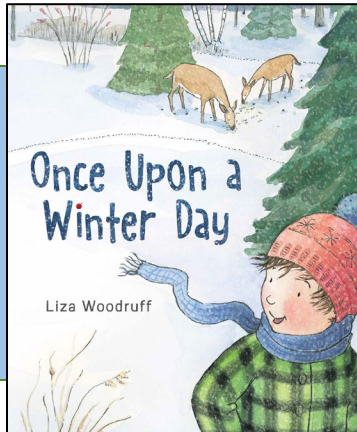


# HOLIDAY HOUSE | EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



## Once Upon a Winter Day by Liza Woodruff

HC: 9780823440993 • E-Book: 9780823444045 • Ages 4–8

MARGARET FERGUSON BOOKS

★ “When a child’s mother is too busy for stories, he follows some tracks in the snow and makes up his own. . . . Nature tells good stories if we only get outside and look around.”—*Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review*

★ “[A] just-right-for-the-audience suspenseful tale.”  
—*The Horn Book, Starred Review*

## About the Book

A boy learns that nature is full of stories to tell when he finds and follows a mouse’s tracks in a wintry wood.

Milo wants a story, but his mom is too busy to entertain him. Instead, she encourages him to go out and play in the snow. At first, Milo is disappointed—he doesn’t want to play outside, he wants a story.

But when he starts to follow a trail of mouse tracks, he discovers signs of activity all around, prompting him to ask, “What happened here?” Before long, he’s using his imagination—depicted in lush wordless spreads that capture the vividness of Milo’s fantasies—to fill in the gaps. By the time Milo comes home, he’s the one with stories to tell.

## Discussion Questions

- *Setting* is when and where a story happens. How does the title of the book and the cover art reveal the setting?



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- The endpapers show ten different animals. Look for these animals as the book is read. Describe where they live and what they eat. How might their homes look different in another season?
- *Conflict* is the problem to be solved. The conflict of this story is revealed on the first page. What is it? The next page shows Milo leaving the house. Explain the expression on his face. How do his expressions change as his adventure progresses.
- Milo is in search of a story. How do his observations in the snow provide him with stories? What does the word *clue* mean? What clues does Milo uncover that help him create stories? Explain how the wordless double-page spreads give answers to the clues that Milo finds.
- What does Milo notice at the bird feeder? How does the next double-page spread reveal the character in Milo's first story? Discuss how this character follows Milo on his adventure through the forest. Point him out each time you see him in an illustration.
- Explain how tracks in the snow lead Milo to his next story. Follow Milo's tracks home. What does he find when he arrives there?
- A *simile* creates certain images by comparing two objects using "like" or "as." Identify and explain the simile in the following: "Beneath the hemlock trees, branches littered the ground. Why had they fallen like autumn leaves?"
- Milo is the main character. His age isn't given. Take clues from the illustrations and assign an age to Milo.
- At the end of the book, Milo doesn't want his mother to read to him. Instead, he has stories for her. Look at each object that he shows his mother. What story does he tell?

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

## About the Author



Photo Credit: Eden Wright

**Liza Woodruff** is the author/illustrator of *Once Upon a Winter Day* and has illustrated numerous children's books, including *A Quieter Story*, which she also wrote. She is also a bookseller at the Flying Pig Bookstore and lives with her family in Vermont.

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