

# Owen & Mzee

## The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship

### A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

**Themes:** Friendship, Ecosystems, Africa

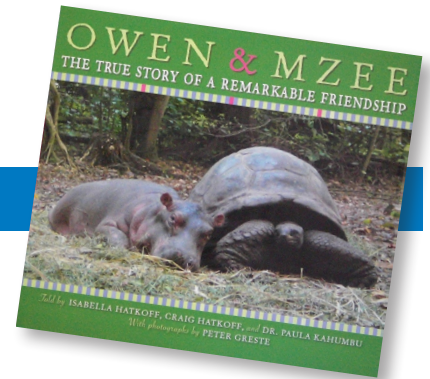
**Grade Level:** 3rd to 5th grade

**Book Brief:** In 2004, the aftermath of the tsunami leaves a young hippo stranded at sea. This is the story of his rescue, his resiliency, and a unique friendship.

**Authors:**

Isabella Hatkoff,  
Craig Hatkoff,  
Dr. Paula Kahumbu

**Photographer:** Peter Greste



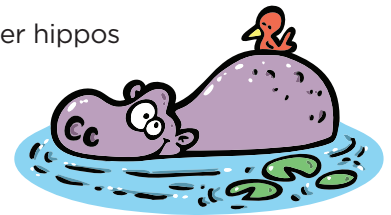
### TIME TO READ!

**Before reading, make inferences:** Based on the book's title and cover picture, what can you tell about these animals? What kind of animals are they?

**While reading, make connections:** Do Owen and Mzee remind you of any of your friends? Why?

**After reading, ask questions:**

- ◆ What would you do if you saw hippos outside eating your grass?
- ◆ Why wouldn't the other hippos like Owen?
- ◆ Do you think Owen has feelings? Why or why not?



### RELATED ACTIVITIES

#### FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS

Materials: colored floss or string, scissors

Show a friend how much you care by designing a friendship bracelet for the two of you. Go to [www.knotcool.com](http://www.knotcool.com) for some easy patterns and directions.

#### WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

If you were an animal, what would you be? Why? How about your best friend? Write a story about or draw a picture of you and your best friend as animals, like Owen and Mzee. What adventures do you have together?



#### TORTOISE TREATS

Ingredients: 2 uncooked canned biscuits, knife, filling (optional)

Tear off dough from one biscuit; use it to make four legs and a head for the second biscuit. Make squares on the back of the biscuit with a knife to represent a tortoise shell. Bake at 350\* for 17 minutes. When cool, slice the biscuit in half and enjoy with butter or the filling of your choice.

#### TECHNOLOGY LINK

Visit [www.owenandmzee.com](http://www.owenandmzee.com) to learn more about this odd couple!

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

#### OTHER BOOKS ABOUT ANIMAL FRIENDSHIPS

*Unlikely Friendships: 47 Remarkable Stories from the Animal Kingdom*, Jennifer Holland (2011), *Friends: True Stories of Extraordinary Animal Friendships*, Catherine Thimmesh (2011), *Tara and Bella: The Elephant and Dog Who Became Best Friends*, Carol Buckley (2009).



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