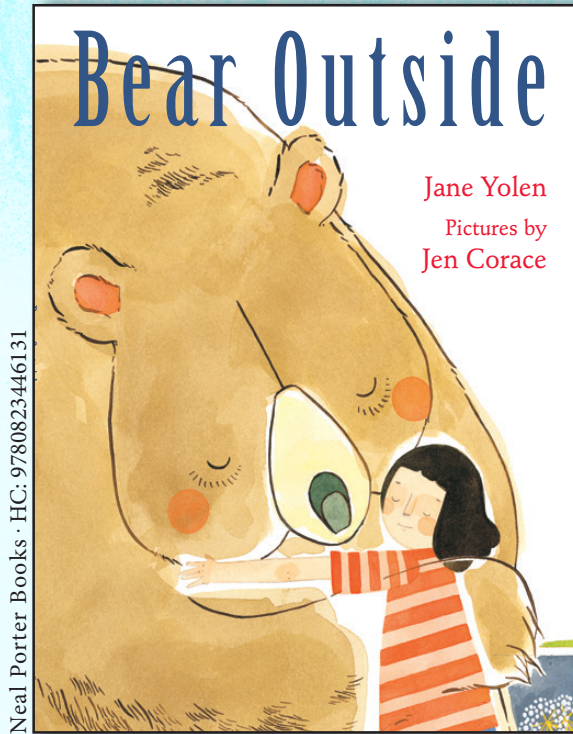


HOLIDAY HOUSE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



Bear Outside

by Jane Yolen

pictures by Jen Corace

Jane Yolen's 400th book!

ABOUT THE BOOK

Lots of people have inner strength, but one girl wears hers as a bear outside.

In this imaginative picture book by Jane Yolen, a girl explores the many ways she expresses herself by imagining that she wears a bear as her personal protective shell. They go everywhere and do everything together. The bear is like a suit of armor and a partner all in one, protecting her from bullies and giving her strength to be bold when she needs it. In turn, she listens to and takes care of the bear.

Jane Yolen's story, paired with the spritely art of Jen Corace, beautifully portrays the relationships we have with our inner selves, encouraging readers to stay in touch with these qualities and wear them with pride.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

- The main character is who the story is about. The bear appears to be a main character, because he is so large and takes up a lot of space. Who is really the main character? Point her out on the first page of the story. Why do you think she is standing alone?
- Take a look at the cover art. The bear takes up space on the front and back cover. How does this reveal the size of the bear? What else in the illustration shows how large the bear is?



- Explain what the girl means by “Some folks have a lion inside, or a tiger.” Debate whether the girl is afraid of these people.
- The girl wears her bear on the outside. Discuss why the girl says her bear is like “a suit of armor.” Why does she need the bear?
- Discuss how only the girl can see the bear. How does the illustrator make the girl and the bear appear as one?
- Define friendship. How does the story show what it means to be a friend? Discuss how everyone needs a friend.
- Define compromise. The girl and the bear don’t agree when creating art. How do they compromise? Explain why learning to compromise with a friend is important.
- Describe all the activities that the girl and the bear enjoy together. Why is swimming not a good activity for them? Name another activity that might be difficult for the girl and the bear to share.
- Explain how the girl’s mother recognizes the bear’s role in the girl’s life. How does the bear give the girl courage and comfort? Discuss whether the girl will need the bear when she gets older and bolder.

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

ABOUT THE CREATORS



Photo Credit: Jason Stemple

Jane Yolen is one of the most distinguished and successful authors for young readers and adults in the country. She is the author of 400 books, including *Bear Outside* and *Rum Pum Pum* with Holiday House, the Caldecott Medal-winning *Owl Moon* by John Schoenherr, and the immensely popular *The Devil’s Arithmetic*. In addition to the Caldecott, her books have won numerous awards, including two Nebula Awards, the World Fantasy Award, the Jewish Book Award, and two Christopher Medals. Science Fiction Writers of America named her a Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master for her contributions to the literature of science fiction and fantasy. She lives in Hatfield, Massachusetts.

Jen Corace is the illustrator of many books for children, including *Little Pea* by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, *Small World* by Ishta Mercurio, and *Brave Jane Austen* by Lisa Pliscou. She has a BFA in illustration from Rhode Island School of Design, and she lives and works in Providence, Rhode Island.

