



The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps

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Acclaimed picture book biographer Jeanette Winter has found her perfect subject: Jane Goodall, the great observer of chimpanzees. Follow Jane from her childhood in London watching a robin on her windowsill, to her years in the African forests of Gombe, Tanzania, invited by brilliant scientist Louis Leakey to observe chimps, to her worldwide crusade to save these primates who are now in danger of extinction, and their habitat. Young animal lovers and Winter's many fans will welcome this fascinating and moving portrait of an extraordinary person and the animals to whom she has dedicated her life.

The Watcher was named a Best Book of the Year by the *Boston Globe*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Booklist*, and the Bank Street College of Education.

The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps Details

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Author : Jeanette Winter

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From Reader Review The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps for online ebook

Ruut DeMeo says

"The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps" is a children's illustrated biography book, intended for ages 4-8. It was named a Best Book of the Year by the Boston Globe, Kirkus Reviews, Booklist, and the Bank Street College of Education. The narrative follows Jane Goodall from age five to her old years, very clearly depicting the theme of the book - Jane's love and ability for "watching" animals.

In searching for excellent biographies for younger readers, parents and educators are often bombarded with wordy, heady books resembling encyclopedias with confusing graphics and busy illustrations. Perhaps the creators and publishers of such volumes do not want their "factual books" to be confused with storybooks. But then, every once in a while, we stumble on a treasure like "The Watcher", where the person's life story is told skillfully by a storyteller who understands why many children prefer (and learn better from) storybooks rather than encyclopedias. Characters who "do" something different and remarkable are much more memorable for children, than text "about what that character did", which is what made this biography so excellent.

I suppose it's easier to accomplish this if the person's life is "exciting" (after all, she did go to live with chimps in the jungle - excellent storybook material). But it still takes careful consideration on the part of a seasoned author and illustrator, such as Jeanette Winter, to decide how to break up the story into digestible chunks and keep the reader turning pages. In this book, Jane Goodall's love of watching animals was established by a fun narrative from her early childhood, a sure way to capture young readers' attention and hook them to hear the rest.

Taylor Carr says

The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps is a fascinating and inspiring portrait of the life and achievements of the world's foremost animal conservationist. The book starts out with Jane in her youth and portrays her passion about animals that parallels the interests of many boys and girls. I think this is a subject to naturally be curious about; animals are life in its purest form, without the rules of human adults. Jane eventually finds her way to Africa to study the chimps she is most passionate about and starts her life's work. The way Jane pursues her dream and changes how the world views our closest animal relatives is so exciting to see unfold. I believe Jane could especially be a great role model to girl readers that are interested in science and animals, and it could perhaps inspire them to pursue an educational path that helps the animals of our world. Chimpanzees are endangered and they absolutely do need our help. The author, Jeanette Winter, makes a strong point about the dangers that chimps face and how Jane and others are fighting to save them. This book could be immediately segwayed into a lesson about animal conservation or could be integrated into a science or social studies (or both) unit on the subject.

[I actually made an Endangered Species 3rd grade science unit for a class, which includes activities like visiting the zoo, researching local endangered species, and "adopting" an endangered animal online. I am happy to share this with other teachers here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m...>]

Elyse Walters says

I've loved chimpanzees since I was a child.

Whenever I even hear - or see the name *Jane Goodall* - the British primatologist- it's impossible to not immediately identify her with chimpanzees. Is there any other person more famous — more of an expert on them? If there is - I don't know 'their' name.

I took a look at this book for my own guilty pleasure. I would be happy to purchase this for my friend's child. It shows how chimpanzees are similar to humans. The book inspires a love of nature and respect for animals. Centered around Jane's personal story - kids experience Jane's love for animals as a child - and 'her story' of how she saved her own money so she could take a boat Africa when to study the chimps.

I think what's great about the illustrations- is that we are suppose to 'look closely'BE THE WATCHER. Jane doesn't see the chimpanzees right away (they were hiding behind a tree) - the illustrations are a good way to have discussions with a child. What do we observe when out walking with a child —there are many 'WATCHER' observing games a parent can play with a child.....with the trees - dogs sharing the trail - etc. This book stimulated my own observational - third eye.

And I'm hiking today. I'll be 'watching'.

So, yep....I enjoyed this Biography for young readers - suggested for ages 4-8.

And would definitely choose this book to give as a gift.

Lydia Ferrell says

It's been pretty cool reading this book!

Hannah Flowers says

This biography of Jane Goodall is truly an example of how interdisciplinary literature can be! I love how it incorporates science by giving readers an example of a scientist who doesn't work in a lab with potions and chemicals, which is a common misconception young readers may have. Moreover, it highlights all of the incredible work that Jane Goodall has done throughout her life and how she started with a love and desire to work with animals (just like many of our students!) and ended up changing the world of science because she acted on this and made a lifelong career of it. If that isn't motivating for young children to hear, I'm not sure what is! I loooooove books that feature women scientists because I think a lot of children think science is a "boy subject" and only boys and men can be scientists, but that is simply not true! This book is a great book to have to teach children that no matter your gender, if you have a passion for something, act on it! I also love that it incorporates social studies aspects (showing different countries-like Tanzania, the presence of deforestation and talking about habitats for animals vs. habitats for people, etc.) are topics I immediately thought of that I could use this book to teach my Kindergarten students during a social studies lesson or two. I think this book would be an excellent lesson introduction to either a science or social studies unit for younger grades like kindergarten (as mentioned above) but would also be a great mentor text for writing for second or third grade. The language in this book is descriptive and lovely ("That first night, Jane lay awake

listening to new sounds- the croak of a frog, the hum of crickets, the laugh of a hyena, the hoot of an owl- and looking up at the stars. She knew she was home") and would be a great example to read to the class before having them create their own biography or autobiography using similar language and detail.

Eve says

"I wish that when I was a little girl, I could have read about someone like Jane Goodall—a brave woman who wasn't afraid to do something that had never been done before. So now I've made this book for that little girl, who still speaks to me."—Jeanette Winter

I grew up watching documentaries about Goodall and Fossey circa the early 80s, when all their research garnered recognition and praise. I just can't remember if I was a "watcher" like Jane or Dian before or after. I just know I've always admired them!

My grandparents remember not being able to find me one afternoon when I was about 6, until they checked the backyard. There I was *in* a corner of Gypsy's (their massive Great Dane/German Shepard mix) doghouse watching her nurse her two-day old puppies. Everyone was both awed and scared to approach because Gypsy, usually docile and happy-go-lucky, had turned a bit scary and overprotective when her babies arrived. She even allowed me to hold them after a few of these visits.

As I read this book this evening, I couldn't help but laugh because I visited my grandfather this afternoon, and he told me about a group of juvenile kittens and their mom that had taken up residence in a shed in the *same* backyard, but would scatter when anyone approached. I took a book and sat in front of the shed not saying a word. An hour later, my mom came to check on us, and there I was surrounded by 4 kittens! Naturally curious, they gradually came closer and closer to me! I came home wondering how many more visits before they allow me to pet them. Sometimes you think you outgrow things, but you don't! Animals and insects have always fascinated me. So what a perfect read at the perfect time!

David Schaafsma says

Jane Goodall was in town the other day so I ordered this book from the library, a fine picturebook introduction to her work with chimpanzees and emphasizing the importance of watching, observing the world in order to begin to ask questions in order to understand it.

"I wanted to learn things no one else knew, uncover secrets. . ."

So she went to Kenya, she worked for primatologist Louis Leakey. She lived among the apes, and learned things about chimps no one knew, secrets. She learned how much we have in common with these other animals. Beautifully illustrated.

Goodall makes it clear that you don't have to be brilliant to add to the knowledge-base in this world. You just have to have deep curiosity about things and be willing to watch, to keep your eyes open and jot down what you see and share it with others with a similar curiosity and commitment. That kinda sounds like how science and becoming a scientist begins.

Kris Dersch says

Really nice picture book biography of an often-covered subject. I like that the early pages solidly ground the reader in Goodall's childhood, making her relatable for the target audience. Back matter isn't much but is very helpful, especially noting why the focus and what of her life isn't included in the narrative.

Mischenko says

I love Jane Goodall and her entire story and it's one that needs to be heard. This book starts out in her childhood and illustrates her story into adulthood. Children will enjoy reading about her ambition and also how important it is to care about our animal wildlife.

I love that this book is a quick, educational read for kids to learn about Jane Goodall and what she stands for.

5*****

Dolly says

This is a wonderful biography about Jane Goodall and her life's work observing and protecting the chimpanzees in Africa. The story offers a good amount of detail from her life, without being overwhelming with details or boring.

I liked that the author explains at the end of the book what she chose to include and not to include in the story, so the reader can understand that there's even more to learn about the scientist's life. The acrylic paint and pen illustrations are colorful and expressive. We really enjoyed reading this book together.

We read *Me...Jane* by Patrick McDonnell about eighteen months ago, and we absolutely loved that story. We were not as bowled over by this book, but it was a very interesting and informative read.

interesting quote:

"You have to be patient if you want to learn about animals,' she wrote." (p. 23)

Lisa Vegan says

This is a nearly perfect picture book biography. It covers just Jane Goodall's work with the chimps (except for a very brief description of other aspects of her life mentioned in the author's note at the end of the book.) It goes from when she was a little girl to a young woman and to her work that continues to this time. Most of what's covered is Jane's work with the chimpanzees but there is more than a mention of the problem of poaching and other atrocities committed against the chimps, and of Goodall's dedication to working to protect them.

I love the humor shown, and I appreciated how Jane's curiosity about animal behavior started when she was a child, and how she had a goal for her life in mind, and how she found what she was looking for in life.

This is an excellent book for young naturalists, young activists, and children who love animals.

I always want to love this author-illustrator's art more than I do. I really liked the pictures but, as with other books by her I've read, I don't fall in love with them.

4 1/2 stars

SheriC (PM) says

*Crossing the ocean, Jane stayed on deck
and watched the waves, even when the cold wind blew.
She saw all the different blues and greens of the sea,
and fish that glowed through the dark water.*

What I loved best about this little children's book was the emphasis that was placed on Jane Goodall's accomplishments and the characteristics of her person and work that helped her to achieve them – curiosity, determination despite hardship, and patient observation, but done in a way that was celebratory rather than preachy. I enjoyed the artwork, too, with its bright unusual colors and sense of motion. In telling Goodall's story, the book also tells us a story about the forest in Gombe in Tanzania, where deforestation and poaching were threatening the chimpanzees with extinction, accompanied by a rather horrifying illustration of a poacher aiming a gun at a mother chimp playing with her infant chimp amid tree stumps. Although the book tries to end on a high note, that illustration is the one that stuck with me after finishing.

This was an ebook, borrowed from my public library. I read this for **The 16 Tasks of the Festive Season**, square 14: *Book themes for Quaid-e-Azam: Pakistan became an independent nation when the British Raj ended on August 14, 1947. Read a book set in Pakistan or in any other country that attained sovereign statehood between August 14, 1947 and today (regardless in what part of the world)*. This book is set in Tanzania, which became independent from the UK in 1961, according to Wikipedia.

????? says

i love Jeanette winter and her lovely lovely books .
i wish i can own them all

Kathryn says

This is a fine picture book biography of Jane Goodall. I like how the thread of Jane being "the watcher" begins right away when she runs into the house as a little girl, having watched the chickens in the yard and declaring happily to her mother that she knows where eggs come from ;-) And how she was so patient and gentle with a bird outside her bedroom window that it eventually approached her and even made a nest in her

bookcase. The "watching" continued when Jane went to Africa to study chimps. At first, they would hide from her, but they watched her as she watched them and, gradually, they came to accept her. Jane's love for the animals and her patience and desire to understand them really shine through in this book and even uses some direct quotes from her books. The afterward helps fill in a few other aspects of her life not covered in the story.

Alas, I did not really like the illustrations in this book, but they were adequate to convey what was happening and it is just personal taste, I think. (I should point out that sensitive audiences may be very unsettled by the illustration on the page talking about poachers where a hunter is pointing a gun at the back of an unsuspecting mother chimp playing with her baby.)

I read this after having fallen in love with *Me . . . Jane* and I must say this one didn't quite speak to me as did *"Me... Jane"*, but *"The Watcher"* is also a more complete look at Jane's life and I think that reading both would benefit young readers interested in learning more about Goodall, chimps, and/or what it takes to be a "watcher".

Tasha says

Follow Jane Goodall's life in this vivid picture book. The book follows Jane from her childhood where she spent a lot of time watching the animals around her, including having a robin nest built on her bookcase in her room. Jane left home soon after graduating from school, heading to Kenya. There she met Louis Leakey who was looking for someone to observe chimpanzees. Jane headed into the jungle to watch the chimpanzees, spending time out near them just quietly viewing them. She learned all sorts of things that no one had ever discovered before. Jane spent many years with the chimpanzees learning, but then people began to threaten the chimpanzee habitat, so Jane had to leave them and become their voice, speaking out to assure their survival.

Winter has created a book that speaks to the heart of what Goodall has done, all of her accomplishments and discoveries pale in the book and in life to her dedication to the animals themselves. Goodall is a perfect subject for a picture book. She is a brave woman who braved living alone in the wilderness to do what she felt she was meant to do with her life. Winter captures all of this in few words, allowing Goodall's life to speak for itself.

Winter's illustrations are done in acrylic paint and pen. They have strong forms, deep colors, and a childlike quality that make the book even more approachable for children. I especially enjoy the cover image with the reflection of the chimpanzees in the lenses of her binoculars. It sums up the book delightfully.

There is something special about a book that tells children to follow their hearts, but this one is even more special because it also shows children the value of watching and learning too. Appropriate for ages 5-8.
