

Story Summary

Zander the goose is trying something new this winter. He is not going to go south. Zander is going to stay!

Every year as winter approaches, geese return south to avoid the cold and snow. Not Zander, though. Zander declares he wants to stay this year, but first he'll have to learn how to survive the harsh winter climate. Should he do as Bear suggests and put on a thick layer of fat? Or should he snuggle up with friends like bat does? None of his furred friends seem to have

the right answer for Zander, but he's determined to make the best of a freezing situation. He just needs to find a northern animal whose winter adaptation works for him. Luckily, one such animal arrives just in the nick of time, walking on two snugly booted feet.

Maureen Fergus is an award-winning author who has published over a dozen of children's books for young people. Maureen's books have been translated into dozens of languages, optioned for film, and shortlisted for many awards, including the Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award, The Sunshine State Young Readers Award, and more. Her picture book *Buddy and Earl* was a Boston Globe Best Book, and *The Day My Mom Came to Kindergarten* was an OLA Blue Spruce Award Winner. Maureen's newest picture book, *Zander Stays*, is filled with humorous charm and emotional depth. Maureen lives in Winnipeg with her family and has never met a gander she didn't like.

Scot Ritchie is an award-winning illustrator and author with more than 60 books to his credit, including most recently *Dinos Driving*. His books have been translated into French, Korean, Indonesian, Polish, Finnish, Arabic and Dutch. Scot has worked with the National Film Board of Canada and has had his illustrations exhibited at the National Gallery of Canada. He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

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JUV039090 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / New Experience
JUV002040 JUVENILE FICTION / Animals / Birds
JUV029020 JUVENILE FICTION / Science & Nature / Weather

Learning Expectations

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Understand the concept of migration, animal adaptations, and hibernation
- Understand what it means to be different from others
- Examine illustrations to gain information
- Share knowledge and experiences of the four seasons
- Solve a word puzzle by noticing words within words
- Write a persuasive letter through the perspective of a character
- Enjoy a story about a goose's adventures and hardships

Key Vocabulary

Migration: seasonal movement of animals from one region to another

Hibernation: a deep sleep in which certain animals pass the winter in cold climates (example: bears)

Adaptation: a change an animal makes to become better suited to its environment

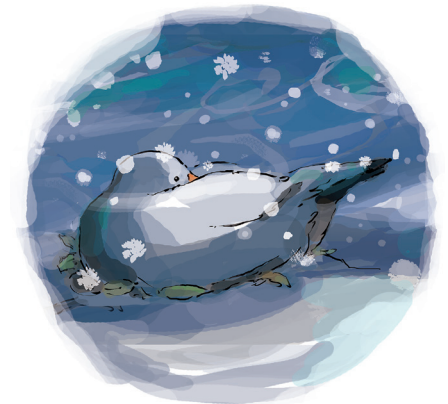
Snuggle: move into a warm, comfortable position

Wingtips: the tip of a bird's or airplane's wing

Vanish: disappear abruptly and completely

Hardship: something that is difficult to experience; lack of comfort

Spellbinding: fascinating; hold someone's attention



Preparing To Read

About Migration

Provide the following definition of the word “migration” that appears in the Author’s Note: Migrating animals travel back and forth between their summer homes in the north and their winter homes in the south.

Draw attention to the illustration on the opening end pages of this book. What do we learn about bird migration from this picture? Have you ever seen birds flying in the sky in this formation?

Students can brainstorm questions about migration:

- When do birds migrate?
- Do all birds migrate from north to south?
- How far can birds travel in one day?
- When do birds return to the north?

Discuss what might happen if a bird doesn't migrate.

About *Hibernation*

Provide the following definition of the word “hibernation” that appears in the Author’s Note: Hibernating animals curl up in a safe place and stay there until winter ends. They barely breathe and their body temperature can drop to almost zero.

Ask the students if they know or want to guess:

- What animals are known to hibernate?
- How do animals prepare for hibernation?
- What happens to an animal’s body when it hibernates?
- How long do animals hibernate?

Before Reading

- The author, Maureen Fergus, dedicates this book to “everyone who has ever dared to do something different.” Have you, or someone you know, ever dared to do something different?
- What things do you enjoy doing during the winter months?

During Reading

- What are three things Zander’s geese friends do to prepare themselves for winter?
- Why did Zander announce one autumn: “I’m going to stay!”
- What advice did each of the animals offer Zander when the weather turned cold? (i.e., squirrel, bear, snowshoe hare, and bat).
- What did Zander enjoy about the fall and winter weather? What did he not enjoy?
- Just when Zander felt like giving up, a miracle happened. What was the miracle? How did Grace help Zander?

- What are some things Zander and Grace enjoyed doing during the winter?
- Examine the final double-page illustration of the book. What are some things Zander’s friends enjoyed doing instead of returning to their usual summer homes?

After Reading

- Do you think Zander (or any of his friends) will migrate the next time winter comes? Explain.
- Is this a funny story? An adventure story? A happy story?
- Examine the end pages that conclude this book. What are some things that Grace and Zander enjoyed doing together?
- What words might you use to describe Zander?



Activity #1: Comparing Animal Adaptations

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Identify and list essential facts about animal adaptations in winter
- Complete a chart to compare information about animal adaptations

When the cold weather arrives, Zander meets up with other creatures to ask what to do to get ready for winter. Each gives the goose some advice by offering suggestions on how they adapt.

By completing the following chart, students will be able to identify key facts about adaptations.

Teacher Tip: To prepare for this activity, provide a definition of the word “adaptation” i.e., a change an animal makes to become better suited to its environment.

Also, information that appears in the Author’s Note at the end of the book can assist children in determining important facts about each adaptation.

Animal Adaptation Comparison Chart		
Animal Name	Suggestion To Zander	Fact About Adaptation
Squirrel		
Bear		
Snowshoe hare		
Bat		

Activity #2: Word Puzzle

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Understand that some words have familiar words hidden within them.
- Solve a puzzle and practice spelling words

Explain to the students that we can often see familiar words hidden inside other words. Display the word “**Zander**.” Ask: What word do you see hidden inside the name “Zander”? (i.e., “and”)

The word “and” can appear at the beginning, middle, or end of many words. (e.g. **candy**, **grand**, **Andrew**)

Have the students add the word “and” to the beginning, middle, or end of these letters to spell a word correctly. For example: st (**stand**), hle (**handle**).

st	stand
cy	candy
b	
l	
br	
sy	
pa	
cle	
hsome	
underst	
grfather	
baid	
swich	
sbox	
Greenl	
Irel	
Ama	
w	

Answers: band; land; brand; sandy; candle; handsome; understand; grandfather; band aid; sandwich; sandbox; Greenland; Ireland, Amanda, wand

Bonus: What words are hidden inside these words from the story *Zander Stays*: sunset; alone; bear; creatures; discover; vanish; winter; chocolate; flowers.

Extension: Do you have a word hidden in our first name or your last name?

Activity #3: Persuasive Letter Writing

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Write a persuasive letter as a main character
- Recount story events

In this story we learn that Zander told his friends a spellbinding tale of his hardships and adventures. Tell students to imagine that they are Zander. Zander has decided to send a letter to his geese friends to try and persuade them not to migrate next winter. What spellbinding tales could we include in his letter? What can he say to convince them that staying might be a good thing?

Consider:

- What reasons might he offer to persuade other geese to stay up north?
- Why would a goose choose not to migrate?
- What adventures await them if they stay up north in the winter?
- What fun might they have with Grace?

Extension: Invite students to write a persuasive letter about *their* favourite season: Autumn, Winter, Spring, or Summer. Encourage them to list **what** their favourite season is and three reasons **why** this is their favorite season.

*This Teacher's Guide was written by **Larry Swartz**, Larry has been an instructor in literacy as well as dramatic arts at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto for nearly two decades. He is well-known for his use of children's literature to help young people grow as readers, writers, and citizens of the world.*

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