Why We Are In Need Of Tales: Part 1 by Maria davenza Tillmanns

In ‘Why We Are In Need Of Tales’, Huk and Tuk explain why reading tales to each other is so important.

In ‘Why We Are In Need Of Tales’, Huk and Tuk explore intriguing questions that arise from their discussions of six different picture books written by Arnold Lobel and Leo Lionni.

Is something ever truly mine alone?

How do we come to know what we don't know?

What makes a friend a friend?

These and many more questions take us on a journey through the world of Huk and Tuk.

Doing philosophy with children inspired Maria daVenza Tillmanns to recreate the bonds of meaningful communication in the writing of her whimsical, playful stories. Philosophy should make us - children and adults - re-think what we think we know.

Review by Review by Children's Author Deanie Humphrys-Dunne:

5.0 out of 5 Stars. Great concepts for discussion in this book.

Reviewed in the United States on April 12, 2022-Verified Purchase

Although ‘Why we are in Need of Tails’ is not specifically designated as a children’s book, the subject matter would be appropriate and appreciated by children and families, in my opinion. It’s the first of the
series. The author, Maria daVenza Tillmanns, specializes in working with children to develop ideas that help them build self-esteem and connect with people and nature.

‘Why We Are In Need Of Tails’ features two characters named Huk and Tuk, who are best friends. In the beginning of the story the two loved taking leisurely walks in the woods, near a small pond. At that time, they had tails, like everyone else. Why did we all have tails? Because tails kept us connected, while simultaneously allowing us to move independently. Huk and Tuk were content with their lives. But over time, our tails became shorter and shorter and finally disappeared altogether. When we lost our tail-connection to the world around us, we began to believe that we were the center of the universe. This was catastrophic for the human race. When you believe you are the center of the universe, how can you connect with other people?

Poor Huk and Tuk were terribly confused. They couldn’t communicate clearly any longer, either. They were puzzled about how to carry on without their tails and so they looked for ways to reconnect. What was their solution? They began to tell each other tales as a way to reconnect to the world around them, because tales have a way of showing us the miraculous ways in which we are connected to everything.

Huk and Tuk tell a story about trees. We know how we can make use of trees. But do we even realize that there would be no life on earth without them? Huk and Tuk want to ensure that everyone understands how important trees are to all of life, animals, plants, and us.

You will also see how to learn the value of lessons of history. Huk and Tuk talk about something called “Trail Theory.” They learned how to find value in the “trails” made by tails of the past so we could appreciate the wonders of the world and realize we were never the center of the universe to begin with.

I believe the illustrations by Blair Thornley compliment the story well.

I sincerely enjoyed reading ‘Why We Are In Need Of Tails’. Ms. daVenza Tillmanns writes her story skillfully, so that children and families can enjoy it and discuss it. There are thought provoking concepts in this book that can benefit people of any age. This story is filled with wisdom and fun. I recommend it highly.

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Why We Are In Need Of Tales: Part Two by Maria davenza Tillmanns

In ‘Why We Are In Need Of Tails’, we learn that our most nuanced skills for communication were lost when we lost our tails - or so the story goes. Huk and Tuk explore ways to compensate for this loss by developing polyphonic listening or by entering into dialogue with each other rather than carrying on a monologue. And they learn that telling tales helps connect us when actual tails no longer can.

In ‘Why We Are In Need Of Tales’, Part I, Huk and Tuk discuss six different picture books by Arnold Lobel and Leo Lionni and explore the intriguing questions the tales inspire, gaining a new understanding of the deep connection we have to each other and the world we live in.

In ‘Why We Are In Need Of Tales’, Part II, Huk and Tuk discuss another important aspect of telling tales: making dreams come alive. Here they discuss six more tales by Arnold Lobel and Leo Lionni and learn that we cannot live without the dreams that our imaginations create. Dreams give us hope and imagination and - with the help of courage and determination - allows us to create extraordinary things.
Doing philosophy with children inspired Maria daVenza Tillmanns to write these whimsical, playful stories about profound, weighty ideas to help recreate the bonds of meaningful communication with one another - the young and not so young alike.

**Review by Children’s Author Deanie Humphrys-Dunne:**

5.0 out of 5 Stars. Another great tale full of fun and wisdom.

Reviewed in the United States on April 12, 2022-Verified Purchase

Why we are in Need of Tales Part 2 is another wonderful, creative, and entertaining story by Maria daVenza Tillmanns. She is a talented author, who is passionate about engaging children and families in discussing philosophical concepts such as what makes a friend a friend or how do you know whether you are dreaming or not? This is the third in her series of stories. Like the others, this book features best friends Huk and Tuk, as well as tales created by renowned authors, Leo Lionni and Arnold Lobel.

Why do we need curiosity? Leo Lionni answers that question in the saga he wrote called Tillie and the Wall. Huk and Tuk begin their discussion by mentioning there is a wall near Tuk’s house that no one knew much about. That is, until Tillie the mouse became curious about what was on the other side. She went to great lengths to discover what was on the other side of the wall. Huk and Tuk discussed how determined Tillie was and she was not deterred when she tried several ways to get the answer to her question about what was on the other side. Tillie and her friends tried several ways to solve their problem, but all attempts failed. Still focused on succeeding, Tillie chose to dig a hole and go under the wall. Guess what Tillie discovered? There was another family of mice on the other side and they were so thrilled to meet Tillie, that they dug their way under the wall using the same tunnel Tillie dug, in order to meet Tillie’s relatives. Huk and Tuk remarked that Tillie’s imagination and bravery helped her to never give up.

In another tale by Leo Lionni, Corneluis, Huk and Tuk wonder why we need imagination. This time they talk about a curious and creative crocodile named Cornelius. What made Cornelius stand out? He was different in many ways from his family members. For example, instead of walking on all four feet, Cornelius stood upright. This allowed him to see things that other relatives couldn’t. But no one in his family was the least bit interested in anything the curious crocid did or said. Regardless, Cornelius kept learning and using his imagination. When he met a monkey, the crocodile mentioned that he could walk upright, unlike others in his family. When Cornelius saw the money standing on his head and hanging by his tail, he wanted to learn the same skills. It took lots of practice, but Cornelius learned to do the monkey’s tricks.

Of course, Cornelius was anxious to show his family his unusual new tricks, but they were disinterested and the young crocodile was disappointed. One day, Cornelius saw something his siblings were doing that surprised and encouraged him. Huk and Tuk were impressed that Cornelius persevered and his using his imagination opened a world of possibilities for him.

In another story by Leo Lionni, Matthew’s Dream, Huk and Tuk explain why dreams are important. In this segment, you’ll meet Matthew, a poor mouse who couldn’t decide what he wanted to do when he grew up. His parents hoped their child would choose to become a doctor or lawyer so that they could afford expensive delicacies like parmesan cheese. After a trip to the Me Mo Art Museum, Matthew imagined becoming a famous artist. He dreamed about the museum trip, where he met Nicoletta the mouse. The
adventure at Me Mo helped Matthew to see things with his eyes wide open. The little mouse learned to create a whole new world for himself by using his imagination and courage.

Each of the wonderful tales in Why we are in Need of Tales Part 2, are full of wisdom and fun. The thoughtful stories will inspire readers to create something amazing by being brave, and creative you’ll see how you may create a more beautiful world for yourself. Huk and Tuk happily share their wisdom to guide you along your journey. I recommend this book highly.

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**Ratings:**  
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About The Author: Maria daVenza Tillmanns teaches a Philosophy with Children program in underserved San Diego schools in partnership with the University of California, San Diego. In 1980, she attended Dr. Matthew Lipman's workshop on philosophy for children and later wrote her dissertation on philosophical counseling and teaching under the direction of Martin Buber scholar Dr. Maurice Friedman. She has publications in a number of international journals. For Maria, philosophy is an art form, and she enjoys painting with ideas. Philosophy has helped her navigate the world in all its complexity, including having a multicultural background and having been raised in the US as well as in the Netherlands. She came back to the US to study and moved across the Atlantic multiple times. --This text refers to the paperback edition.

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