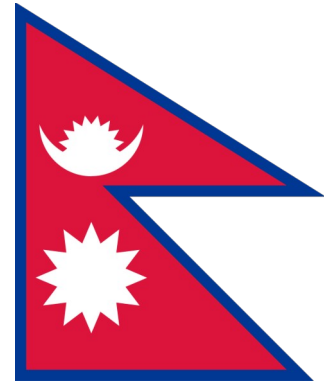


### Setting

*Climbing Home* is set in the country of Nepal, in the region of Central Asia. Encourage students to locate Nepal and the Himalaya mountain range on a world map, if you have one.

Encourage students to notice details in the story that reflect its setting:

- On the **front cover**, the animals are eating a dessert called *kulfi*, which is made from frozen milk. *Kulfi* originated in India, but is also popular in Nepal.
- We see many mountains throughout the story. Nepal is a very mountainous country. It has many of the highest mountains in the world.
- The clothes the animals are wearing are loosely based on traditional Nepalese clothing.
- As we go higher up the mountain, we begin to see snow.
- The sign on the front cover is written in Nepalese. It says “home”.



The flag of Nepal is seen on the **title page**, and outside Snow Leopard’s house on **pages 2, 3, 14, and 15**. You can ask students what shapes the flag is made out of (2 triangles). It is the only flag of nations that has this shape. All others are rectangular.

### Characters

The animals in the story are modelled on species of mouse, hare, goat, and snow leopard found in Nepal. Depending on where you are in the world, your students may have seen other species of mouse, hare, goat, or leopard before. What makes the animals in the story different from those they have seen before? Consider the size of the animal, colour, markings, ears (size, shape), tail (size, shape, position, thickness), legs (length, width), feet (hoofs or paws, number of toes), horns, etc.



Woolly hare  
(Ksuryawanshi, [CC BY-SA 4.0](#))



Goats in Nepal



Snow leopards

### Story

The four houses are visible on the mountain on **pages 2 and 3**. Encourage students to count the houses at this point in the story and guess which animal lives in which house. To make a good guess, they should consider how high the houses are on the mountain, the sizes of the animals, and the features visible on each house.

As the story progresses, we see more details on the houses which you can encourage students to notice. For example:

- What shape is Mouse’s house number?  
(pages 7 and 9: a mouse head, see also Snow Leopard’s house number on page 15)

- Why might the colour we see through Mouse's windows change from blue on **page 5** to yellow on **pages 7, 9, 10, and 13**? (Mouse turns a light on inside. As it gets darker outside, we see more of the light)
- What is on Hare's doormat? (**page 8**: a carrot)
- What happens to Mouse's washing? (**pages 12-13**: it is blown away when Snow Leopard leaps)
- What do the house numbers correspond to? (**pages 5, 8, 14, and 15**: the number of stairs each animal climbs)
- Why does Mouse not live at the very top? (It would take too long to climb up)

You can also ask students to notice what the colours they can see suggest about the time of day throughout the story. For example, compare the daytime setting of **page 2** with the evening setting of **page 3 onwards**, especially **pages 14 and 15**.

### Mathematical concepts

A statement like "We have words to name the numbers" is useful for students to understand how language and mathematics are connected. However, do not push this too far, because in everyday language we more often use numbers as adjectives than as nouns. Learning to recognise and spell numbers is essential. Regular reinforcement is needed in class and at home.

Counting in 2s, 5s, and 10s is an important skill to master to aid students as they progress in mathematics. Counting in 5s and 10s will be particularly useful when dealing with money.

Finding patterns is key. It may be useful to show students a table of numbers, and highlight the multiples of 2, 5, and 10. Once students recognise the pattern, they should be able to predict multiples of 2 beyond 20 (**page 7**), and multiples of 5 beyond 50 (**pages 10-11**). Extension students may be able to predict multiples of 10 beyond 100 (**pages 13-14**).

At the end of the story, the reader is challenged to count back down the stairs. Encourage students to count back in 10s, using **pages 13-14** to help if needed. Students should be able to count back from 100 in 1s, but may find it difficult to keep track of where they are up to. It is also a very time consuming process, and students will likely struggle to have the patience to get all the way back to zero, so you may prefer to count back from 100 to 80, or count back from 20 to 1. It is important to start at 100 at Snow Leopard's house, and end with *zero* at the base of the mountain.

### For students requiring extension

Some students may recognise that the animals climb *10 lots* of 1, 2, 5, and 10 stairs, respectively. They may be able to write a multiplication for the number of stairs each animal climbs:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Mouse climbs $10 \times 1 = 10$ stairs | • Goat climbs $10 \times 5 = 50$ stairs      |
| • Hare climbs $10 \times 2 = 20$ stairs  | • Leopard climbs $10 \times 10 = 100$ stairs |

Some students may also be ready to count back from 100 to 0 in 5s and 2s. We cannot simply read the book in reverse to do this, because we only counted up to 50 in 5s (**pages 10-11**), and up to 20 in 2s (**page 7**). However, students can use these pages to help identify each pattern, and practise counting back down from the lesser amounts.