



TWO

AT THE

ZOO  
A Counting Book

written by **Danna Smith**  
and illustrated in full color by  
**Valeria Petrone**

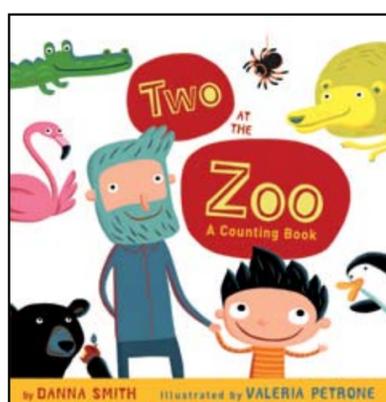
Discussion Guide created by **Cassandra Reigel Whetstone**

## Story Summary

A boy and his grandpa count their way through a colorful zoo.

**Danna Smith** writes from her home in northern California, where she lives with her husband, two children, and her schnauzer named Cosmo. Learn more about her at [www.dannasmithbooks.com](http://www.dannasmithbooks.com).

**Valeria Petrone** lives and illustrates from her home in Italy. You can learn more about her at [www.valeriapetrone.com](http://www.valeriapetrone.com).



## Discussion Questions:

### Before, During, and After Reading

1. Who has been to a zoo? What did you see there? (before reading)
2. What other animals would you expect to see at a zoo? (before reading)
3. Does anyone see a pattern in this story? What do you think we'll see on the next page? (page 11)
4. What kind of show do you think they might have seen? (page 28)
5. What was your favorite animal in the story? (after reading)

## Shared Reading:

**Preschool** Read the story a second time and have students stand up and act out the behavior of the animals on each page.

**Grades K–2** Divide the class into two groups. Have one group be the counters who call out the numbers on each page. The second group will be the actors who act out the behavior of the animals in each scene. Read the story again and let the groups switch parts.

## Response to Story: "Two at the Zoo" Class Book

### Preschool–Grade 1 (Counting, Writing, Art)

**Materials:** construction or drawing paper; markers or crayons; chart paper; slips of paper, each with a different number starting with one and ending with ten in enough sets to give each student a number; animal stamps or stickers (optional)

**Preparation:** Put numbers into bag, basket, or hat.

#### Directions:

1. Say, "We are going to make our own *Two at the Zoo* book. What different animals could we draw in our zoo book?" List names of animals on the chart paper.
2. Have each student draw a number and choose an animal from the chart. Instruct students to create a picture that includes their number and a drawing of the animals. **Preschoolers** may want to use stickers or animal stamps instead of drawing each animal. (Young preschoolers should only use numbers 1–10 or 1–5.)
3. Have students write the following, according to grade level:
  - Preschoolers may write the number, and some may want to write the name of their animal on their picture.
  - Kindergarteners and first-graders may write a complete sentence, "I see four parrots at the zoo." Be sure to write the sentence on the board for students to copy.

**Closure:** Bind pages into class book called *(Number of Students) AT THE ZOO* and share with students.

### Grade 2 (Grammar, Writing, Art)

**Materials:** chart paper; markers or crayons; construction or drawing paper; slips of paper, each with a different number starting with one and ending with the number of students in class

**Preparation:** Draw three columns on the chart. Title the first column ADJECTIVES, the second, NOUNS, and the third, VERBS. Display chart on board or easel. Put slips of numbered paper into a bag or hat.

#### Directions:

1. Say, "We are going to make our own *Two at the Zoo* book. First we are going to brainstorm a list of animals, adjectives, and verbs."
2. Brainstorm a list of animals you might see in a zoo. Record them in the NOUNS column and remind students that nouns are persons, places, and things.
3. Remind students that adjectives are describing words. Brainstorm adjectives that would be used to describe animals and record in the ADJECTIVES column. The adjectives should not necessarily correspond with the list of animals.
4. Remind students that verbs are action words. Brainstorm a list of actions that you might observe animals doing at the zoo and record in the VERBS column.
5. Have each student draw a number. Pass out the paper and have them write a sentence using their number, an adjective, a noun, and a verb from the chart, e.g. "there were three scaly lizards sleeping in the zoo."

**Closure:** Bind pages into a class book called *(Number of Students) AT THE ZOO* and share with students.

**Modification for ESL students:** Provide pictures of animals to use during brainstorming session and as a visual reference while drawing the animals. Point out features of animals while looking at the pictures and ask for terms in English and students' primary language.

## Map the Zoo (Mapping, Story Organizing)

### Preschool–Grades 2

**Materials:** large butcher paper; markers or crayons

**Preparation:** Draw a large circle or oval on the paper to create a map of the zoo. Write "ZOO ENTRANCE" on the map. Moving clockwise from the entrance, write the numbers 1–10 on the map. Write "Sea Show" and "Hot Dogs" under the entrance. Hang the map on a board or easel.

**Directions:** Do a picture walk through *Two at the Zoo* and ask students to call out the names of the animals in each scene. Write the name of the animals on the map as you move through the story. Invite students to take turns drawing animals and other illustrations on the map either during center time or throughout the day. Leave the map up for students to use during read-around-the-room time.

## Two Red Tickets (Writing)

### Preschool–Grades 2

**Materials:** red construction paper, 9 in. x 12 in.; crayons or markers

**Directions:** Give all students a sheet of red paper and help them fold it in half. Have them design a zoo ticket on the top side of each half. On the back have them write, or give a dictation that finishes the following: "If I could take two to the zoo, I would take \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."

These could make lovely cards for Grandparents' Day, etc.

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