

The Tiger Rising

KATE DiCAMILLO

About the Book

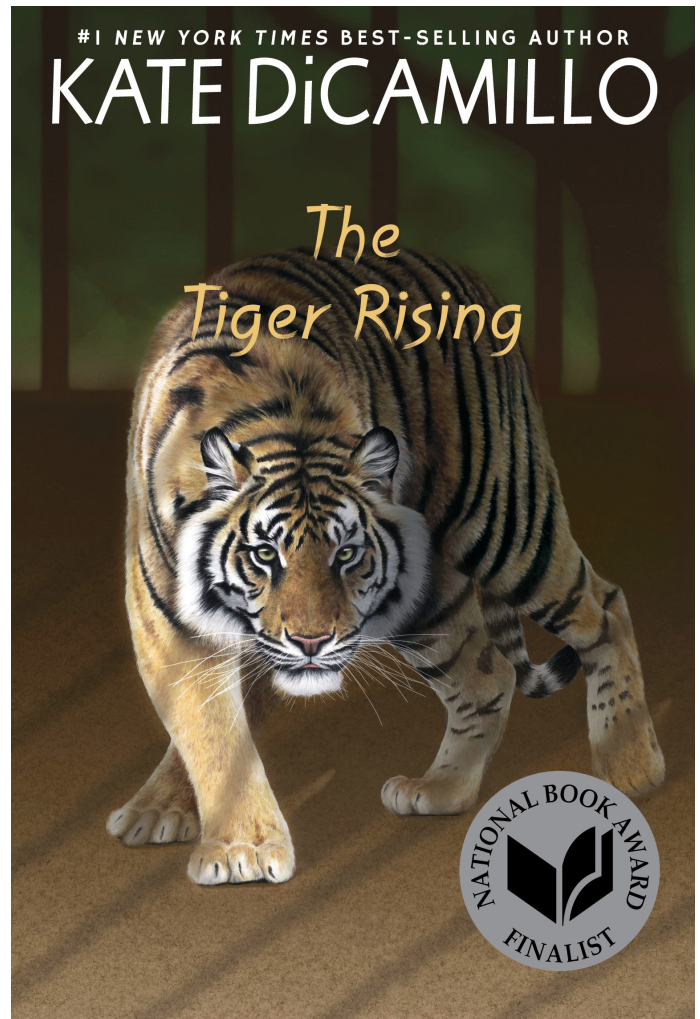
Walking through the misty Florida woods one morning, Rob Horton is stunned to encounter a tiger—a real-life, very large tiger—pacing back and forth in a cage. What's more, on the same extraordinary day, he meets Sistine Bailey, a girl who shows her feelings as readily as Rob hides his. As they learn to trust each other and, ultimately, to be friends, Rob and Sistine prove that some things—like memories, and heartache, and tigers—can't be locked up forever.

In 2001, *The Tiger Rising* was a National Book Award Finalist. In 2022, it was released as a major motion picture. This guide provides questions for discussing and comparing the book and the movie.

Common Core Connections

This discussion guide, which can be used with large or small groups, will help students meet several of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts. These include the reading literature standards for key ideas and details, craft and structure, and integration of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL), as well as the speaking and listening standards for comprehension and collaboration and for presentation of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL). Questions can also be used in writing prompts for independent work.

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About the Author

Kate DiCamillo is one of America's most revered storytellers. She is a former National Ambassador for Young People's Literature and a two-time Newbery Medalist. Born in Philadelphia, she grew up in Florida and now lives in Minneapolis.



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Discussion Questions

1. What similarities and differences did you notice between the book and the movie? How did they add or take away from your understanding?
2. Why isn't the movie exactly like the book? Is it possible to ever re-create a book exactly?
3. Did the overall tone of the movie feel like the tone of the book?
4. The movie begins and ends with a voiceover of an adult Sistine talking about finding the tiger when she and Rob were kids. How does this change the story? Is it still Rob's story or is it Sistine's? Or is it both of their stories intertwined?
5. In the book, we read about Rob's imagination, but in the movie, we see it. Describe what it felt like to see Rob's imagination come to life in the movie. Was it different from what you imagined when reading the book?
6. In the book, Sistine is described as having yellow hair and a pink lacy dress when she gets on the bus. In the movie, Sistine is African American. How does this impact the story? Why do you think the director/screenwriter decided to make Sistine African American? Would you have made this change? Why or why not?
7. In the movie, Rob helps the art teacher before he leaves school. Later in the movie, she checks in on Rob at the motel. Why do you think the art teacher was added to the story, and what purpose does she serve for Rob's character?
8. There are several flashbacks of Rob and his mom in the movie. Many of them did not take place in the book in the same way. Why do you think the flashbacks were added to the movie? What do they help us to understand about Rob and his mother?
9. What does the tiger's reaction to Beauchamp tell us about Beauchamp's character?
10. It is raining for most of the book but only in a few scenes in the movie. Does the lack of rain change the mood and tone of the movie, and if so, how? Were there other elements in the movie that affected the tone and mood?
11. In the book, Rob's father kills the tiger to save Sistine and Rob. In the movie, he kills the tiger to save Beauchamp. How does this change the story?
12. What happens to the tiger at the end of the movie and the book? What impact do the changes have on the story? Which ending do you prefer?
13. Compare and contrast Rob's relationship with his father in the book and in the movie. How is it similar? How is it different?
14. Compare and contrast Rob's relationship with Willie May in the book and in the movie. What similarities and differences do you notice?

These questions were prepared by Nicholl Montgomery, a PhD candidate in the curriculum and instruction department at Boston College and part-time lecturer in the children's literature department at Simmons University. She is a former middle school and high school English teacher in Boston.



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