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Dhavat Singh Uikey

The Gonds are amongst one of the largest tribes in and across Central India, and are known for their rich, intricate everyday wall art. Gond tribes are made up of different groups, the Pardhan Gonds being one of them. The Pardhans are renowned for their artistic skills, particularly in song and story-telling. The concept of a unique signature is vital to Gond painting, with the use of patterning and repetition forming the artist's distinctive style.

In [Where Has the Tiger Gone?](#), Pardhan Gond artist Dhavat Singh Uikey recalls a time when tigers and humans lived close to each other. In the process of offering us a glimpse of this forgotten world, he captures not only the mythic and iconic status of the great beast, but also a time, place and relationship that is lost to us.

Here is a set of activities, asking children to do a variety of tasks. An educator can take them through this list carefully and explain what needs to be done.

### TEXT

1. What is your favourite story in this collection? What is the story that makes you feel uneasy or even icky? Why?
2. In these stories, human beings appear to either fear the tiger or respect it. Which are stories of respect, and which, of fear? List the actual words or phrases which show respect and express fear.
3. Choose a story whose ending you would like to change—and change it.
4. In many of the stories, tigers share a world with what we would call ‘domestic’ animals: what is the relationship between the two kinds of animals? Imagine a ‘wild’ past for a domestic animal like the dog or cow—and come up with a story.
5. The author of these stories remarks that though he grew up with tiger tales, the animal had long left the environment he grew up in. There are many reasons for this, but major factors are, an increase in hunting the animal in British India, when over 80,000 tigers were killed, chiefly with advanced firearms; and the disappearance of their natural habitat and an increase in poaching. With the help of an adult, you can read more about what happened to India’s tigers in the book *India’s Wildlife History: An Introduction* by Mahesh Rangarajan (2005)

### ART

1. The author notes that these days one does not ever get to see a tiger fully, and ‘that’s a tragedy’. How is the tiger featured in this book? Do we see him or her whole or in parts? What does this way of depicting the tiger add to our understanding of the animal?
2. Examine the front and back covers of the book carefully: what do they communicate to the reader?
3. The illustrations in this book could be termed ‘symbolic’—that is, the picture that goes with each story contains the essence of that story. See if you could create an alternative symbolic picture for your favourite story in this collection.
4. The person who designed this book has used a limited set of colours: what are these colours? Why has the designer chosen these particular colours? If you were to draw a tiger which of these colours would you choose? How would the tone of the story be affected if the colour palette was completely changed?
5. You would probably have noticed that the tigers in this book are brilliantly patterned. Make a swatch of all tiger patterns. You could add your favourite pattern to your own drawing of a tiger.



## WHAT IS **EXPLORE THE BOOK?**

Our free resources and activity sheets help parents and educators looking to extend the scope of our books. They contain pointers and questions for discussion, as well as suggestions for activities based on the ideas, art and narrative in the book.

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