



# Animal Tails:

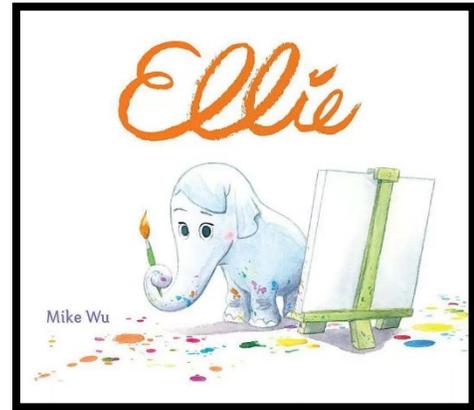


*explorations of the animal world through connections to literature*

## **Ellie**

by Mike Wu

**Age:** K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade



## **Gather your Gear**

- Ellie book or log on to watch the storybook reading
- Butcher paper or construction paper
- Pool noodle
- Tape (masking or duct)
- Paint brush
- Washable paint

## **Get Ready**

*You can help your child make connections by thinking about concepts before reading the story.*

- What types of animals have you seen at a zoo?
- What does an elephant look like? What are key features of an elephant?

## **Read**

*Read the book, stopping to explore key story ideas. Below are some prompts to help guide you.*

- What is the problem that Ellie and the other animals are trying to solve?
- How are they working, together or independently?
- What is each animal doing to help the zoo?

## **Reflect**

*Briefly discuss what was important or what we learned. Below are some questions to guide you.*

- Have you ever had a problem you needed to solve that you worked with others to solve?
- How did Ellie contribute to solving the problem?
- What appendage of her body did she use to solve the problem?



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## Relate

*Create connections to the idea through activities*

### Paint like an Elephant

1. First have your child paint a painting with the brush, holding it in their hand. Review how Ellie used her trunk to hold the brush.
2. Now practice painting like an elephant. Take your pool noodle and tape the paint brush to the end of it. Set up your painting station, make sure to pay attention to location as this can get messy. Hold the end of noodle without the brush in your hand and paint away. Try to paint a flower like Ellie.
3. Discuss why it was so easy for Ellie to paint with her trunk but may be more difficult for you. Explore how the elephant has a special adaptation called a trunk. Below are some facts about the trunk of an elephant that may help you in your discussion.

**Did you know:** An elephant's trunk contains thousands of muscles, many of which attach to the skin of the trunk. A series of long muscles runs along the length of the trunk to raise, lower, or move it from side to side. Other, shorter muscles are perpendicular to the length of the trunk, while others are wrapped like a barber pole along the length of the trunk, producing the trunk's unique twisting abilities. Thanks to this system of muscles, an elephant's trunk is not only extremely powerful, but is also delicate enough to manipulate and pick up very small objects.



The nostrils at the end of an elephant's trunk are capable of suction strong enough to draw about 1.5 gallons of water, although elephants cannot drink through their trunks. Instead, they draw water with their trunks, squirt it into their mouths, and swallow.

### **It takes a team.... join ours**

Help us save species by joining the "Zoo Conservation Corps" and raise awareness about wild animals, their habitats and why conserving both is so important. If you or your family are on social media, post your paintings to share with your family and friends what you have learned. Use the hashtag #OnlyZooATL so that we can see all your great work!

### **Want to know more....**

- Go to Zoo Atlanta's website to learn about the African elephants at the Zoo: <https://zooatlanta.org/animal/african-elephant/>
- Check out Zoo Atlanta's YouTube page for videos featuring our African elephants: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCh1d5bkhX3DGMgBFOQtI5Sw>
- Another great site for information is National Geographic: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/a/african-elephant/>