

Name _____



Hidden Details

Jan Brett's *The Mitten* is a beautifully illustrated story that follows a young boy, Nicki, who loses his white mitten in the snow. As the mitten lies on the ground, various woodland animals crawl inside, stretching it to its limits. Brett's storytelling is not just in the words she writes—it's in the intricate illustrations she designs on every page.

One of the most fascinating aspects of Brett's artwork is the way she adds small details that hint at what will happen next. In *The Mitten*, each page contains a main illustration, where the animals squeeze into the mitten, but there is also a smaller side panel showing Nicki, who remains unaware of the adventure happening nearby. These side panels provide subtle clues to the reader, making them feel like they are in on a secret that the characters don't yet know. For example, before a new animal enters the mitten, Brett includes a tiny image of it in the side panel, preparing the reader for what's to come. This makes the story more engaging because readers can predict which creature will appear next.

Brett also uses color and texture to enhance the emotions in the story. The mitten, originally small and snug, gradually appears stretched and full as more animals enter. Each animal's fur is drawn with great care, making them look realistic and warm. The contrast between the soft mitten and the cold, white snow helps the reader understand why the animals are eager to snuggle inside.

Another way Brett's illustrations enhance storytelling is by including hidden elements that encourage readers to pay close attention. If you look carefully, you might notice little details, such as a mouse scurrying across the snow or an owl watching from a tree. These small touches make each reading experience exciting and new, as there is always something fresh to discover.

By blending detailed illustrations with a simple yet engaging story, Jan Brett creates a book that invites young readers to explore beyond the words on the page. Her artwork encourages curiosity, helping readers develop observation skills and an appreciation for storytelling that goes beyond just reading words.