

# **Ursula Upside Down**

## **Written and Illustrated By: Corey R. Tabor**

**Synopsis:** Ursula is a happy catfish, swimming through a shimmering river with weeds waving above and a sky full of scrumptious bugs below. Then one question turns her world upside down. Is left right? Is right wrong? Which way even is up?

**Suggested Reading Date:** January 31 (Upside Down Day, aka Backward Day); June 25 (National Catfish Day)

### **Activity Descriptions:**

- Have students draw a scene from the book as Ursula sees it—upside down!
- Have students reenact scenes from the story or come up with their own “upside down” adventures for Ursula.
- Ask: "Would you rather swim upside down like Ursula or float right-side up?"
- Research other animals that spend time upside down (bats, monkeys, snakes, etc.)
- Discuss gravity and how we know that our right side up is right.
- Make a chart of how Ursula feels at different points in the story. Discuss what might make her feel that way and how others reacted to her.
- Give students mirrors and ask them to draw or write something while only looking in the mirror—just like Ursula seeing things upside down!
- Makerspace: Make a fish out of a plastic bottle and use some type of weight to make it swim upside down, or make a fish out of a paper plate and hang it upside down.

### **Related Websites:**

- Author’s Website: <https://www.coreyrtabor.com/>
- Book Trailer: <https://youtu.be/nvIHBsqqucE>
- Author Interview: <https://afuse8production.slj.com/2024/05/09/the-constant-change-of-perspectives-a-qa-with-corey-tabor/>
- Upside-Down Catfish Doesn't Care What You Think - PBS Deep Look: <https://youtu.be/eurCBOJMrsE>
- Upside Down Catfish Facts - Animal Fact Files Video: <https://youtu.be/4DeN7GJdM0c>
- Publisher Activity Sheet: <https://b0f646cfbd7462424f7a-f9758a43fb7c33cc8adda0fd36101899.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/activity-guides/AG-9780063275560.pdf>

### **Text to Text Connections:**

- *Not a Monster* by Claudia Guadalupe Martinez
- *Except Antarctica* by Todd Sturgell
- *Creature Features* by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page
- *Cyril and Pat* by Emily Gravett

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