

# ***Ivan: The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla***

**AUTHOR:** Katherine Applegate

**ILLUSTRATOR:** G. Brian Karas

**PUBLISHER:** Clarion Books

**COPYRIGHT:** 2014

**ART MEDIUM:** watercolor

**GENRE:** Nonfiction

**LIFE SKILLS:** Caring, Responsibility, Perseverance

## **SYNOPSIS:**

A baby silverback gorilla is taken from a forest and sent to the state of Washington where he is treated like one of the family until he gets too big to handle. Then the owners send him to live in a shopping mall.

## **BOOKTALK #1:**

Imagine being taken from your home in the green, green jungle and sent to a place where everything was gray cement and strange. You couldn't do any of the things you loved to do. Even though you eventually make some friends, you still miss your home. That's the treatment a baby gorilla, later named Ivan by the humans who captured him, receives. Read *Ivan: The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla* to find out what happened in this true story.

## **BOOKTALK #2:**

Have you ever been to the zoo? Did you ever wonder how the animals got there? Once upon a time, far away in an African jungle, a baby gorilla was born. One day, poachers came and took him away from everything he knew and loved. What would happen to him? In this true story all about the life of Ivan, the shopping mall gorilla, we'll learn about his journey from Africa to Washington and beyond.

**AUTHOR:** Katherine Applegate

Katherine Applegate is the author of many books for children including the Newbery Award winner, *The One and Only Ivan*, which was based on the same true story as this book about Ivan. Applegate and her husband Michael Grant, co-author with her for the Animorphs series, live in California.

**Other books written by the author:**

Picture books

*Jack Rabbit and the Beanstalk* (1997)

*The Buffalo Storm* (2007)

Novels

*Sharing Sam* (1995)

*Listen to My Heart* (1996)

*Home of the Brave* (2007)

*The One and Only Ivan* (2012)

*Eve & Adam* (with Michael Grant) (2013)

*Crenshaw* (2015)

**ILLUSTRATOR:** G. Brian Karas

G. Brian Karas is the illustrator for many, many books. He got his start in illustration working for Hallmark in their humorous cards department. Currently he lives in the Hudson Valley in New York.

**Other books illustrated by the illustrator:**

*A Poem in Your Pocket* (Schwartz & Wade) 2015

*Whales Trails, Before and Now* (Henry Holt) 2015

*As an Oak Tree Grows* (Nancy Paulsen Books) 2014

*Tap Tap Boom Boom* (Candlewick Press) 2014

*I Like Fish* (Random House)

*Tippy-Tippy-Tippy, Splash!* (Atheneum) 2014

*Ant and Honey Bee: A Pair of Friends in Winter* (Candlewick) 2014

*The Apple Orchard Riddle* (Schwartz & Wade)

**CHALLENGING WORDS :**

- juveniles
- silverback
- poachers
- petitions
- Tacoma, Washington
- Petitions
- Protests
- Scientists

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did the shopping mall owner treat Ivan like a human child?
2. Why couldn't Ivan live in the human's house?
3. Why do you think people got angry about Ivan living in the shopping mall?

4. Have you ever been to the zoo or an animal rescue? Where do you think those animals come from? Are they born there, or do they come from somewhere else?
5. How do you think Ivan felt when he was taken from his family? How do you think he felt when he was kept in a cage in the mall? How do you think he felt when he was placed in the zoo enclosure?
6. Where do you think Ivan belonged?
7. Why do you think they didn't release Ivan back into the wild?
8. What do you think it would have been like to have a baby gorilla living in your house? What are some things you would have to change at your house if a baby gorilla lived there?
9. Do you think it's desirable for people to have wild animals as pets?

## **ACTIVITIES WITH STANDARDS:**

### **Language Arts:**

- **Debate: Wild Animals as Pets**  
Choose one side of this issue and write a persuasive paragraph that supports your claims. Have both sides present their perspectives.

**3.W.3.1** Write persuasive compositions in a variety of forms that –  
State the opinion in an introductory statement or section.  
Support the opinion with reasons in an organized way.  
Connect opinion and reasons using words and phrases.  
Provide a concluding statement or section.

- **Write a Persuasive Letter**  
Choose one side of this issue and write a persuasive paragraph that supports your claims. Have both sides present their perspectives.
- **Students will write a letter to the editor stating why they think wild animals should not be kept in a shopping mall window.**

**W.1:** Learning Outcome for Writing: Write effectively for a variety of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

**W.2:** Handwriting: Demonstrate the ability to write legibly.

**W.3:** Writing Genres: Develop writing skills by writing for different purposes and to specific audience or people.

**W.4:** The Writing Process: Produce coherent and legible documents by planning, drafting, revising, editing, and collaborating with others

**Research:**

- Endangered Species  
The Mountain Gorilla is on the World Wildlife Federation's critically endangered list. Choose an animal from that list and write a short report about why the animal is in danger and focus on what can be done to help protect it.

**3.W.5:** Conduct short research on a topic.

- Identify a specific topic or question of interest (e.g., where did Benjamin Harrison grow up?).
- Locate information in reference texts, electronic resources, or through interviews.
- Recognize that some sources may be more reliable than others.
- Record relevant information in their own words.
- Present the information, choosing from a variety of formats.

**RELATED INTERNET SITES:**

Author website: [www.katherineapplegate.com](http://www.katherineapplegate.com)

Illustrator website: [www.gbriankaras.com](http://www.gbriankaras.com)

Atlanta Zoo website: [www.ZooAtlanta.org](http://www.ZooAtlanta.org)

Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund website: [www.GorillaFund.org](http://www.GorillaFund.org)

National Geographic website: [www.NationalGeographic.com](http://www.NationalGeographic.com)