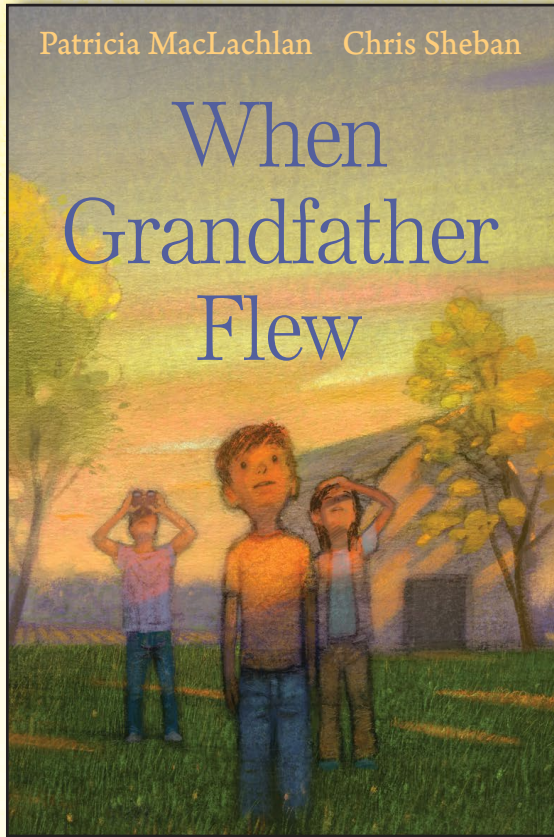


HOLIDAY HOUSE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



When Grandfather Flew

by Patricia MacLachlan
illustrated Chris Sheban

A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection

“MacLachlan . . . creates deeply sympathetic characters in a few sentences, and invites readers to share in the lives of a family nurtured by the natural world—and comforted by it in their grief.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, Starred Review

★ “Warm, calming, affectionate, quietly soaring.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred Review

ABOUT THE BOOK

In this moving evocation of love and loss by a Newbery Medalist, a grieving boy remembers his grandfather by thinking of the hobby they shared.

Milo's grandfather is fascinated with birds. He admires their freedom and never loses an opportunity to point out the things that make them special. He can't see like he used to, so Milo helps him spot and take care of some of his favorites: hovering Kestrels, fragile Chickadees, and the soaring Bald Eagle. One day when Milo comes home, Grandpa isn't there, but when he sees a Bald Eagle swoop through the sky above, he knows Grandpa got his wish of being reborn in the skies.

With *When Grandfather Flew*, acclaimed author Patricia MacLachlan award-winning artist Chris Sheban bring readers an honest, reflective, and deeply moving portrait of grief and memory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Study the cover of the book. What do you think the children are watching? Look at the illustration on the title page. How does it reveal what they see? Draw a connection between this illustration and what the reader learns about Grandfather on the first page. What do you think Grandfather is writing in his notebook?
- Narrator refers to who is telling the story. What is the first hint that one of the children is narrating the story? At what point in the story does the reader learn the narrator's name? How is her name revealed?



- The children call their grandfather “birdman.” How is this an appropriate name for him? Discuss the ways Grandfather shares his passion for birds with his grandchildren. What does Grandfather tell the children about Nana’s passion before she died?
- Milo shares Grandfather’s ability to identify birds. Take a close look at the double-page spread where Milo is in his highchair. He and Grandfather are looking to the right. What do you think they see? Explain how the direction they are looking leads the reader to the next page and reveals what they see. How does Grandfather teach Milo to recognize birds by how they look? Why does Grandfather call Milo “amazing”?
- Why is the bald eagle Grandfather’s favorite bird? Explain what Grandfather means when he says, “I want his eyes.” Simile compares two unrelated things using “like” or “as.” Identify the simile in the following: “Milo saw the open sky, the hills beyond the faraway river, like glass in winter, and the birds.”
- Grandfather becomes blind. How does he hear what he can no longer see? Leah is Grandfather’s nurse. What does she love about caring for Grandfather? Discuss how she helps him continue enjoying the birds. How does Leah develop Grandfather’s passion for the birds?
- One day the children come home from school and Grandfather isn’t there. Explain how it’s obvious that he has died. How does the illustration reveal the sadness the family feels? What is Milo looking for when he runs outside? Explain what Milo means by “Grandfather got his wish!”
- Texture is how something feels when it is touched. The illustrations in the book don’t actually have texture, but they look as if they do. Point out specific illustrations that have texture. Why is texture important when creating things in nature?
- Return to the second page of the book. How does it reveal that Emma is sharing memories of Grandfather? Explain how the true meaning of the title of the book is revealed on the last page.

ABOUT THE CREATORS



Patricia MacLachlan is the author of many novels for children, including the Newbery Medal-winning *Sarah, Plain and Tall*; *Baby*; *Waiting for the Magic*; and *The Truth of Me*. Among her picture books are *The Iridescence of Birds*, *Someone Like Me*, and *What You Know First*. She lives in Western Massachusetts.



Chris Sheban won a Gold Medal from the Society of Illustrators for his illustrations in *The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught Her to Fly* by Luis Sepulveda. He previously collaborated with Patricia MacLachlan on *Someone Like Me*. He also illustrated *What a Cold Needs*, by Barbara Bottner; *Job Wanted*, by Teresa Bateman; and *Three Squeezes*, by Jason Pratt. He lives in Northbrook, Illinois.

