

From Little to Big: The Life Cycle of the Reindeer

Ellen Anne Sara Gaup

High in the north, where it is snowy, frosty, cold, and daylight never fades, a herd of reindeer made its way to its spring and summer grazing grounds. The reindeer moved in a line and side by side, the pregnant females at the front eager to reach the calving sites where many of their calves would soon be born.

In the nonfiction book *Miesážis rávis boazun*, we follow a white reindeer from birth through its first year of life: what it does, where it lives, what it eats, etc. We also follow the calf's interactions with humans, giving us insight into the relationship between the reindeer, Sámi reindeer herders, and nature. The book is a fully illustrated, easy-to-read picture book that includes a summarizing factual section and a vocabulary list.

The author writes about reindeer and their annual cycle through the story of one reindeer calf. With the calf as the main character, the content becomes easy to understand, and children in particular can identify with the emotions the calf experiences.

The text and illustrations complement each other beautifully. Malle Rimmel illustrated the book with lively and colorful images that showcase important details about animals and nature.

Many find the remote Arctic, where the polar night lasts for three months, fascinating, making this book particularly relevant. It dispels the notion that the region is nothing more than a dark and barren place; here, the interplay between humans, animals, and nature is unique.



Miesážis rávis boazun
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Ellen Anne Sara Gaup is from Máze, Kautokeino. She was born and married into a reindeer herding family. A licensed educator and teacher, she believes in the importance of children engaging with stories that offer valuable lessons. In this way, she carries on the Sámi storytelling tradition through her children's books, the first of which was published in 2007.