Setting

Hide and Seek is set in the country of Costa Rica, in the region of Central America. Encourage students to locate Costa Rica on a world map, if you have one.

The mountain range seen on **pages 14-15** is inspired by the Cordillera de Guanacaste – a volcanic mountain range in the northwest of the country, where spotted skunks are most commonly found – and by the Cordillera de Talamanca – a mountain range in the southeast, where cottontail rabbits are found.

The clothing worn by the animals in the story is inspired by the bright colours and patterns found on of traditional Costa Rican dress. For women, traditional dress usually includes a ruffled blouse and a large colourful skirt that can be twirled when dancing. Flowers are sometimes worn in women's hair. Traditional men's clothing includes pants, a shirt, a cowboy hat, and a cummerbund (sash worn around the waist). Traditional clothes are most commonly worn for celebrations and for dancing.

The interior of the house features bright colour combinations found in Costa Rican art. For example:

- the floor tiles (most pages)
- the curtains (**title, pages 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16**)
- the table cloth (**pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 16**)
- the couch cushions (**pages 2**, **16**)
- the wall mirrors/frames (**pages 2**, **4**, **11**, **16**)
- the ornaments/vases (**page 6**)

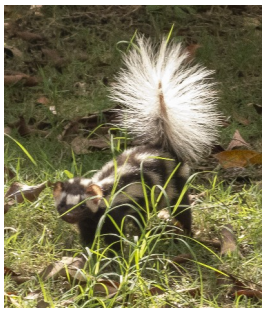
You can ask your students to name the colours they see on each object.

The mask seen on the shelf on **pages 2** and **16** is inspired by Boruca or "rainforest" masks of the indigenous Boruca people, from the south of the country. They are carved from wood and painted with bright colours. They are used in cultural festivals and rituals, and are sold as art to tourists.

The flag of Costa Rica can be seen on the front cover of the book, as well as on **pages 2, 4, 11, and 16**. The state flag (used by the government) includes the coat of arms, while the civil flag (used by any citizen) does not.

Characters

The animals in the story are modelled on species of rabbit and skunk found in Costa Rica. Depending on where you are in the world, your students may have seen other species of these animals 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 (number of toes), etc.



Southern spotted skunk
(Heidi Donat, CC BY-SA 2.0)

Common tapeti / Brazilian cottontail
(Thomas Kay, CC BY 4.0)

The southern spotted skunk has a particularly broad and bushy tail and pattern of black and white fur that is unlike many other skunk species. Cottontail rabbits (including the tapeti) have 5 toes on their front paws (we refer to these toes as "fingers" on **pages 14-15**) , and only 4 toes on their back paws. This is why we count the skunks' toes on **pages 9-11**, not the rabbits' toes!

Story

"Hide and seek" or "hide-and-go-seek" is a children's game that has been played in many different cultures throughout history. Ask your students if they have ever played it before. If they have, ask them to explain the rules of the game. If not, you can explain the game like this:

- one player is chosen to seek (we often say they are "it") while all other players hide;
- the person who is "it" closes their eyes and counts up to a number the group decides on (e.g., 20, 50, 100);
- all the other players hide in a chosen area (e.g., the living room, inside the house, in the backyard);
- when they have finished counting, the person who is "it" tries to find all the other players;
- the person found first is usually considered to have "lost" that round and becomes the seeker in the next round;
- the person found last is the "winner";
- after some time, if the seeker cannot find everyone, they may call out something like "Game over!", "I give up!", or "Come out, come out wherever you are!", and everyone reveals themselves.

Be aware that the rules differ from country to country, and that there are many variations on the game. Try to find out how it is played in your area, if possible. Once you have reached the end of the book, you can ask your students who they think won the game. (the narrator's little sister)

Using **page 2**, you can ask your students to think of other places to hide in the room. For example:

- under the couch;
- in the cupboard (but it is important to not shut the door completely if you do, in case you get stuck);
- in the hole in the wall.

If you have an appropriate area in your classroom or at your school playground, your class could play a game of hide and seek. Make sure you supervise carefully and keep track of where all the children are hiding, so no one gets lost!

Mathematical concepts and language
A variety of words are used throughout the story to indicate multiplication. Students should be able to recognise and understand these words wherever they appear.

Word or phrase	**Synonyms**	**Definition**
groups of	lots of	
times	multiplied by	These words indicate multiplication. In each case, they function as verbs, though it is not particularly helpful to attempt to place these words into standard grammatical categories when we read an equation aloud. What is important is that they correspond to the "×" symbol. You do not need to introduce the word "product" yet.
equals		This word introduces the result or answer of a calculation. It corresponds to the "=" symbol.
In total	altogether	This is an adverbial phrase which we use to state the answer to the question of "how many ___ ?". It refers to the entire amount we have counted.

In this book we move from counting in 1s, 2s, 5s, and 10s (as in Reader #2), to multiplication. Counting in this way and using the language of "groups of" helps to connect multiplication with addition, and primes us for times tables. Addition is very helpful for smaller multiplications but once we have five or more "groups", as we do in this book, the additions become less helpful for young students. We have not stated the corresponding additions in the book, but for your reference, they are:

- $1 + 1 = 2$ (**pages 4-5**);
- $2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 10$ (**pages 7-8**);
- $10 + 10 + 10 = 30$ (**pages 10-11**);
- $5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 = 50$ (**pages 14-15**).

Counting in 5s makes the larger multiplication (10×5) much easier and quicker than repeated addition.

We have endeavoured to make the illustrations clear enough for students to count the tails, ears, toes, and fingers one by one. It is perfectly okay for them to do this. However, our goal is for them to subitise (recognise on sight) the groups, and so be able to think in groups and multiples. Emphasising the multiples as you count can help in this transition. For example:

- "one, *two*... three, *four*... five, *six*... seven, *eight*... nine, *ten*..."
- "one, two, three, four, *five*… six, seven, eight, nine, *ten*… "

Encourage your students to keep practising.

In each case, we generate a sequence of the answers of the corresponding times table. There has been a lot of talk over the years about learning "times tables", whether they are important, when to

learn them, how to learn them, which ones to do first, and so on. It is our opinion that times tables are helpful and indeed necessary:

- For very young students like we are dealing with here, reciting times tables helps to develop familiarity with the number words.
- Just as we have to not just introduce, but practise single-digit plus single-digit addition before we can do column addition, we need to not just introduce, but practise times tables before we do long multiplication.
- In the case of addition, we can practise more easily by counting objects and counting along the number line. In the case of multiplication, the numbers get too big too fast to do everything by counting.

For students requiring extension

You might like to ask students to write out their 1, 2, 5, and 10 times tables, and practise saying them from memory. They can also look for patterns in the times tables:

- When we multiply a number by 1, the number remains the same.
- The results of the 2 times tables end in 2, 4, 6, 8, or 0, in that order.
- The results of the 5 times tables end in 5 or 0.
- All the results of the 10 times table end in 0.

You can also ask the students to perform different multiplications, without using the book's illustrations to count. For example:

- There are 7 rabbits. Each rabbit has 2 ears. How many ears do they have in total?
  $7 \times 2 = 14$ ears in total.

- There are 5 skunks. Each skunk has 10 toes. How many toes do they have in total?
  $5 \times 10 = 50$ toes in total.

- There are 12 animals. Each animal has 2 eyes. How many eyes do they have in total?
  $12 \times 2 = 24$ eyes in total.