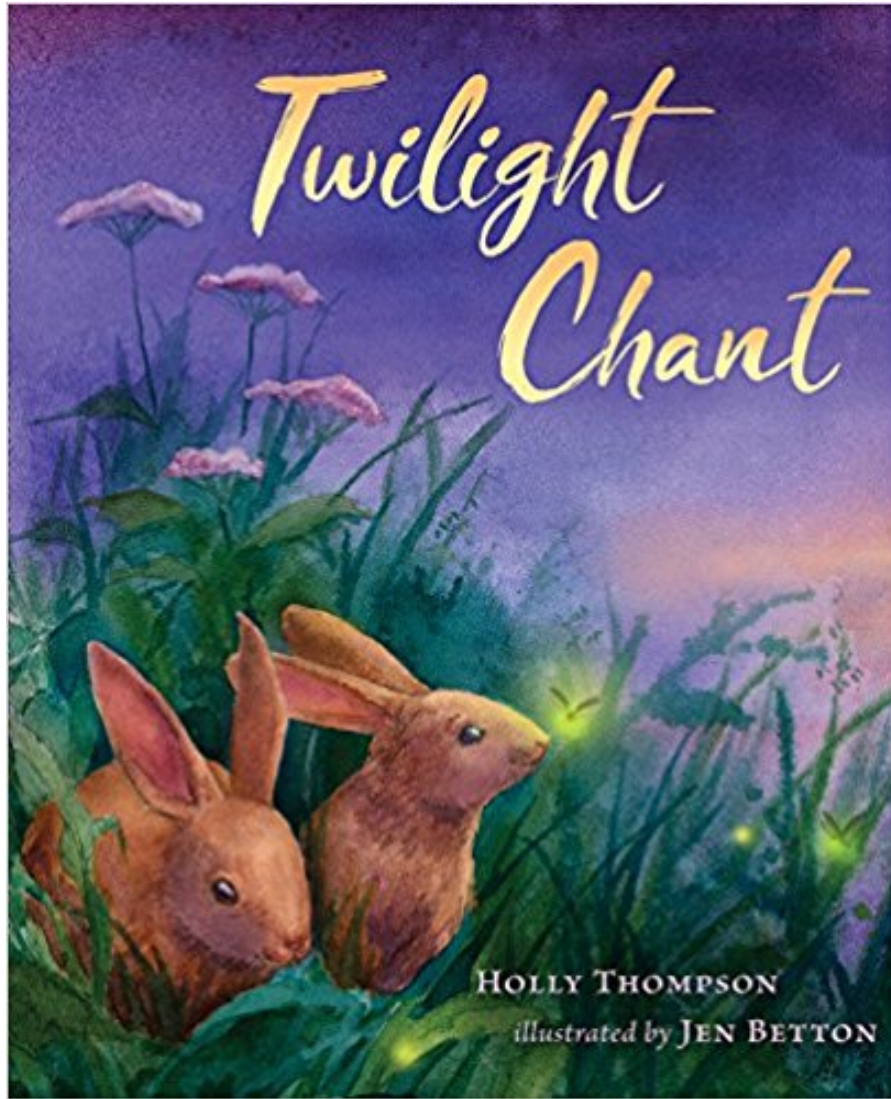


Twilight Chant

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen
based upon the picture book
written by Holly Thompson and illustrated by Jen Betton



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Author, *Twilight Chant*

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Stories, a collection of 36 Japan-related short stories, including ten in translation. She writes frequently on Japanese culture and is a columnist for the ANA inflight magazine Wingspan. A graduate of the NYU Creative Writing Program, she writes poetry, fiction and nonfiction for children, teens and adults, serves as Regional Advisor of SCBWI Japan (Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators), and teaches writing in Japan, the U.S., and places in between. Follow Holly at www.hatbooks.com or on Twitter @hatbooks

Jen Betton
Illustrator, *Twilight Chant*

Jen Betton loves to draw and make up stories with her pictures. In kindergarten, she got into trouble for drawing presents on a picture of Santa, and she's been illustrating ever since. Her picture books include *Twilight Chant*, written by Holly Thompson, published with Clarion, and her upcoming debut as an author-illustrator, *Hedgehog Needs a Hug*, published with Putnam. She has a BA in English, and a BFA and MFA in Illustration. She now lives in Boston with her husband and two children. You can see more of her work at <http://www.jenbetton.com/>.



Marcie Colleen
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This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides, Marcie can often be found writing books of her own at home in San Diego, California. Visit her at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

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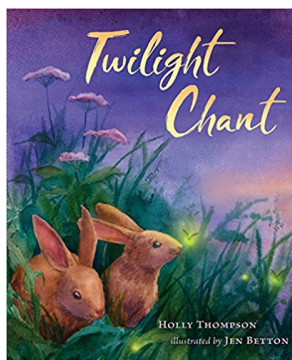
How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Twilight Chant* is designed for students in kindergarten through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Twilight Chant* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

Book Information



TWILIGHT CHANT

Age Range: 4 – 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool – 3

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A lyrical exploration of the transition between day and night and of the animals who thrive during this special time.

As day slips softly into night, sharp eyes catch glimpses of the special creatures who are active at dusk.

Lyrical text and lush art capture the richness and life of this magical time in a sumptuous picture book that will inspire budding naturalists and anyone who has ever chased a lightning bug at twilight. An author's note about twilight is included.

"A lovely, lyrical visual and verbal exploration of the wonders of twilight."—Kirkus Reviews

"A lovely science picture book."—Booklist

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English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Before reading *Twilight Chant*,

Help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: jacket, front cover, back cover, title page, spine, end papers, and jacket flap.

The Book Jacket~

- Look at the full book jacket. Describe the illustration in your own words.
- What time of day do you think it is in the jacket illustration?
- How many kinds of animals do you see?
- Mimic what the animals are doing. How does it make you feel?
- Can you guess what the story might be about? What are some clues you can find in the cover and title page illustrations?

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

- Make a list of the animals that appear in the story and what they are doing.
- Who are the humans in the story? What are they doing?
- How does the story begin? How does it end? What changes?

Let's talk about the people who made *Twilight Chant*.

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Take a close look at the illustrations throughout the book.

- Can you guess what materials Jen Betton used to create the illustrations?
- Jen uses many colors to paint the sky. How many colors do you see for the sky throughout the book? How do the colors change from the beginning of the book to the end? Why do you think she chose to depict the sky in this way?

Look closely at the following spreads:

The "trot trot" spread

- Can you find
 - Three rabbits?

- A broken-down fence?
- Two birds?
- Several fireflies? (Count them!)
- Three people?

The “beat your wings” spread

- Can you find
 - One cat?
 - Three people?
 - Several June bugs? (Count them!)
 - Four flowers?

The “prowl slow” spread

- Can you find
 - Four June bugs?
 - Two mice?
 - One cat?
 - Several fireflies? (Count them!)

Writing Activities

The Rhythm of Poetry and *Twilight Chant*

Twilight Chant was written by Holly Thompson as a long poem. This poem is like a chant which has a repeated rhythmic phrase.

Listen to the poem’s sounds as it is read aloud.

- What phrase is repeated?
- What words are repeated?
- What sort of rhythm is created in the poem? Can you clap the rhythm as you listen?

Pick a time of day or a time of the year or even a kind of weather to write a poem about.

- First, list interesting animals or plants that might be active at that time of day or year or in that weather.
- Next, to each animal or plant name, write action words that relate to that animal or plant. Be creative!
- Then, like *Twilight Chant*, write a poem about that time of day or that time of year or weather.

- Be inventive with the way you use your words.
- Try to create a rhythm in your poem.
- You can make your poem like a chant by repeating a line in each stanza or every other stanza.

Small Poems

Read some of Valerie Worth's *Small* poems.¹

Here is an example of one of her poems in the book:

cow

The cow
Coming
Across the grass
Moves
Like a mountain
Toward us;
Her hipbones
Jut
Like sharp
Peaks
Of stone,
Her hoofs
Thump
Like dropped
Rocks:
Almost
Too late
She stops.

Notice the many details that create a picture of the cow.

- Make a list of nouns in a Valerie Worth poem.
- Make a list of action words or verbs in a Valerie Worth poem.
- Do you see similes in the poem? If so, list those.

Then, choose one of the crepuscular animals in *Twilight Chant* and write a "small poem" about it. Be sure to include nouns, verbs, and at least one simile or metaphor.

¹ Valerie Worth's *All the Small Poems and Fourteen More* with pictures by Natalie Babbitt. Square Fish/Macmillan. 1996.

Rewrite your poem on a large piece of paper and include a drawing of the animal. Hang your poem poster on the classroom wall.

Pay Attention ~ observing nature

Read this stanza from Mary Oliver's poem, *Sometimes*:²

*"Instructions for living a life.
Pay attention.
Be astonished.
Tell about it."*

As a class, discuss the poem.

- What might the poem mean, in your own words?
- In what ways can you follow Mary Oliver's advice?

Have students create a Nature Journal:

- Gather together 6-8 pieces of paper (some can be lined for writing, others blank for drawing).
- Add on top a piece of blank paper for the cover.
- Punch three holes through the pieces of paper and the cover sheet.
- Cut a piece of cardboard just a bit larger than your paper.
- Punch three corresponding holes in the cardboard.
- Place the papers on top of the cardboard and top everything with the cover sheet.
- Line up the paper and cardboard holes. Then tie together with yarn or string.
- Copy Mary Oliver's poem onto the cover sheet and decorate.
- You are now ready to head outside and observe nature.

Guide students in observing nature.

- Find a "sit spot" outside where you can sit quietly and observe. Be sure to have your Nature Journal and something to write with. You may use colored pencils, crayons or markers if you prefer.
- Sit for at least thirty minutes. You may set an alarm.
- Look all around you. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you feel?"
- Find something you want to write about or draw and record it in your Nature Observation notebook.

² From Mary Oliver's, *A Thousand Mornings: Poems*. Penguin Books. 2013

- Continue to observe nature in the same spot, thirty minutes at a time, for a whole week. Every day, take care to notice something different to write about or draw.

Provide an opportunity for students to share about their observations in "*Tell about it.*"

- Share your notebook with the class.
- What did you discover when you paid attention?
- What did you feel? What did you smell? What did you hear? What did you see?
- Did the weather ever change? How was it different? How did the weather (light, temperature, wind, rain, snow, etc.) affect the nature around you?
- What astonished you?
- If you were to continue observing nature, what spot would you choose? Why?

Language Activities

Poetry is Playing with Language

The Poetry Box

Decorate an empty shoe box and cut a hole in one of the ends.

You can attach a sock (with the toes cut off) to the hole on the end to make it easy to guide little hands in and out of the box. Attach one end of the sock around the hole and the rest of the sock serves as a tube into the box.

Place various items in the box (i.e. A shell, pinecone, feather, pine needles, an acorn, etc.) These should be very tactile items from nature. The kids will not be able to see inside the box, but only feel around.

Although they might be able to identify the object, the game is to DESCRIBE the item using adjectives. (i.e. Hard, soft, squishy, bumpy, like a twister, like etc.)

Each child should have a chance to reach inside the box. See how many words the class can come up with and create a list.

Once the descriptive lists are created, students can turn their lists into a poem with the object name at the end. These can also be made into a lift the flap game with the object revealed when the flap is lifted.

For example:

*smooth and rough
curled in and around
with a sharp tip
that points
to a friend
SEASHELL*

Painting Pictures with Words

Poems paint pictures in our minds with words.

- Have the students close their eyes while listening to a poem that uses metaphor and imagery (such as "Fog," by Carl Sandburg, "Porcupines" by Marilyn Singer, "Winter Poem" by Nicki Giovanni, or "Firefly" by Jacqueline Woodson, for example).
- Read the poem two or three times slowly.
- Remind the students to keep their eyes closed and imagine the pictures the words paint as they listen.
- Then have the students draw a picture of what they "saw" as they listened.

Now, look closely at one of the illustrations in *Twilight Chant*.

- Use sensory details (details of sight, sound, touch, smell and taste) to re-paint the illustration using words to create a poem.

I Am—Collaborative Animal Poem

Choose an animal from *Twilight Chant* or an animal not in the story--mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish, invertebrate, etc.

Title the poem with I Am: for example, "I Am a Skunk"

Brainstorm about the animal for fresh and interesting details.

Then, as a class, build a free verse poem about the animal to perform with gestures or poses.

Students can then create an I Am poem about an animal of their choice.

Action! Learning about Verbs

There are many verbs throughout *Twilight Chant* and readers will have fun trying to find them all.

Re-read *Twilight Chant* aloud and ask students to listen carefully for verbs.

- As soon as they hear a verb, they should raise their hand.
- Repeat the phrase using the verb. What might it mean, based on context?
- Look up the verb in the dictionary. (*Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this or the teacher can.*) Read the definition.
- Get up on your feet and act out the verb! Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.
- Create a list of the verbs and hang it on the wall. Revisit it again and again.
- Write a poem using action words to show an animal's behavior.

Create a Bedtime Library

Twilight Chant might be categorized as a bedtime story. Why do you think?

Gather bedtime picture books from the library or ask students to bring some in from home.

- What makes these books good bedtime stories?
- What are some words to describe the illustrations in these books?
- What are some similarities between the stories?
- What are some differences? One by one, read the books aloud to the class and discuss.
- Make a list of some of the soft, soothing words in the story.

Then, as a class or individually, write an original bedtime story using some of the elements discovered and discussed.

Speaking and Listening Activities

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some other ways to bring *Twilight Chant* to life in your classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills!

Mime

- While the teacher reads the book aloud, students can act out the animal and human actions in the book. Emphasize body motion and facial expressions, as well as listening skills. Add some instrumental music to set the tone.

- Make and record a radio version of *Twilight Chant*. Students decide what to use for the sound effects to create a mental picture of the story.

Drama

- Create a TV commercial to encourage people to read *Twilight Chant*.

Choral Reading

- Using the text of *Twilight Chant*, take the role of the narrator while students chime in with the nature sounds.

Math

Word Problems

For younger students, the use of pictures or props might be needed to figure out word problems.

- 1) Five rabbits are eating in a field. A fox jumps the fence and scares one of the rabbits away. How many rabbits are still eating in the field?

$$5 - 1 = ?$$

- 2) The skunk digs and finds four worms. The skunk digs some more and finds three more worms. How many worms does the skunk find?

$$4 + 3 = ?$$

- 3) Six june bugs rest on a flowery bush. Three fly away to find juicier leaves to munch. How many june bugs are still resting on the flowery bush?

$$6 - 3 = ?$$

- 4) Two little mice hide on a tree branch from the prowling cat. One more mouse scurries up the tree branch to join them. How many mice are hiding on the tree branch?

$$2 + 1 = ?$$

- 5) There are nine golden glowing windows in the house. Seven lights in front of windows are turned off. How many golden glowing windows are still in the house?

$$9 - 7 = ?$$

Under Where? Spatial Sense

Using illustration spreads in *Twilight Chant*, focus on developing students' spatial sense.

Look at the "trot trot" spread in *Twilight Chant*.

Describe where the fox is standing.

[examples: in the grass, next to a bush, to the left of the rabbits]

Describe where the rabbits are.

[example: in the brush, under the fence, in front of the people, between the people and the fox]

Describe where the fence is.

[examples: beside the people, above the rabbits, far away from the fox]

Describe where the people are walking.

[examples: towards the river, away from the fox, next to the fence in the grass]

Have students pick another spread in *Twilight Chant* and discuss where things are spatially within that illustration.

Now look around your classroom (or, if possible, do this in an outdoor space).

- Describe where your desk sits.
- Describe where your teacher is sitting or standing.
- Describe where the chalkboard/whiteboard is.
- Describe where the clock is.
- Describe where the door is.
- Can you describe where anything else is?

"What Time is it, Red Fox?" game

Some animals, like foxes and coyotes, emerge at twilight to feed on crepuscular animals. Show students the illustrations of the red fox in *Twilight Chant*.

"What time is it Red Fox?" is a variation of a classic version of tag that helps kids work on listening skills, counting skills and coordination required for running while also enjoying being outside and playing with friends.

Select one person to be Red Fox to start off the game. This person needs to stand, facing away from the group, at either the other end of a small field or a cleared area suitable to run around. Determine the size of the playing area based on the age and ability of the kids playing.

Line all the other children up at the other end of the area. Make sure there is a distinct line or markers to note the starting place.

Call out as a group "What time is it Red Fox?"

Have Red Fox respond with a random time, such as "five o'clock" or "eleven o'clock."

Step forward, with the kids, as many spaces as Red Fox said it was time. So, if Red Fox said it was three o'clock step forward three spaces.

Repeat this asking, answering and stepping pattern.

Beware that at any time Red Fox can answer "Twilight!" when asked the time. When this happens, the child playing Red Fox will face the other children and chase them back to the original start line.

Become the next Red Fox if you were the first person tagged before returning to the original starting line.

Science

Crepuscular Animal Research Project

Make a list of all the animals in *Twilight Chant*. You may refer to the list at the back of the book.

Assign each student or pair of students a crepuscular animal (an animal that is active at twilight) to research on the Internet.

Information to be gathered must include:

- Type of animal
- A photograph
- 3 words that describe the animal
- What the animal might do during twilight
- The eating/feeding habits of the animal

- The sleeping habits of the animal

Once the research is completed, have the students create an information card for the animal. Then students can write a lullaby for the animal, based on their research and scientific facts. Students can share their research and lullaby with the class.

Crepuscular, Diurnal, or Nocturnal?

Some animals are crepuscular. They are mainly active during twilight.

Some animals are diurnal. They are mainly active during the day.

Other animals are nocturnal. They are mainly active at night.

Lead your students through a discussion of which animals fit into these three categories.

Measuring Twilight

Create a poster or draw a diagram to show students the three stages of twilight:

1. Civil twilight (when the geometrical center of the sun is 0-6 degrees below the horizon)
2. Nautical twilight (when the geometrical center of the sun is 7-12 degrees below the horizon)
3. Astronomical twilight (when the geometrical center of the sun is 13-18 degrees below the horizon)

The duration of twilight is the longest around the time of the summer and winter solstices and shortest around the time of the spring and fall equinoxes. Twilight lasts longer at higher latitudes. In areas located more than 50 degrees north or south of the equator, around the time of the summer solstice, twilight can last from sunset until sunrise.

Show students each illustration in *Twilight Chant* and focus on the light.

Ask the students, based on the colors seen in the sky, can you guess which stage of twilight is depicted in each spread?

Using watercolors, paint your own sky based on one of the three stages of twilight.

What Causes Day and Night?

The earth revolves around the sun. Meaning, half of the planet is always facing the sun, making daylight. The other half of the planet faces away from the sun, which means that it is dark and in nighttime.

However, the earth is also rotating and tilted on its axis while it revolves around the sun, which effects the length of the day, night, and twilight. This creates seasons.

At the equator, day and night are equal length—12 hours of each. But the farther you travel from the equator, the longer the daylight hours. This is why the hours of daylight are longer in the summer and shorter in winter.

The following video from Crash Course Kids helps demonstrate:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l64YwNI1wr0>. Conduct your own search on YouTube to view other examples.

Students can “act out” the rotation and revolution of the earth and how it effects daylight using this activity.

You will need:

- A lamp without the shade
- A globe of the earth (or a ball, if a globe is not available)
- A dark room

Place the lamp in the middle of the room on a table. This represents the sun.

Hold the globe (or ball) a few feet from the lamp.

Then, walk in around the lamp, holding and slowly spinning the globe.

Make note of where the sun shines on the earth and where the earth is in darkness.

Create a PSA

As a class, create a list of all the reasons why animals in nature are important.

What wildlife--plants and wild animals--do you find in your own community?

Make a list of ways your community can protect the natural environment for these plants and animals.

Then, create a video in which you inform and motivate others to protect the animals and plants in their communities.

Social Studies

Biodiversity Mural

Throughout history, art has been used to transform public spaces into places of beauty and reflection. Most importantly, these pieces of public art are used to bring about tighter community and to “give back” for all that we have been given. Some public art also draws attention to the environment and wildlife

Look up examples of public art on the Internet: in subways, under bridges, and in parks. Be sure to find examples of traditional murals painted on walls, but also sculptures and knit-bombing.

How can art be used to foster community and create awareness of the natural environment?

- Bring people together to create it
- Depict local wildlife in the artwork
- Create a space that people will want to visit and hang out in

Then,

1. Choose a space within the school that would be right for a mural of local wildlife.
2. Brainstorm a mural or other piece of temporary art called “Our Biodiversity” that can be created in this space.
3. Brainstorm how this mural can celebrate the many plants and animals found in your own community.
4. Involve as many people as possible in the creation.

A Week of Twilight

Twilight occurs twice each day—before sunrise and after sunset. Many students are aware of the changing times of sunrise and sunset throughout the year, but may be less aware of periods of twilight each day. Encourage students to pay attention to the environment during twilight.

Choose a week for a twilight focus.

Make a Twilight Diary with seven pages. At the top of each page, print a heading with the date, day of the week, and the sunrise and sunset times in your area for that date.

Create three large boxes on each page: 1. before sunrise observations, 2. after sunset observations, 3. space for drawing a picture

Have students observe twilight for a week. Encourage them to pay attention during morning and/or evening twilight and record observations.

In the chart have students do the following:

- Write down words to describe the sky during twilight.
- Can you see any animals outside? Inside? Write the type of animal and write words to describe the animal's behavior.
- Are any people active outside? Inside? What are the people doing during twilight? Write some notes.
- Are lights on outside? Inside? Where and why? Write some notes.
- Draw a picture of what you see. Use crayons or colored pencil to show the colors of the sky.
- After 10 to 30 minutes, does the sky change? How? Describe.

Twilight North and South

Help students understand the effect of latitude on twilight times.

Have students research the sunrise and sunset times in your location.

Based on the sunrise and sunset times, have students estimate the general time of twilight before sunrise and of twilight after sunset.

On a world map, mark your location. Then mark several locations in the northern and southern hemispheres that are north and south of your location.

Have students research the sunrise and sunset times in those locations.

As a class compare the times. What do you notice?

If you have Internet in your classroom, you can show students a live map of nighttime, twilight and daytimes.

If possible, partner with a school at a significantly different latitude, and have students do a twilight exchange--share twilight observations or twilight diaries of their environment.



Image from TWILIGHT CHANT, written by Holly Thompson, illustrated by Jen Betton
for more activities go to www.jenbetton.com/twilight-chant

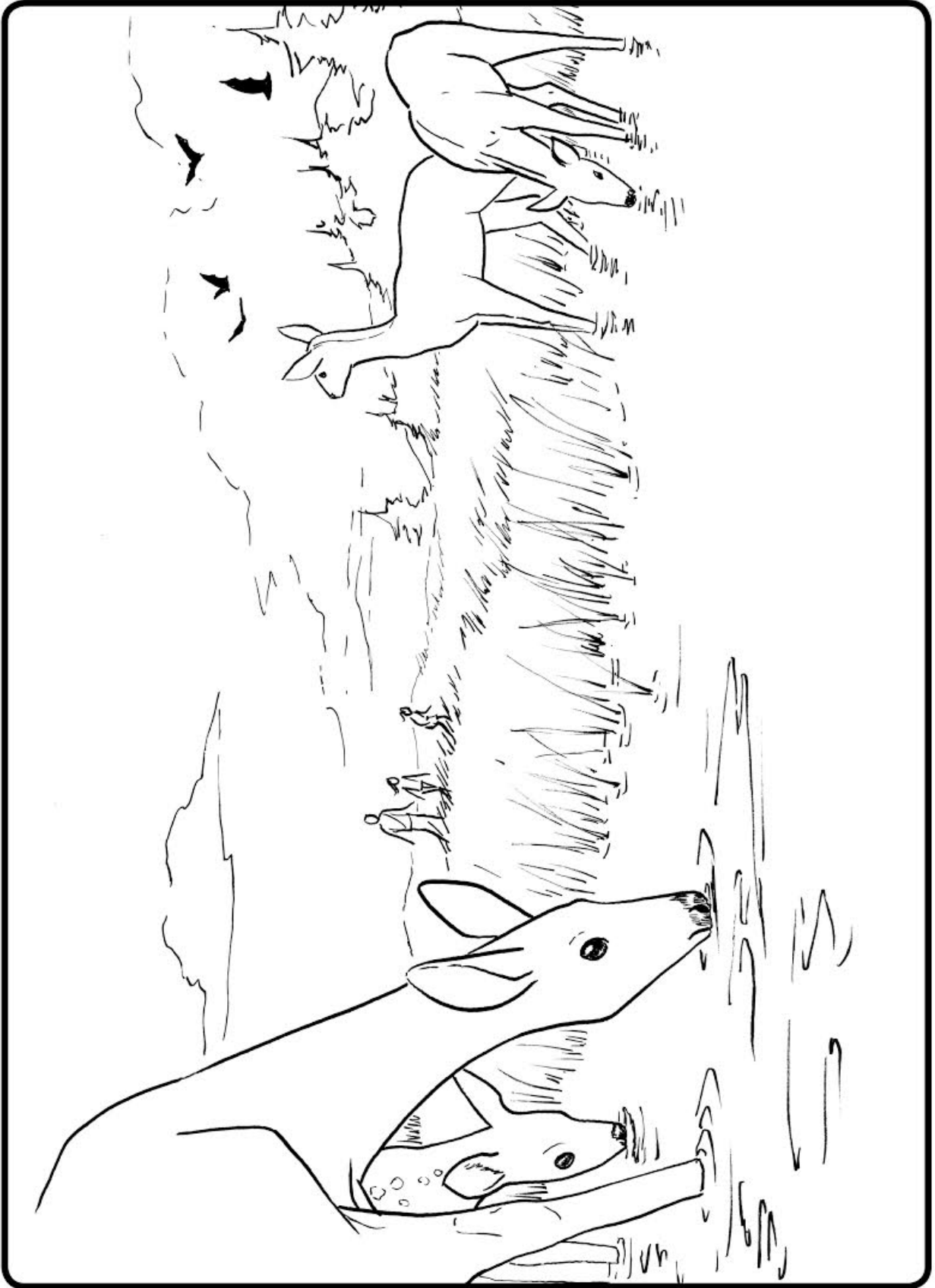


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