



IN MY GARDEN

by Charlotte Zolotow
illustrated by Philip Stead

HC: 978-0-8234-4320-8 • E-Book: 978-0-8234-4953-8 • Ages 3–6
NEAL PORTER BOOKS

★ “This is the **best kind of picture book**, offering a satisfying reading experience while leaving plenty of space for wondering.” —*Booklist*, Starred Review

★ “[Stead’s] stunning artistic interpretation of this text . . . is a triumph in how it matches the writing’s quiet tone . . . **A picture book to love best in all seasons.**” —*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred Review

About the Book

This quiet, intergenerational story poetically describes a garden as it changes through the seasons and pays homage to the joy of experiencing nature as a child and as an adult.

Two picture book giants, author/editor Charlotte Zolotow and author/illustrator Philip Stead, collaborate across generations in this elegant retooling of Ms. Zolotow’s *In My Garden*, originally published in 1960.

Classroom Discussion Questions

- Take a look at the title page. What is the cat standing on? How is this more obvious on the first double-page spread? How many times in the book do you see the garden wall? Point out how often the cat appears in the book. How does this suggest that the girl and the cat are friends?
- The first page shows a bird perched on the word “Garden.” How does this link the text to the first-page illustrations? Study the second double-page spread. How many bird nests are there? Count the birds in the book. How are the birds in winter different from the ones in spring?



- How does the illustrator use color to show the various seasons? Explain how the pear tree links the seasons. How does the girl's clothing suggest which season is being discussed? How do the flowers change with the seasons? Explain how the different seasons suggest how time passes.
- A simile compares two unlike things using the words "like" or "as." Identify the simile on the first page of text. Explain how "red tulips" are like "fire." Find other similes in the book.
- The girl likes to fly kites, "play dolls and roller skate and skip rope" in the spring. What things does she like to do in the other seasons? Name other things to do in spring, summer, fall, and winter.
- Count the garden objects and tools in the book. How do the garden tools change with the seasons? The girl comes upon a broken-down car. How does she create something beautiful and useful?
- Explain how the illustrator reveals how high the kite is flying. The girl sleds down a hill in the winter. How does the reader know that the hill is high? Take a look at the illustration of the girl skating on the pond. Why do you think the illustrator wants the reader to look down at her? Discuss whether this shows the size of the pond and how free the girl feels.
- Discuss the elements of poetry: rhythm, repetition, and imagery. Identify the repetition in the text. How does repetition create rhythm? Imagery appeals to the senses. Point out words that appeal to the senses: sight, sound, smell, and touch.

Guide prepared by Pat Scales, retired school librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina

About the Creators



Charlotte Zolotow (1915–2013) is the distinguished author of more than seventy picture books, including *In My Garden*. She was editor and later publisher at Harper & Row (now HarperCollins Publishers), worked with innumerable celebrated artists, and her own books were published by more than twenty houses.

Philip Stead is the illustrator of *In My Garden*, written by Charlotte Zolotow. He is the author of *Music for Mister Moon*, and the Caldecott Medal–winning *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*, both illustrated by his wife, Erin E. Stead, and many other award-winning and highly acclaimed picture books. Philip lives with his family in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

