Introduction

*I’ve Got Feet!: Fantastical Feet of the Animal World*, written by zoologist Julie Murphy and illustrated by artist Hannah Tolson, has plenty of scope to inspire productive and imaginative learning in your classroom, from early childhood through elementary school and beyond. This book is more than an exploration of the incredible range in structure and function of one animal adaptation: feet. It is also a bright, colorful portal to stimulate discussion, explain and extend curriculum ideas, and inspire creative projects about animals, children’s own bodies, and the world around us.

The picture book format is perfect for capturing students’ attention and making nonfiction content accessible. On most pages, layered text of three distinct styles ensures there’s something to interest everyone. The striking illustrations have a distinctive naïveté that are relatable without compromising scientific accuracy. These elements work together to make your job in the classroom easier by inspiring student participation through discussions and creative projects to meet and extend cross-curricular learning in literature, science, geography, math, and art.

This teacher’s guide suggests ways that you can integrate *I’ve Got Feet!* into lessons in your classroom. Reproducible handouts in the back pages provide ready-to-go activities to tap into your students’ curiosity and inspire their creativity.
Literature Connections: Point of View

Supports standards:
CCSS-ELA RL.1.6: Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

CCSS-ELA RL.2.6: Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading aloud.

Reader’s Theater  Preview the book and discuss with the students how there are three styles of text on each spread: the exclamation, the first-person lyrical statement, and the informational section in third person. Assign students to be either animals (reading the exclamations and lyrical text) or narrators (reading the informational text). Have them take turns reading different parts aloud to the class.

Write Like the Author  Assign students to look up a few facts about their favorite animals. Ask them to write in first person, as if they are the animals. Then ask them to write the same fact in third person, as if they are a reporter. Students can take turns reading their writing aloud. Ask the students to compare the first person and third person statements.

Art Connections

Supports standards:
CCSS-ELA RL.1.7: Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

CCSS-ELA RL.2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, and plot.

Art Detective  After reading the book, ask the students to go back and look at the pictures. What did the illustrator add that was not stated in the author’s words? Examples include habitat details such as sea turtles living in the ocean near coral reefs or animal details such as kangaroos carrying their babies in their pouches and great horned owls surviving in the snow.

My Imaginary Animal’s Got Feet!  Make a foot of an imaginary animal from clay. Dip it into paint and press onto paper to make a footprint. Make tracks in different colors! If time allows, ask students to draw their imaginary animals. The students can then try to match the painted footprints to the imaginary animals.
Science Connections

Supports standards:
NGSS 1-LS1-1: Use materials to design a solution to a human problem by mimicking how plants and/or animals use their external parts to help them survive and grow.

Awesome Shoes  Read *I’ve Got Feet!* Ask the children which animal foot adaptation from the book they would most like to have. Ask them to invent and draw special shoes that would help their feet to do the same job as the feet of the animal they chose. Some examples are: shoes that could stick to walls like a gecko’s feet or shoes with claws for walking on ice.

Who Walked Here?  Discuss animal foot shapes using the reproducible worksheet. Print out the page for students and let them connect each animal to its footprints. Discuss how they made their decisions based on foot structure and appearance of footprint. If they get stuck, refer to the endsheets in the book for answers.

Math Connections

Supports standards:
CCSS-Math 1.MD.4 Organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories; ask and answer questions about the total number of data points, how many in each category, and how many more or less are in one category than in another.

CCSS-Math 2.MD.10 Draw a picture graph and a bar graph (with single-unit scale) to represent a data set with up to four categories.

Bar Graph: What Kind of Feet?  Read *I’ve Got Feet!* Then list the type of feet each animal has, e.g. claws, flippers, hooves, webbed, or other. Ask students to create a bar graph to show the results. Which is the most common type of foot? Which feet are unlike the others?

Tally: How Many Feet?  Read *I’ve Got Feet!* List how many feet each animal has. Use tally marks to count the number of animals with two feet or four feet. Which number of feet is most common in the book?

Geography Connections

Where Do These Animals Live?  Print the reproducible activity sheet. Introduce the idea that animals live in different geographic ranges. For example, you won’t find a kangaroo in North America or an emperor penguin in Australia! Ask students to follow the instructions and match the animals to where they live.
1. Blue-footed boobies live along the west coast of Central and South America.

2. Koalas live along the east and southeast coast of Australia.

3. Emperor penguins live on Antarctica and the surrounding sea. (Antarctica is the real name for the South Pole. No penguins ever live at the North Pole!)

4. Red kangaroos are found in arid (dry) regions of Australia, which is basically everywhere except the coast.


6. Chimpanzees live in patches from Africa’s northwest to central Africa.

Animal images © Hannah Tolson from I’ve Got Feet!
Who Walked Here?

Draw a line from each set of footprints to the animal that made them.

- duck
- cheetah
- zebra
- bighorn sheep
- kangaroo
- great horned owl
- blue-footed booby
- gecko
- chimpanzee
- emperor penguin