use your tail when you go swimming?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that baby crocodile's happy little face. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Stroke your baby's skin and talk about how it is nice and smooth and not all bumpy like a crocodile.

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – look who's back! He's come back to talk to all those butterflies again!

Trunk holding elephants!

Read the text and talk about how this baby elephant is holding his mum's trunk like we hold hands – is it his Mummy's or is it his Daddy's trunk? How would we know? (we can't!!) When do you hold hands with your mum or dad? e.g. when you cross the road, when you are in a crowded place, to stop you running on ahead in case it's dangerous! All this kind of hand holding helps keep you safe, but we also hand hands when we are scared, when we want some comfort, just because we like it, and because it's fun to hold hands!

Ask the children what they know about elephants. Let me see your long elephant noses (ie their arms!) and let's hear you trumpet like an elephant! Point out this baby's enormous ears – let me see your ears are they as big as an elephant? Discuss how wrinkly this little elephant is and how wrinkly his mummy's trunk is! Do you have wrinkles like that? Do you have a big, long nose like an elephant?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that baby elephant's great big ears! Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Gently rub your baby's ears – you've only got neat little ears, not big flappy ones like that little elephant!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette 'Where's that baby elephant going – isn't he going the wrong way!'

Wise moose words!

Read the text and talk about how this little moose looks like he's listening to what Mum or Dad has to say. Talk about some of the things mum and dad tell us – sometimes they tell us things we don't want to hear like 'It's time for bed'. Other times they tell us fun things. What do your mum and dad tell you?

Ask the children what they know about moose and their babies. Explain how moose don't live in Australia, they live in forests by rivers and creeks, where it is very cold and often snows. Talk about how this little moose looks a lot fluffier than his mum, which is to help keep him warm in case it starts snowing.

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that baby moose and his sticky-up ears! Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Once again gently rub your baby's ears. 'You don't have big flappy ears like an elephant and you don't have hairy sticky-up ears like a moose. You have ears just like me!' and show them your ears.

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – 'He is definitely going the wrong way, his mummy and Daddy went the other way!'

Game playing chimpanzees!

Read the text and talk about how happy this little chimpanzee looks playing games with his mum, although I think it's his dad! Does your dad play games like this with you? Does he hold you up high? What other games do mum or dad play with you?

Ask the children what they know about chimps or chimpanzees. Look at how similar their hands and ears are to ours! Let's see you act like a chimpanzee! Look how big and strong his Daddy's arms are, they have lots of muscles like we do in our arms – show me your muscles! Does your Daddy have hairy arms, I bet they're not as hairy as this big Daddy!

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. 'Look at that chimpanzee daddy holding up his baby!' Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Sometimes I hold you high in the air, just like that!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – 'Oh look he's turned around again and is going back the right way now, but he doesn't seem to be watching where he's going!'

Cheeky little fox cubs!

Read the text and talk about how cheeky that little fox cub is grabbing his Mummy's (or Daddy's) tail. 'I'm glad I don't have a tail you can bite!'. Where are they going do you think?

Ask the children what they know about foxes. Have you ever seen a fox? Where do foxes live? Talk about the sounds foxes make, use words such as *barking*, *yipping* and *yelping*. Let's hear you do some barking, yipping and yelping! Look at this little cub's black paws, we don't have paws we have hands so we can do all sorts of things a fox can't do.

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. 'What is that naughty fox cubbing doing? He's biting his Mummy's tail!' Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Her tail is long and fluffy. You and I don't have a tail and we don't have hairy bottoms!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – 'Uh oh, he wasn't watching where he was going and now look what's happened, he's fallen over!'

Heavy rhino babies!

Read the text and talk about how cheeky this little rhino baby is lying on top of Mum (or Dad) like that! Do you sometimes lie all over your mum or dad? I bet he is very heavy because rhinos are much, much bigger than we are!

Ask the children what they know about rhinos. Where do they live? What do they eat do you think? (I have no idea!) Rhinos have big horns but this baby rhino's horn is only just beginning to grow. Look at his big toenails – are you toenails big like that?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. 'What is this baby rhino doing? He's sitting on his Mummy!' Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Can you see the mummy rhino? Point to the mother rhino's head. Here's her ear, here's her eye and here's her nose! And here's the baby rhino – we can see both his ears, his eye and his two big feet!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – 'Look he did fall over and now he's lying on his tummy!'

Travelling baby possums!

Read the text and talk about what a funny way this is to carry all those babies. Count the babies – there are seven little possum babies. imagine how funny it would be if our mummies had to carry us on her back like that! This possum mummy is climbing up a branch so she must be in a tree. Where is she going do you think? Back to her nest?

Ask the children what they know about possums. Have you ever seen a possum? Where do possums live? Explain how young possums live in a pouch then ride on mum's back until they can look after themselves. Some possums build nests in the ceilings of people's houses and you can hear them running around at night, because possums sleep during the day! Have you ever had a possum living in your house?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look how many babies this mummy has! I only have one baby and that's you! Point to each baby and count them slowly. Point to their eyes, ears and noses, but do it slowly. Two little ears, two little eyes and one little nose just like me – make sure your baby can see your face and point to your eyes, ears, and nose.

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – look how sad this baby looks after falling over, but it's ok because here comes Mummy elephant to help!

Cuddly little lion cubs!

Read the text and talk about how this little lion cub is snuggling up to his mummy. Point out how little his paws are compared to her great big ones! He looks so cute it makes me want to tickle his chest! Would that be a good idea do you think to tickle a lion?

Ask the children what they know about lions. Where do they live? How do we know this is a mummy lion and not a daddy one? Do you like snuggling up with your mummy and daddy? How do we know this isn't a tiger or a leopard?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. the mummy lion is looking straight at us, but her baby is having a snuggle. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Give your baby a cuddle – that's like you and I we like to snuggle up too!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – 'Help me Mummy!' I think he must be saying, 'I'm coming' says Mummy elephant!

Brave little racoon babies!

Read the text and talk about where this racoon and his Mum (or Dad) are. They are in the hollow of a tree. That must be where she has her nest. The baby looks a little frightened. It's a big wide world out there and all he's ever known is the inside of a tree! Do you think you would be scared to go out into the world for the first time?

Ask the children what they know about racoons. They look like they have a black mask across their eyes. They have thick grey fur and a black and white striped tail. We don't have racoons in Australia, but they are known for being very naughty and taking everything out of people's rubbish bins. They can even open door handles and get into people's houses and eat things from their cupboards!

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. the mummy racoon is looking out of her hole and here's her baby just peeking out – he's a little bit frightened I think. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. They have white faces and black noses with black fur around their eyes. Look at my eyes, I don't have any black fur around my eyes and neither do you!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – it looks like Mummy elephant is giving baby a kiss with her trunk – 'Up you get Little One' she says!

Loving little cheetah cubs!

Read the text and talk about how spotty these two cheetahs are. They look like they love each other a lot, don't they? Do you love your Mummy and Daddy as much as that?

Ask the children what they know about cheetahs. Where do they live? Do some of them have stripes? – oh no, silly me, that's a tiger! Look at all their spots – shall we count them? One, two, three... oh no that's way too many for me to count!

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that little cheetah cub looking up at his Mummy. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Stroke your baby's arm, you have lovely soft skin, it's not all spotty and furry like theirs!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – 'Come on' says Mummy elephant, 'You're alright now'. Point out how the flowers he was sitting on are all flat now!

Proud penguin parents!

Read the text and talk about how the mummy and the daddy penguin are black and white, but their baby is all grey and fluffy! Point out that the baby is standing on his Daddy's feet!

Ask the children what they know about penguins. Where do penguins live? Can penguins fly? Why is he standing on his Dad's feet do you think? It's because the ice and snow are so cold, his feet would freeze if he didn't, it's the only way for that little penguin to stay warm! Do you like standing on your Daddy's feet sometimes? Do you walk around like that or even dance together like that?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. here's a Mummy and a Daddy and a fluffy grey baby penguin. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Give your baby a cuddle – that's how I like to look at you, full of love and pride! (Your baby will obviously have no idea what pride means – or love for that matter! – but that's ok, they will one day!).

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – off they go again on their journey, they had better hurry up to catch up with Daddy elephant though!

Loving chimp mothers!

Read the text and talk about how much this mummy chimp loves their baby. Point out how cute the baby's little face is.

Ask the children what they know about chimpanzees. Point out the baby's big round eyes and little whiskery chin. Do you have whiskers on your chin? Their eyes look just like our eyes, but we have sticky out noses, not like their big flat ones! Do you like to cuddle with your Mum and Dad like that? How does it make you feel? Look at her hands, they look a bit like human hands, but much, much hairier! I'm glad we don't have hairy hands like that!

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at that mummy giving her little baby a hug. Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Give your baby a cuddle – that's just like you and me, I like to give you hugs like that, but your little face is much cuter than that baby!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – what's that little elephant doing now? He's holding his Mummy's tail with his trunk!

Contented little foals!

Read the text and talk about how happy and contented these two look lying together. They look like they love each other very much. They're sleeping with mummy resting her head on her baby.

Ask the children what they know about horses. What are baby horses called? What kind of noises does a horse make? Let me hear your horsey neighs! Do you know anyone with a horse? Can you ride a horse? Do you sometimes fall asleep snuggled up with your mum or dad?

When sharing this book with very young babies ask and answer questions and point to things in the pictures e.g. look at the mummy horse she has fallen asleep with her head on her little foal.

Give them time to focus on what they are seeing. Rest your head gently on your baby. I love you more than any other Mummy (or Daddy!) in the world!

Don't forget to point out the silhouette – that baby elephant looks happy now he's back with Mum!

The final silhouettes

There they all are, back together again, Daddy elephant, Mummy elephant and baby elephant! I wonder where they're going? To find some lunch perhaps, or to the river to have a swim, or to meet up with the rest of their herd? Where do you think they might be going?