

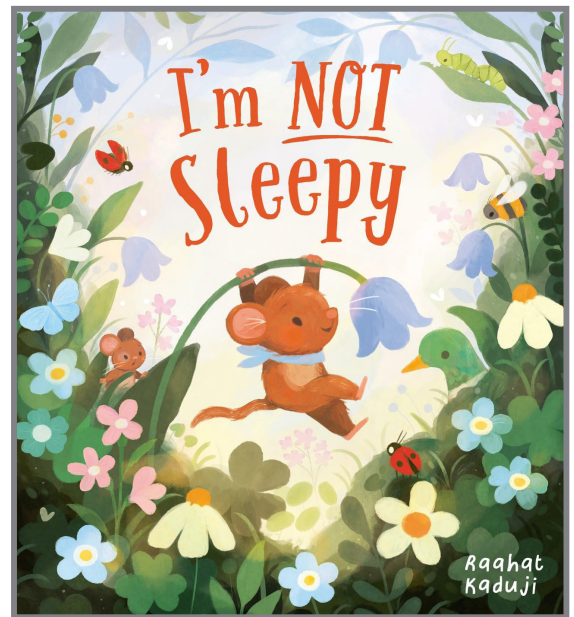
I'm Not Sleepy

AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR
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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Flora, the smallest dormouse, is going on a grand adventure . . . The other dormice just want to sleep, but there's a wide world outside, and Flora can't wait to go exploring. She's brave. She's full of questions. And she's not sleepy at all! Flora finds there's so much to discover, from tadpoles wriggling in a pond to bees buzzing from flower to flower. But when winter comes, even Flora needs to sleep. She curls up in a cosy burrow . . . and doesn't realise she's fallen asleep on the back of a fox! Will the other dormice dare to come to Flora's rescue?

ABOUT THE CREATOR

Raahat Kaduji is an author and illustrator based in Oxfordshire. Her work is inspired by nature, wildlife and the English countryside where she lives. She especially enjoys creating worlds and characters that evoke a sense of comfort with a touch of adventure.

STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, as a class, discuss the book cover and title. Some things to include in your discussion could be:
 - What can you see happening in the cover artwork?
 - Who do you think might be the main character of this story?
 - What do you think is likely to happen in this story? Why do you think this?
 - What does the title tell us about what might happen in this book?
- When does someone usually say 'I'm not sleepy'? When have you said 'I'm not sleepy'? What usually happens after you say 'I'm not sleepy'?
 - Draw or paint a picture of you saying this. Be sure to show in your picture what is about to happen after you say this! Caption your picture with a sentence that starts 'When I say I'm not sleepy _____'
- Why have the dormice slept all winter? What other animals sleep all winter?
 - What is it called when an animal spends the winter sleeping?
 - Would you like to sleep all winter?
- When Flora wakes up, she has lots of questions about the world around her. In small groups or pairs, research online or in the school library to find out the answers to one or more of her questions. Create a captioned artwork showing the answer to her question and share it with the class, telling them all about your findings.
- The dormice in the story have adorable round ears and a little round face with a pointy nose. Look carefully at all the pictures of Flora and the other dormice in the story. Analyse what you see in the illustrations of dormice. Some

things to think about when you are analysing the dormice illustrations could be:

- What shapes are the different parts of their bodies?
- Where and how do the different shapes connect?
- When the artist has coloured the dormice, what types of marks has the colouring left? What impression does this give?
- How has the illustrator created the look of soft fur on the dormice?
- After completing your analysis above, use your new understanding of how the different shapes and colours fit together to create a picture of a dormouse, and draw or paint a dormouse picture of your own! First, use a soft lead pencil to sketch the circle, triangle and rectangle shapes you can see in the artwork, then join them together to make a dormouse shape. Gently erase the lines that you don't need, then colour your dormouse. Before you start, think about what your dormouse will be doing, and where they are. You will want to choose background colours carefully, so that your dormouse looks like it fits in the environment.
- What does Flora see when she visits the pond? Look at the artwork showing the pond and try to identify all the different things mentioned in the story. Is this what ponds look like near where you live?
- As a class, visit a pond, wetland or other natural waterway. What animals and plants can you see living there? What is under the water? What is next to the water? When you return to school, as a class, discuss what you saw. Be sure to discuss how all the different plants and animals fit their lives together to form an ecosystem. Think about what the animals, insects and water creatures eat, and where they can find their food. How does having healthy wetlands help the people who live near them? Create a postcard describing your trip to the local waterway, pond or wetlands. Recount as many of the different animals and plants that you saw as possible and include them in your illustration.
- Flora spends a lot of time watching the baby birds grow and learn to fly. What type of birds do you think she is watching? What birds live in your local area? Choose one bird that is native to your local area, and research it online or in the library. Some questions that you might like to try and answer with your research could be:
 - Where do these birds live?
 - What do these birds eat?
 - What, if anything, preys on them?
 - How do (or have they) adapted to urban areas?
 - What social structures (if any) do the flocks and mated pairs have?
 - Do they mate for life or just for a season?
 - Where do they lay their eggs?
 - How many eggs do they usually lay at any one time?
 - What do they feed the newly hatched chicks?
 - How long does it take the chicks to grow big enough to learn to fly?
 - Do they migrate? If so, where do they go and when?
- Go for a nature walk, and see how many different types of birds you can spot and identify. Note down where the birds are and what they are doing.
 - When you return to class, create a map of the local area, and mark on it where you saw the different birds and what they were doing when you saw them. Repeat this activity on a different day with different weather conditions. Compare how many and which birds you saw on the different days. Can you see any patterns of behaviour? If so, what are they, and why do you think the birds are behaving in this way?
- Flora sees squirrels gathering nuts in autumn. What nuts can you find in your local area? Go on a walk in your local area and try to identify as many different seed and nut-bearing trees as you can. Do any of the trees have nuts that people can eat? Which trees are native and which are introduced exotics? Be careful and don't try eating any seeds or nuts you find in case they are poisonous!
- Why was it so dangerous for Flora sleep on a soft warm fox?
- How do you think the other dormice felt when they saw Flora's danger?
- How do you think that Flora felt when she woke up in her safe warm bed at home?
- What do you think all the dormice are going to do this summer? Do you think they will go back to bed for a nap and stay close to home? Why/why not?

- Read Flora's nature diary. What is the most interesting fact in it?

AUTHOR OF NOTES
RAE CARLYLE