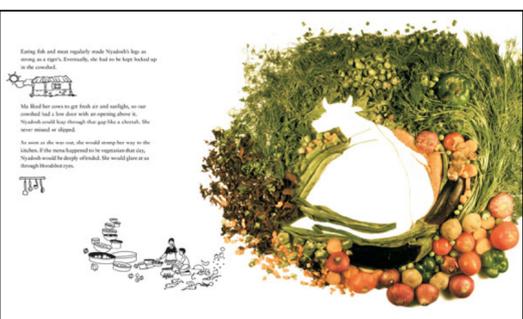
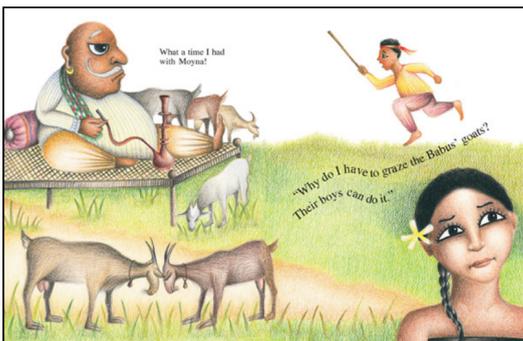
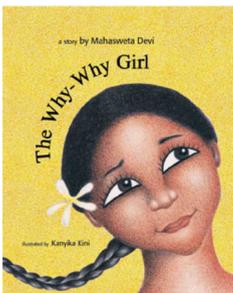




Not many outside Bengal know about Mahasweta Devi – activist, political writer, chronicler of the oppressed – as a delightful children’s writer. With deep regret at her passing, we pay respect to her timeless legacy by highlighting the two classics by her that we were privileged to publish. “I want to reach as many people as possible,” she’d once said – we hope that the nine language editions of these books will go some way in reaching her to many, many children.

Books



Mahasweta Devi

Growing up with nine brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles and grandparents... what a lively childhood Mahasweta Devi must have had! She was never stopped from doing anything she liked. She cycled around everywhere. And craved books all the time, like Nyadosh the cow in 'Our Incredible Cow'.

She was born on 14 January 1926 in Dhaka, which is now the capital of Bangladesh but was then part of India. When she was about ten, she was sent to school in Shantiniketan. She was very, very upset, and her father bought her four ice-creams to make her feel better.

When Dhaka became part of East Pakistan after Partition, her family went to West Bengal in India. Her father worked in the government and so they kept moving from place to place. Both her parents were writers. Education was very important in her family. Her grandmother ran a 'school' from home for the girls in the village where she lived, and her mother did the same later on.

All of this must have had something to do with Mahasweta Devi herself becoming a writer. In fact, she could read fluently by the time she was only four years old, and began writing very early too.

Her happiest memories are of the time when they were in Medinipur. Just beyond their house was a sal forest where Santhal tribals lived in huts. Even after she grew up, Mahasweta Devi was close to adivasis. She lived with them, worked with them, and wrote books about them.

She became a very well known writer in Bengali, and her books have been translated into many languages all over the world. When writing for grown-ups, she is serious. But her stories for children are full of funny incidents and unforgettable characters. They show us a bit of her childhood, a time when "every day was a festival!"



From 'About the author' in *Our Incredible Cow*, Illustrated Classics series

Reviews

"The story lends itself to many layers of interpretation as all good works of art do. As you read the story, seemingly simple, you first realize the divide between urban life and life close to nature, the rich and the poor, then the divide between the literate and the illiterate, between adult and child and above all, the divide between those who ask why and those who don't.... The translations read beautifully. By recreating this very Indian story in other Indian languages, the story enjoys a new rhythm, a fresh dynamism, and an inexplicable verve in the hands of each of the translators...."

The Sunday Express, January 2004

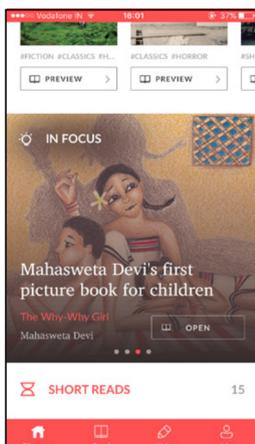
Thinking about the life and times of the story's context (it was written in Bengali in the late 1960s) asks of the reader a pause for reflection. Many of its pages have an idea embedded within that can be drawn out, and yet the story as a whole leaves you thinking – incredible!

What makes this Tulika book even more incredible is the fact that we now have the story as a picture book, translated into multiple languages, accessible in form, price and visibility, and as something we can place in multiple hands to trigger multiple thoughts. Incredible!

Goodbooks.in, January 2015

eBook

The Why-Why Girl, Mahasweta Devi's timeless classic and first picture book, is up on the Juggernaut app in its e-avatar. Just a download-click-watch away!



Book to Stage



Khelo with masti, seekho with fun

About Kyon kyon ladki

The play is based on Mahasweta Devi's well known picture-storybook *The Why-Why Girl* and celebrates the thrill of 'WHY?' It is the story of Moyna and at the same time the story of so many children, all who always ask the question 'Why?' Performed through dance, movement and live music, the play shows glimpses of their lives and of their minds.

Premiered at the Prithvi Summertime in 2011, Kyun-Kyun Ladki has also been performed for schools, at theatre festivals and at theatres across Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Patna and Delhi, including TIFLI, International Theatre Festival for Young Audiences, Mumbai Literature Festival and Junoon's Arts at Play for Schools.

Audience feedback

ONCE MORE - KYUN NAHIN – Minak Bangera (Parent)

So much said so aptly. – Darshana Ghosh (Parent)
Brilliant Performance. leaves us to think a lot!
Sabhya Chhabria (Parent)

It was an awesome play. Actually opened my eyes that I can ask my child to read a book daily. Thank You.
Vaishali Agrawal (Parent)

Super play – very good and really my children have enjoyed very much. All the best wishes. – M.M Sampat. (Parent)

Super Play, Really enjoyed it. Our first play with children in Hindi. - Kavita Agarwal (Parent)

Storytelling



The Why Why Girl & Our Incredible Cow

Why, This Incredible Cow, Why

A solo performance weaving together two stories by legendary Bangla writer Mahasweta Devi, one old, one new.

by PARNAB MUKHERJEE at Bookaroo 2015, New Delhi