

Goodies

Animal Art



CATHERINE Rayner is a children's writer and illustrator from Edinburgh (愛丁堡). She loves animals very much, so all of her books are about animals. Look at how adorable these creatures are! They are beautiful, are they not? Today, we are pleased to meet up with Rayner; she will show us her artworks as well as tell us about her intriguing life of being an artist and children's books writer!





Illustrator: Catherine Rayner



Doodling animals to life

CATHERINE Rayner's new book, *Hello, Horse*, was launched just this year in June. She was asked to illustrate the book by her friend, Vivian French, who is also the author of the book. The story is about Rayner's horse, Shannon, and her eldest son. It is a non-fiction story!

Rayner said creatures are her favourite things to draw. She has spent a lot of time with various animals during her life, and what really excites her is capturing their **personalities**. Now, let us ask Rayner whatever that we want to know.



Draw a giraffe

RAYNER loves to meet children at workshops and book events. Today, she will teach us how to draw Abigail the giraffe.

How to draw Abigail the giraffe...
by Catherine Rayner



1. Draw a knobby strawberry shape, with a pencil on a nice piece of paper, like this...

2.

Now draw a slightly smaller strawberry shaped thing at the bottom of the one you just drew, like this...

3.

Now, these are very important. You need to draw two sausage-like shapes on top of the bigger strawberry. These are the Abigail's horns. They are called Ossicones.

4.

Now for ears, Abigail needs big ears so she can hear whispering ladybirds... they look a bit like two leaves on either side of her head...

5.

And a neck, very simple, but VERY important to a giraffe! (They need a really long neck to reach the juiciest leaves at the top of trees)

6.

We are getting there! Now draw two black dots for eyes, two upside down raindrops for nostrils. Then draw her smile! She's very happy that you're drawing her...

7.

Now draw a nice black line over your pencil drawing with pen, like this... Then rub out your pencil line.

8.

...then paint some colour on her ears, forehead, horns and nose. Nice golden browns will be perfect...but there's really nothing stopping you making a purple Abigail if you fancy it, you could choose any colour!

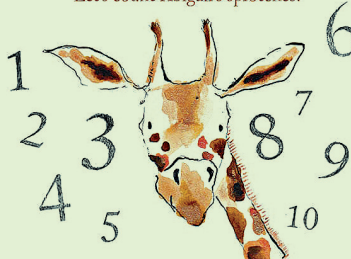
9.

Now for the very, very fun bit! SPLOTCHES! You can copy how I've done mine or you could try a spot of finger printing...

Hurray! You've finished! Well done!

Now, there's just one more thing to do...

Let's count Abigail's splotches!



G: Where do your story ideas come from?

R: Usually, an animal just pops into my head and I start to **doodle**! I can be doodling a creature for months, sometimes years, before a story emerges. My words are inspired by something in the way the animal looks, or an expression he or she might be making.

G: What is your favourite animal? Did you use it as a main character in your books? If so, which one?

R: That's a very tough question! I think it would be impossible to choose a favourite but I am always inspired by my own pets. I have been drawing my horse, Shannon, for 21 years exactly! As soon as I got her I would sit in the field with her and sketch away.

G: Did you always want to be a picture-book writer and illustrator when you were young?

R: I've always found drawing **therapeutic**. I was the child who secretly loved it when it rained as it meant you could stay indoors and draw. The first book I ever wrote, illustrated and made was about my sausage dog Wilfred being naughty. My mum still has it. I was about four. I think I knew then I wanted to be an author and illustrator. But, like most dreams, you don't expect them to come true.

G: How do you motivate yourself when you work on your own?

R: I always look at a finished book and see the little things I could have done better! This spurs me on to try harder the next time and motivates me. I think the key to creating characters that I hope children and adults enjoy reading about comes from drawing from my heart.

G: How long does it take to complete one book?

QUOTE:

"I still can't believe I get to draw every day as a job. I hope I can continue to do it for the rest of my days."

R: I find it can really **vary** but I always hope to do one within a year. I like to get to know an animal, even a fictional one, inside and out. I imagine what they smell like, how they move, even what they eat and it all feeds into drawing a character that I hope people can engage with and love. I feel like if I know them well and love them, other people can too.

G: Are there any obstacles in your working life? What are they and how do you overcome them?

R: Just all the usual juggling of being a busy working mum! Mornings tend to be pretty hectic but once I'm back from the school or nursery run I make a **cuppa** and settle down at my desk. I try to make a plan for the next day the evening before. If I don't, I end up being **sucked in** by my emails. I find I work better if I start the day doing something creative.

G: Do your sons draw? Do you teach them how to draw?

R: Both my sons love to draw and they are always popping in and out of my home studio to help themselves to my pencils and paper! I love seeing my older son's creations **evolve** as he becomes a more confident artist whereas my two-year-old is still very much at the **squiggle** drawing stage!

