

To See an Owl by **MATTHEW CORDELL**

ABOUT THE BOOK Silent and wide-eyed, owls are hidden creatures of the night. Janie has always dreamed of finding one. She searches everywhere for signs of an owl—for short-eared owls on the open prairie, for snowy owls on the beach, and for great horned owls in the woods near her home. But months go by, and she sees no owls. She wonders, what will it take to see an owl?

Her teacher, Mr. Koji, a fellow bird-lover, shares that he, too, waited a long time to see an owl. He assures her, “If you are very quiet and very patient, and if you look very close, you might just find them.” When the snow begins to fall, Janie and her mother head into the woods again, and as she looks carefully, hidden high up in the trees, what she sees is pure magic.

From Matthew Cordell, the creator of Caldecott Medal winner *Wolf in the Snow*, comes this beautiful story about quiet perseverance that will resonate with anyone who has experienced the anticipation of discovering a rare treasure in the wild.



Art © 2025 by Matthew Cordell



Visit [RHTeachersLibrarians.com](https://www.RHTeachersLibrarians.com), your online destination for all the resources you need for your school or library!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR BEFORE AND AFTER READING

To See an Owl

BEFORE STARTING THE STORY

Ask readers: What do you know about owls? What do they look like? Where do they live? What do they eat? When are they most active? Is there anything special about them that makes them different from other birds?

AFTER THE STORY

Janie needs a lot of patience and dedication in her quest to see an owl. Ask readers if there has ever been anything in their life that they have wanted to accomplish that has required them to exercise patience or practice?

Mr. Koji says, “to see an owl is magic.” Ask readers to share what they think makes it magical?

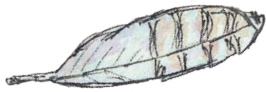


TURN A PAPER PLATE INTO AN OWL

Janie creates an owl journal to organize her facts and findings. This journal includes drawings of many different types of owls. Create your own owl using the instructions below!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Uncoated paper plates, paint, construction paper, scissors, ribbon, and glue

- Fold the sides of the plate in toward the center to make the owl's wings.
- Fold over the top of the plate to make the owl's head.
- Glue the wings and head down. Then glue construction-paper feathers on the body, or paint feathers if you prefer.
- Cut out the eyes, beak, horns, and feet from construction paper, along with any other defining features you want to give your owl.
- Glue the eyes, beak, horns, and feet to the owl.
- Add ribbon to the back of the owl's head with tape for an easy way to display your creation.

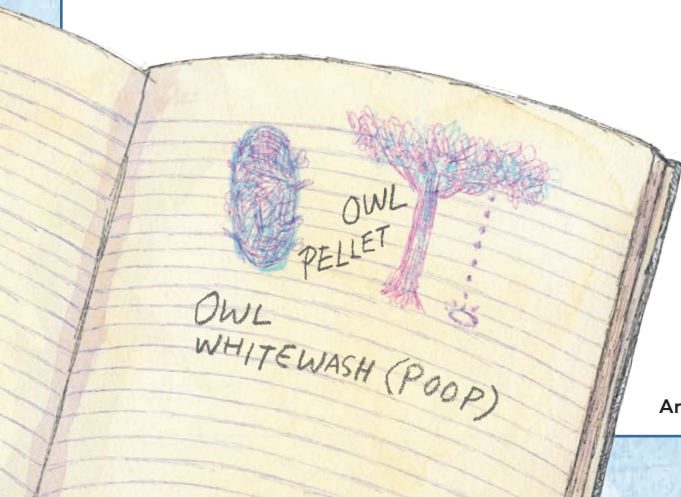


LET'S GO BIRDING!

Janie is a birder. When she goes out looking for owls, she brings her owl journal, her map, a flashlight, and most importantly her binoculars. Construct a pair of binoculars using the instructions below and get ready to go birding!

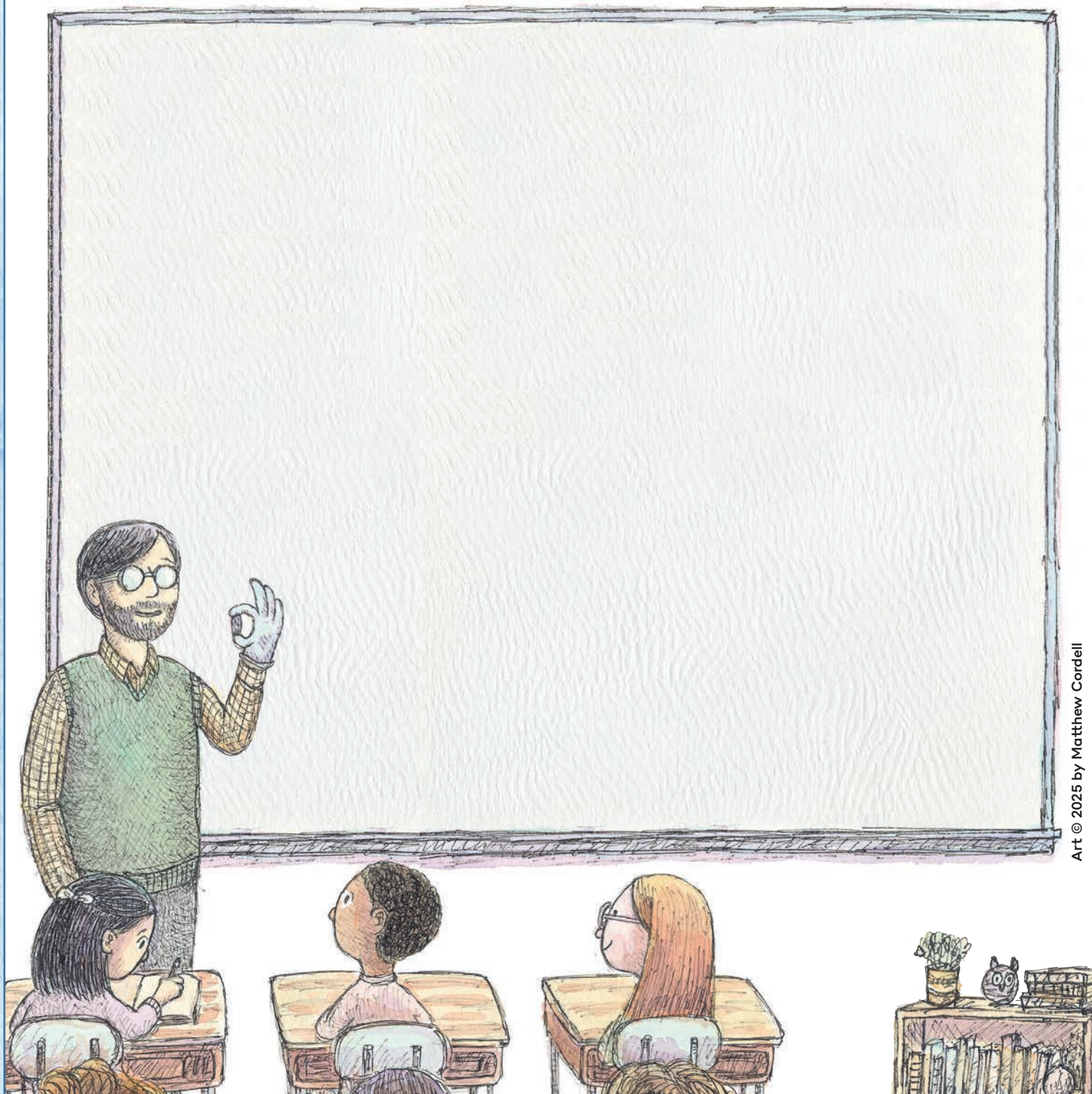
WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Toilet paper rolls (or a paper towel roll cut in half), stapler or glue, hole punch, ribbon or yarn, colorful things to decorate with, such as paint, markers, washi tape, stickers, rhinestones, pom-poms, buttons, craft paper, felt, craft foam, glitter, pipe cleaners, and more!

- Paint your two toilet paper rolls whatever color you want your binoculars to be.
- Staple or glue the tubes side by side so they resemble binoculars.
- Use your creativity to decorate your tubes.
- Punch a hole on both sides of the tubes and attach the ribbon or yarn.
- Go exploring! Don't forget to take a notebook and write about what you find!



WHAT ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT?

For as long as she can remember, Janie has thought about owls. At school she is asked to bring something personal to share with the class. She brings her stacks and stacks of owl drawings, her owl journal, and her map of the woods. What is something you are curious about? Draw a picture or describe the topic of your choice in the space below and then share it with your friends or classmates.



Art © 2025 by Matthew Cordell