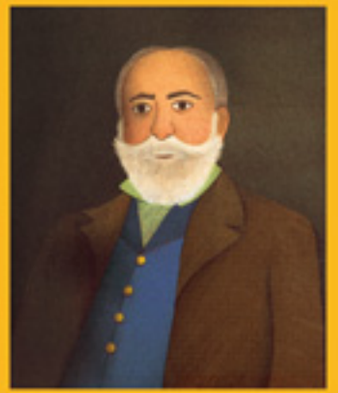

Carnival of the Animals
It is a rainy day and James and Thomas are two brothers who are very bored. Their mother tells them to go and find something to do—maybe they could tidy their room? Instead, James picks up a book full of the animals of planet Earth. As the two boys read about lions and tortoises and fish and birds of paradise, they hear a click. Behind the bookshelf, something swings open. It looks like a secret door...
Press the musical note on each page to bring the story of *Carnival of the Animals* to life.
PRESS HERE
LION


James climbs through and is quickly surrounded by a curious lion pride. The majestic leader paws him on the shoulder. "I am the king of this land, the top of the food chain. Welcome to my magical kingdom. Do you want to hear me roar?" James just stares at him. ROOOOOAR! "Good, isn't it." he winks, smoothing his shaggy mane with his claws. The lion's roar travels for miles and echoes in James's ears. He wonders if the heat has gone to his head or if he fell asleep reading.
"You look just like the lion in my book!" says James to the lion king, mystified. Suddenly, he hears Thomas cry out, "James come here! I've found something!"
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Thomas tumbles through a tree burrow and James jumps hastily after him. They land with a bump on a hard rock. James tries to work out where they are, when the rock starts to speak. It's a tortoise!
"What-a-birth-day-surprise. I am o-n-e- h-u-n-d-r-e-d to-d-a-y," the tortoise says. "They call me Lonely George. But if you have to leave me—on my birthday—go that way." Thomas strokes his shell.
"We will be back, Lonely George!" he says.
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Camille Saint-Saëns was born in France in 1835. He was a talented pianist from a very young age, giving his first concert at five years old. By 16, he was writing his first symphonies. Saint-Saëns wrote "The Carnival of the Animals" in 1886 as a fun musical suite. It was so much fun, in fact, that he thought people wouldn't take him seriously if it was ever performed in public! But today, *The Carnival of the Animals* is loved all over the world as the perfect introduction to classical music.

There are 14 movements in the suite, but we have handpicked a selection of nine in our story. "The Carnival of the Animals" is all about imagination and jokes. Each piece of music helps you to imagine the animal it's named after.

Listen to the sound clips on the next page. How do they help you imagine their matching animals? What pieces make you laugh, and why?

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Music licensed courtesy of Naxos Rights US Inc. (Slovak Radio Symphony, Ondrej Lenárd, 1990) These clips have been edited for this book format.
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GLOSSARY

Glissando – a slide from one pitch to another

Glockenspiel – a percussive instrument made from metal bars

Movement – one shorter, but complete piece that makes up part of a musical composition

Phrase – a group of notes that is part of a longer piece of music

Pitch – how high or low a note is

Scale – a set of musical notes ordered by pitch

Tremolando – a trembling or quivering effect, created by fast repeating notes

Waltz – a dance in three time

Xylophone – a percussive instrument made from wooden bars

Can you remember where the sounds appear in the story?

PRESS HERE

5 (Aquarium)

In this movement, a low flute and high strings play the melody. This sounds like fish swimming gracefully in schools, using their tails to change direction as the notes change pitch. The pianos play shimmering notes that move quickly, like ripples of water.

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4 (The Elephant)

Saint-Saëns gives the large and lumbering elephant a waltz melody on the double-bass. The double-bass is a large and majestic instrument, with a deep and rich sound, but it is not normally given a solo in the orchestra. Yet the sound matches perfectly with the animal. They are both the unlikely stars of the show.

PRESS HERE

10 (Finale, part 2)

In the second clip, you can hear the piano trembles from the introduction. There are other animals hidden, too. Can you hear a donkey braying in the strings? It leaps between low and high notes. All the animals build together to create orchestral madness, before ending like a traditional orchestral symphony—but sillier and with more xylophone.

PRESS HERE

3 (Tortoises)

This is what is known as a "musical joke." The strings play a slow version of a hugely energetic piece of dance music, the Can-Can, where dancers kick their legs very high. Ask an adult to find the music by Jacques Offenbach and compare the two pieces. This would have made Saint-Saëns' friends laugh, imagining the tortoises' slow-and-steady walk as a dance.

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6 (Aviary)

The flute is the star of this piece. With its quick, fluttering rise and fall, the flute brings to life a curious little bird, by mimicking its wing movements. The strings hum with energy in the background, playing tremolando, representing a house full of colourful birds ready to take flight.

PRESS HERE

8 (The Swan)

This piece is beautiful yet simple. A single cello mimics the swan's body, gliding elegantly over the water. Beneath the surface, two rippling pianos sound like the swan's feet, paddling along.

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9 (Finale, part 1)

This is perhaps the liveliest movement in Carnival of the Animals. All the instruments have parts to play. It is as if all the animals have come together to run around and take a final bow. We have split the finale into two parts for our book. In this first clip, the xylophone plays the melody as the fossils take the lead.

PRESS HERE

2 (Royal March of the Lion)

This piece feels grand and a little dangerous—perfect for the king of beasts. The piano, cello, and double bass play a chromatic scale going up and down, which sounds like a lion's rumbling roar. A chromatic scale uses all the half-step notes, which are next door to each other, in order. (All the 12 black and white keys on the piano.)

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7 (Fossils)

The hard, brittle sound of the xylophone sounds like dinosaurs using their own bones as instruments. Or, in our story, their feet on the museum floor. Saint-Saëns makes fun of his other piece, "Danse macabre," which also uses a xylophone to imagine a spooky skeleton.

PRESS HERE

1 (Introduction)

Suspense is building! Two pianos tremble, while the string section passes around the same upward three-note phrase. This phrase gets quicker, higher, and louder—something is coming! Listen out for the two pianos playing a glissando. One goes down and one goes up, followed by a pause, while we wait for the first animal.