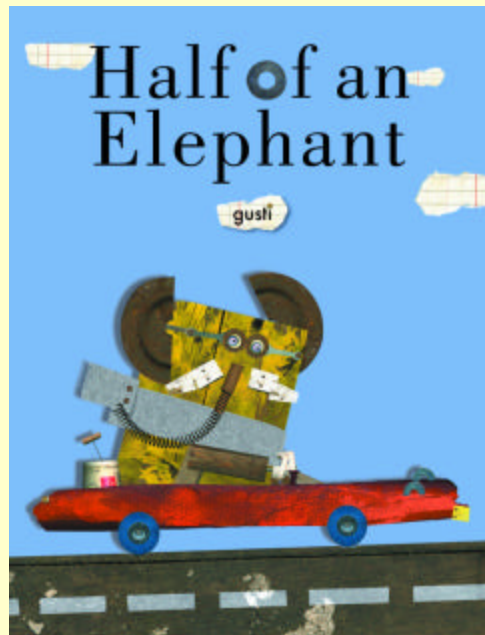


Kane/Miller Book Publishers



Half of an Elephant
by Gusti



From Mexico

About the Book

One night, all of a sudden, the world split in two. An elephant, who had been fast asleep, woke to find half of his body missing. Thus begins a unique, magical, fantastically illustrated journey filled with discoveries and surprises.

About the Author / Illustrator

Gusti is an award-winning artist and illustrator of over 25 books. In *Half of an Elephant*, **Gusti** used digital images of numerous discarded objects "to show children that art can be created from objects that usually end up in the garbage."

Before Reading:

Discuss and name all of the items on the title page. This book was originally published in Mexico. The author is from Argentina. Point out these countries on a world map.

As you read:

Identify all of the animal halves found on the interior pages.

After reading:

The front half of the elephant met many other animals as he tried to find his missing half. What were some of the problems he had when joining these other animals?

- The worm talked too much.
- It was too difficult to catch flies as the front half of a chameleon.

What were some of the problems the back half had when joining the other animal halves?

- It was too hard to nap with the flamingo.
- The monkey thought the elephant was too heavy when they swung from tree to tree.
- The duck spent too much time in the water.

The elephant halves realize that there are some positive things about being "half of an elephant." What are they?

- He can float in a hot air balloon.
- He can weigh himself without breaking the scale.
- He only needs one pair of shoes.
- He doesn't have to blow his trunk because he doesn't have one.
- He can hide behind a tree.
- He can drive a sports car.
- He has no tail to itch.

Activities:

1. Turn this story into a Reader's Theater. Children can take turns being the different animals.

2. Make a tissue paper world. Each child will need a round piece of cardstock paper to represent the world, several 1 inch squares of blue and green tissue paper, glue and a pencil. Draw the world on each piece of paper. Scrunch one square of tissue onto the pencil eraser. Dip in glue and place on the world. Use the color blue for oceans, green for land. Continue until the entire world is filled in.

3. Found Art Project: Ask children to start collecting various "found" items and to bring in items which the class could use in this creative project. Once you have a variety, challenge students to create an animal or anything else they can think of. Allow them to use the book for ideas. Parent volunteers might be helpful with the project. Some examples of items to collect:

Springs
Googly eyes
Empty juice boxes
Paper plates
Straws
Wallpaper pieces
Paper clips
Peanut shells
Coffee filters
Styrofoam cups
Cheerios
Toilet paper rolls
String
Twigs
Washers
Buttons
Corrugated cardboard
Tape measure (cut into pieces)

4. Create your own creatures using the front and back halves of separate animals, like Gusti has done in this book. Can you think of a silly name for these new animals?

Related topics for discussion:

Recycling, animals, optimism, problem solving

ANIMAL NAME MATCHING GAME

When the elephant in this story realizes that half of his body is missing, he goes out to look for it. Along the way, he discovers that *all* of the animals have been split in two. Can you help to put the animals below back together? Match the front half of each animal with its back half from the columns below.

ANTE

CROCO

ELE

FLA

GI

GO

HIPPO

JAG

LE

MON

OS

RHI

TI



MUR

NOCEROS

LOPE

GER

TRICH

RAFFE

PHANT

DILE

MINGO

RILLA

UAR

KEY

POTOMUS

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ANIMAL NAME MATCHING GAME ANSWER KEY

