

BIGFOOT VS YETI: A LOVE STORY

JAMES FOLEY

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YEAR LEVEL: Y3–6

ABOUT THE BOOK

The clans have been enemies for as long as anyone can remember. The Bigfoots say it started when a Yeti threw a snowball across the rift. The Yetis say it started when a Bigfoot threw some fruit across the rift. Who could say for sure?

One night, a young Bigfoot and Yeti decide to find the end of the rift so they can finish the feud – once and for all.

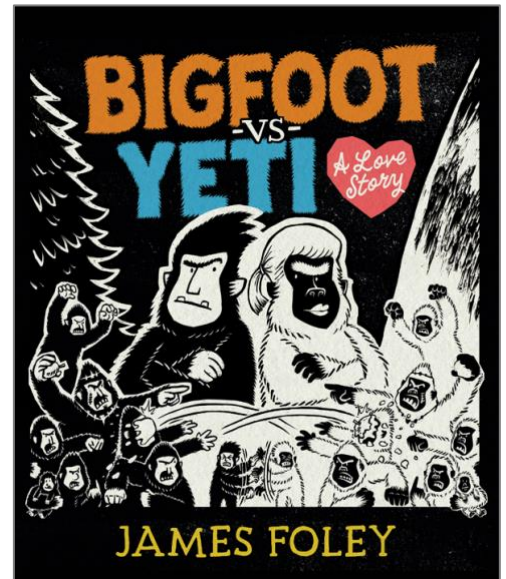
Things are about to get hairy ...

A fantastical fable from the multi-award-winning creator of *Stellarphant*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Foley makes children's books for children who read books. If you're a child and you're eating his books, you're doing it wrong. He is the author and illustrator of many picture books and graphic novels, including *Stellarphant*, *Happy Barry Capybara*, *Secret Agent Mole*, *Brobot* and *Gastronauts*. His upcoming books are *Bigfoot vs Yeti: A Love Story*, *Dungzilla* and *Chickensaurus*.

Legend says James can grow a beard in an afternoon. He is a massive Marvel movie nerd and comes from a long line of queuing enthusiasts. He lives near Freo/Walyalup with his wife Renae, their two kids and a labrador called Frankie.



THEMES

- Altruism
- Conflict resolution
- Friendship
- Resilience and managing change
- Tolerance and intolerance
- Trusting in your beliefs
- Understanding the difference between fact and opinion

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author's website: jamesfoley.com.au
- Britannica, Bigfoot: kids.britannica.com/students/article/Bigfoot/631810
- Britannica, The Abominable Snowman: kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Abominable-Snowman/390061

CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. A rift can have more than one meaning. At the beginning of this story, the reader is shown the physical rift that literally separates the two clans. There can also be a 'rift' between two people or nations when they don't agree on something. This sort of rift can be healed when one or both sides are prepared to see the other's point of view and find common ground. Once Bevan and Yolanda begin to **'see each other clearly'** and help each other out, the rift between them becomes smaller and smaller. Have you ever had an argument with someone and tried to resolve it in this way? What happened? Discuss in pairs, then share with the class if you feel comfortable doing so.
2. What is a feud? Explore the etymology of this word. What time in the past was this word more commonly used and what was happening at the time?
3. What does the word **'fathom'** mean? What synonyms can you find for it?
4. Look at the language in the book, particularly the verbs. Note how the same verb is used for both the Bigfoots and the Yetis to start with (they both threw the fruit and snowballs) but as the feud intensifies, the author uses different verbs that have similar, but stronger, meanings (e.g. 'sling' and 'fling'). The same verbs are then used again for both clans towards the end of the story. What do you think the author was trying to show by doing this?
5. Choose a verb from the book and find as many synonyms as possible. As a class, create a word cline ordering the verbs from the weakest to the strongest, showing increasing intensity of meaning. E.g. mumbled, whispered, said, shouted, yelled.
6. The author began the story with black-and-white illustrations and then moved on to colour.
 - a. At what point in the story do we begin to see a little colour?
 - b. When do we see lots of colour?
 - c. What is the significance of this?
 - d. Why do you think there are some black-and-white illustrations towards the end of the book?
7. Discuss how some pages show one illustration, and others show two parallel illustrations.
 - a. Why does it vary from page to page?
 - b. How is this reflective of what is going on in the story?
8. Discuss the concepts of symmetry and asymmetry. Find examples of each in the illustrations.
 - a. Why do you think the illustrator chose to use symmetry throughout most of the book?
 - b. At what point is asymmetry used? Why do you think it's used at this point?
9. The author tells us the clans **'hurl insults into the wind'**. What do you think this means?
10. Discuss the use of body language and non-verbal clues in the illustrations, then discuss their importance in illustrated stories in general.

Creative Writing

1. Both Bigfoot and the Yeti are known as cryptids – an animal with limited or disputed evidence of existence.
 - a. Research Bigfoot and Yeti, and write descriptions for both, including where they are said to be found. Do you believe they exist?
 - b. Create a text in the form of a newspaper article to detail what is known about them and conclude with a paragraph stating your opinion and why you believe this.
2. The author has used figurative language to enhance the mood of the setting:
 - a. Personification (where a human characteristic is given to a non-living thing) is used to great effect when **'The forest trembled and the mountains moaned'**. What other examples of personification can you find in the book?
 - b. Onomatopoeia (where the word used almost sounds like its meaning) is also used effectively. Discuss examples as a class and practise reading these lines out loud to hear the sounds. Find other examples in the book or think of your own ones. Write a selection on the board and get the students to put them into sentences.
 - c. Alliteration (the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words) is used extensively throughout the book. One example is when **'The Yeti would sling snowballs and the Bigfoot would fling fruit'**. What other examples of alliteration can you find in the book?

3. Have students write a narrative or comic strip about a conflict between two groups. Brainstorm different settings or rising action with the students, using figurative language to add detail and interest. Focus on them using personification, onomatopoeia and alliteration in their descriptions to enhance the mood of their story.

The Arts and Drama

1. Create a class display of the Bigfoots versus the Yetis. Decide first if you want it to be with the rift evident, once they have made friends, or both (this will determine if the display is mostly black-and-white or has colour.) Divide the class into two groups – one group can do the Yetis and the other the Bigfoots. Brainstorm with each group how they can create the fur-like appearance (using items such as sponges, feathers or wooden forks, etc.) and encourage the students to be experimental with texture.
2. The illustrations in the book convey a lot of meaning about how the characters are feeling through body language and non-verbal facial clues. Discuss how someone's feelings and emotions can be conveyed through body language and facial expressions, and that it can be very important to note these things during conversations. Examples of non-verbal communication:
 - a. facial expressions – nodding, smiling, frowning, eyebrows raised
 - b. eye contact – constant, staring, glaring, rolling eyes (can be culturally specific), lack of eye contact/looking elsewhere
 - c. gestures – waving, pointing, touching, clicking pens
 - d. posture – open body versus arms crossed, shoulders/body slouched, sitting upright
 - e. personal space can demonstrate closeness, sympathy, dominance or hostility
 - f. paralinguistics – not what we say but how we say it, e.g. tone of voice, pitch, volume and inflection
3. The students can work in groups of two or four for the following activity:
 - a. Prepare scenarios on cards for one student/pair to read out. The others in the group react to the scenario using only body language and facial expressions. The one(s) who read the scenario must guess their response (e.g. happy, excited, surprised, disappointed, upset, angry, etc.)
 - b. This can be made more challenging by giving them a choice of responses to the scenario, i.e. they were unsure but really wanted to give it a go/they knew they would be terrified to try this/they'd done this before, and it was so much fun, etc. It can also be acted out in front of the class for the others to guess.

Health and Protective Behaviours

Managing differing opinions: towards the end of the story, the words used, as well as the illustrations, portray the anger and frustration felt by both sides until they are made to stop by Bevan and Yolanda, and are made to review the situation. Peace is achieved with most of both clans choosing to live together in harmony, while those who cannot accept the situation are sent back to the rift to live.

1. Discuss how it is acceptable for people to have different opinions about a topic, and how communication style can be important to keep things from developing into an argument. We should be able to discuss things in an open manner and not undermine the other person's opinion, even if we disagree with them. By listening to the other party's opinions, and talking and acting in an assertive but non-threatening manner, peace can be maintained.
2. Practice role-playing some situations with assertive (rather than aggressive or passive) behaviour. Examples of assertive communication:
 - a. firm, relaxed voice
 - b. steady, even pace of talking
 - c. not too loud or too quiet
 - d. cooperative comments, e.g. 'What are your thoughts on this?'
 - e. seeking others' opinions
 - f. willingness to explore other solutions
3. Ask students to brainstorm how they might have resolved the conflict between the Bigfoots and the Yetis. How could they deal with it differently now after discussing the above?
4. Understanding the difference between fact and opinion. A fact is something that can be proven to be correct. An opinion is a statement of a person's feelings on a subject or object that can't be proven.

- a. Prepare a game with various fact and opinion statements. Students start as one group. Give them a statement and have two areas of the room they can go to – one if they think the statement is a fact, the other if they think it is an opinion. If they get it wrong, they sit out. Continue with statements until only one or two students remain. Afterwards, discuss the statements they found tricky to decide if it was a fact or opinion and why.

Biological Sciences

1. Research the different habitats where Bigfoots and Yetis are said to be found. What animals do we find there now? This could be done as a class poster.
 - a. Choose one animal from either of the habitats above and write a fact sheet about it. Include a detailed description of its appearance, what it eats and how the animal has adapted to survive and thrive in that environment. This could be done through an annotated picture.

Civics and Citizenship

1. Discuss this book in relation to the tolerance paradox. Should a tolerant society tolerate intolerance? Why or why not?



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