

The Wildest Thing

READ ALOUD GUIDE

Themes: Balance and Comfort, Connection to Nature, Embracing Imagination, Freedom vs. Restriction, Individuality and Self-Expression

Book Brief: This beautifully illustrated story follows Eleanor, a child who loves all things wild and discovers the untamed spirit growing inside her.

Author/Illustrator:

Emily Winfield Martin



BEFORE READING

The Cover: Have students make predictions about the story based on the cover.

The Pictures: Take a brief picture walk and ask students what they notice about Eleanor.

Prior Knowledge: Ask students, “What kinds of animals or nature make you think of the word “wild”?”

Vocabulary: Frontload Tier 2 words using the accompanying [vocabulary guide](#).

Purpose for Reading: “While reading, notice how the character expresses her feelings through imagination and how the story moves from wild energy to calm comfort.”

DURING READING

Check for understanding & make connections:

- Why do you think Eleanor’s mother called her inside?
- How does Eleanor feel when she is being wild? What makes you think that?
- Why do you think Eleanor wants to be wild?



Think Aloud: “Eleanor woke up to grass on the ground and rabbits in her bedroom. That makes me think she might still be dreaming, because those things don’t usually belong in a bedroom.”

AFTER READING

Our Purpose: “Eleanor learned how to take her wild energy and calm down. What helps Eleanor feel safe and comfortable at the end of the story?”

Extending Our Thinking: Using [RIF’s Story Map](#), have students identify the characters, setting, and events in the beginning, middle, and end to see how the story fits together.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.

Let them explore more titles about feelings and emotions.

- [My Path](#) (2025)
- [The Crayons’ Book of Feelings](#) (2021)
- [Where the Wild Things Are](#) (1964)