

Aren't You a Strange Bird!

By Rocio Bonilla

READING GUIDE

About the Book

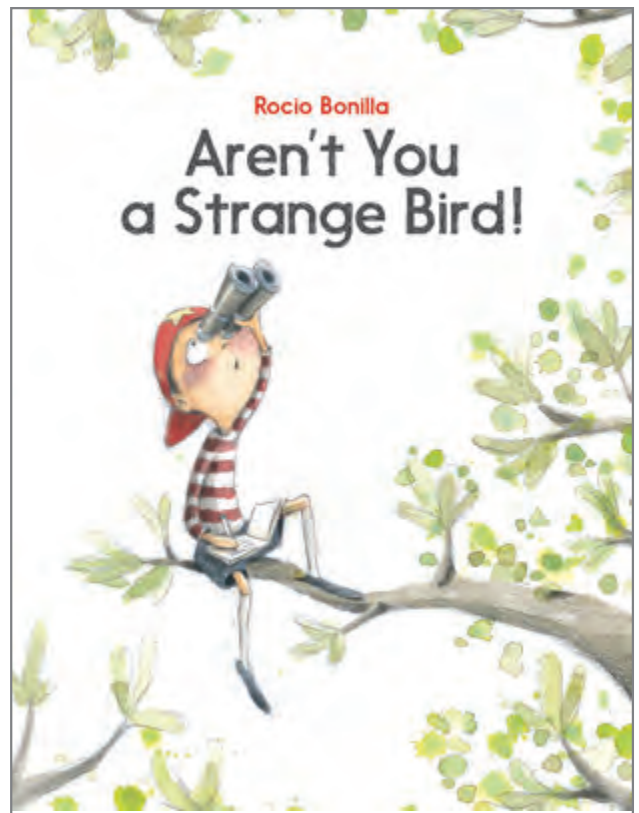
In the spirit of Amelia Bedelia, a story of miscommunication and literal thinking that sets a curious young boy on a journey towards self-acceptance.

Carrasco is a curious boy. So when his neighbor, Mrs. Manolita, says "Aren't you a strange bird!" he wonders what she meant by that. Is he a bird? Does he look like one? Does that mean he can fly?

So Carrasco embarks on an exploration. He climbs trees and pores through books in the library, but doesn't find a bird that looks like him. He tries to eat birdseed, but it doesn't taste very good. It seems like he's not a bird. But, being as curious as he is, Carrasco has one final test to be sure: trying to fly.

A publisher's note highlights connections between the story and Jewish teachings about identity.

Rocio Bonilla received a degree in Fine Arts from the University of Barcelona and is now one of the most prominent author-illustrators in Spain. She has worked as a designer, painter, and teacher, and now spends most of her time illustrating books and painting children's murals. Her books are available in more than 20 languages around the world. She lives in Barcelona, Spain.



Key Themes:

Courage, Curiosity, Language and learning, Self-awareness and identity

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Ages 4–6 years

Use these questions to preface and conclude a reading of this book with children. Encourage them to share their observations as you read the book together, and take time to linger on pages or spreads that generate more discussion.

Before Reading

- When you look at the front cover, what do you think this story will be about?
- Turn to page 14, and predict what might be happening in the picture.
- Can you describe the emotions that the main character is expressing on page 17
- Have you ever experienced any of those feelings?

After Reading

- Can you recall some of the things that Carrasco likes to do?
- One day Carrasco's neighbor, Mrs. Manolita, said "Aren't you a strange bird!" What did he think she meant?
- How did Carrasco try to solve the mystery – is he a bird or a boy? Name some of the things he did.
- After Carrasco's dangerous stunt, he decided that he wanted to be himself. Why?
- In the elevator, Hulk barked at Carrasco. Mrs. Manolita said, "He won't hurt you, he's really just a chicken". What did Carrasco think? Why was he confused?
- Have you ever heard sayings like the ones in this story? Did they seem confusing to you?

Optional: Extension Activity

1. At the end of the story, Carrasco decided he really liked being himself and not a bird. There is a famous quote by Oscar Wilde, "Be yourself; everyone else is already taken".

Draw a picture showing some of the things you do that highlights how important and special you are.

2. Below is a list of more sayings that may cause confusion for some people. Pick one and create some illustrations to go with it.

Apple of my eye

Two peas in a pod

Hit the nail on the head

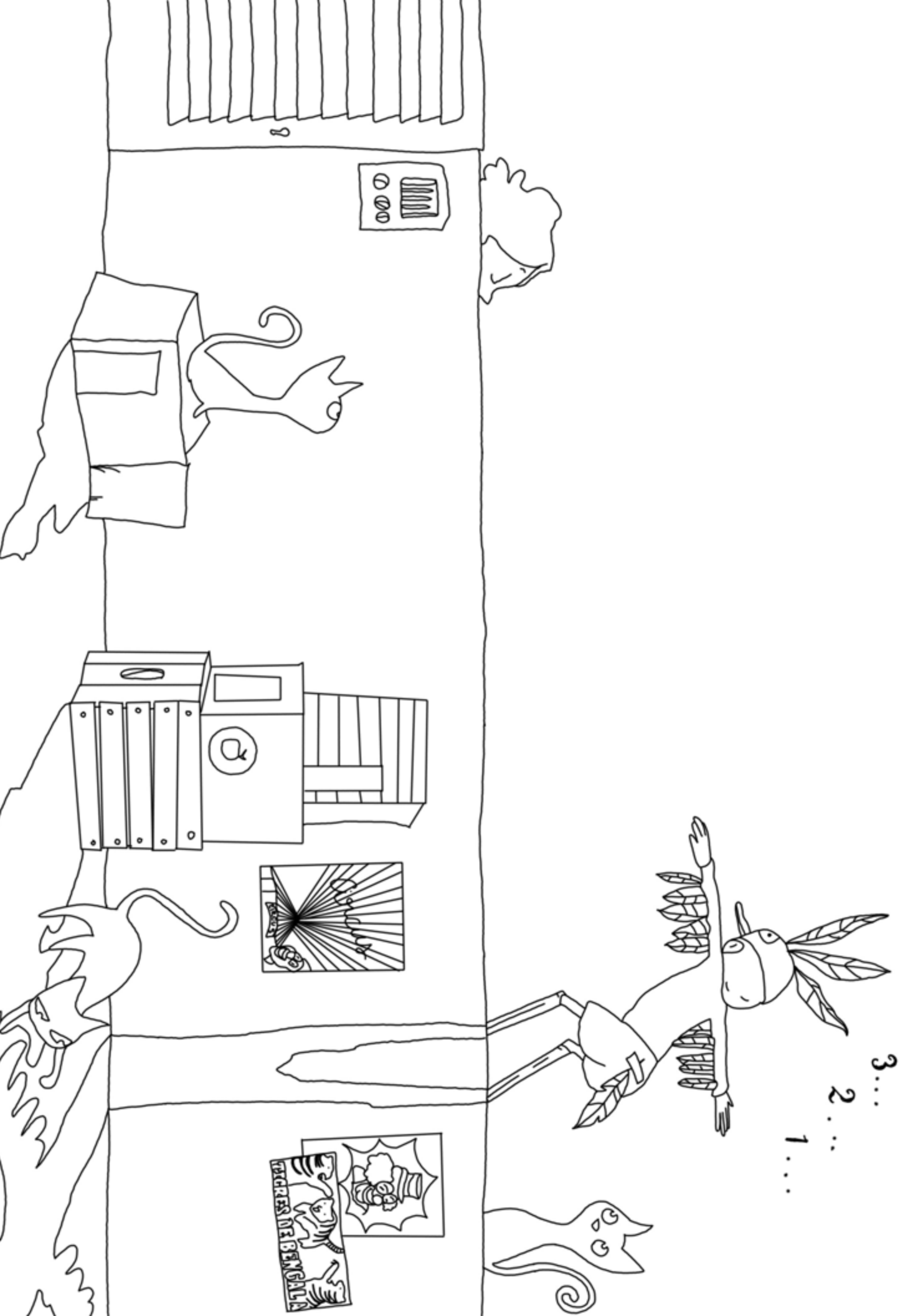
Let the cat out of the bag

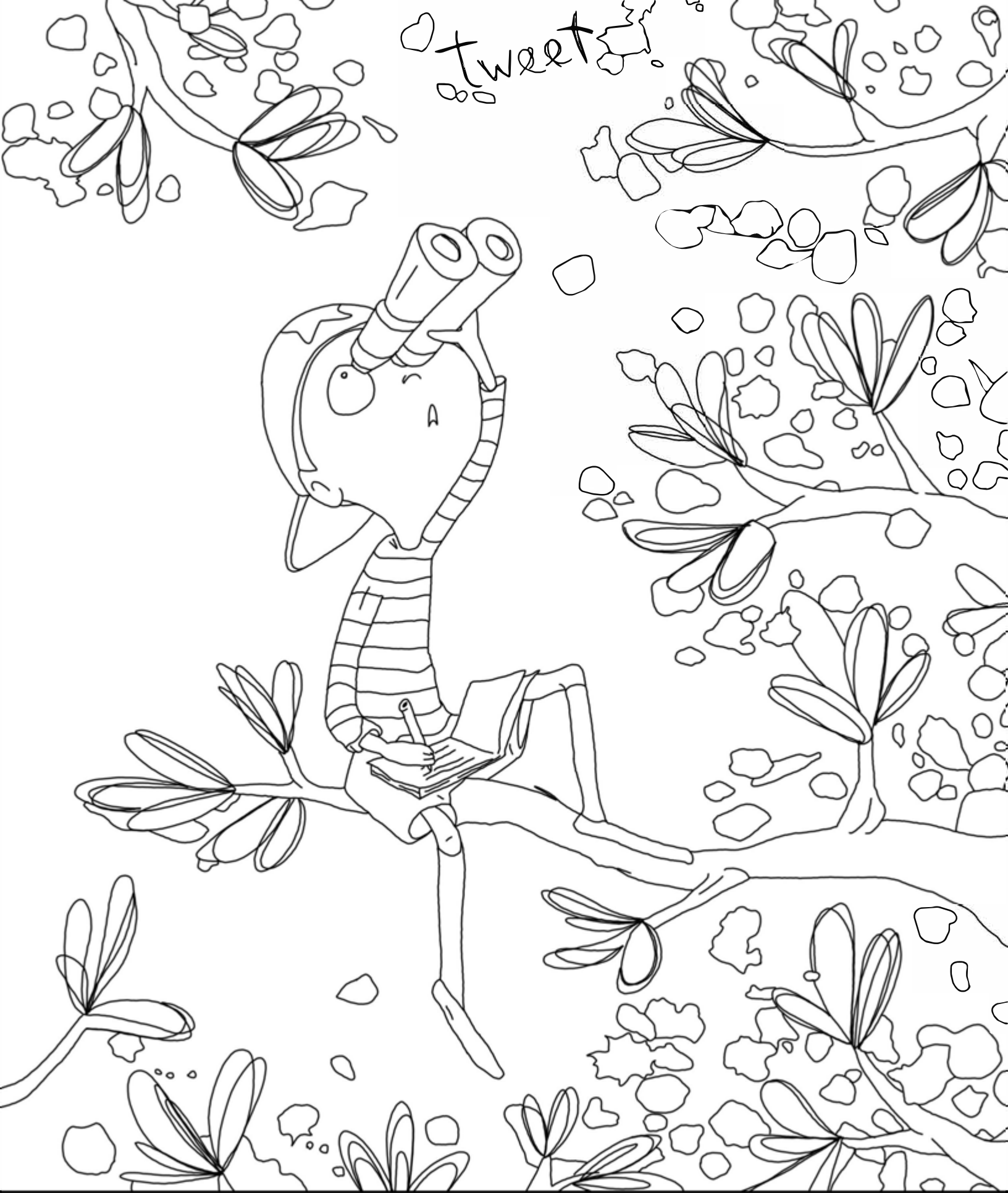
Try to add more sayings to the list.

Discussion Questions by Debbie Berger



3...
2...
1...





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Character Cut Outs

