

CYRM Resource Book
Picture Books for Older Readers
(All Ages)
Nominees 2006-2007

The Cats in Krasinski Square

by Karen Hesse

illustrated by Wendy Watson

Scholastic Press, 2004

Coming on Home Soon

by Jacqueline Woodson

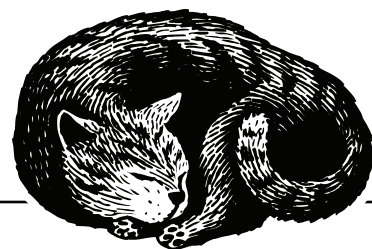
illustrated by E. B. Lewis.

Putnam's, 2004

I, Doko: The Tale of a Basket

by Ed Young

Philomel, 2004



California Young Reader Medal
**Picture Books for Older
Readers Ballot**
2006-2007

_____ *The Cats in
Krasinski Square*

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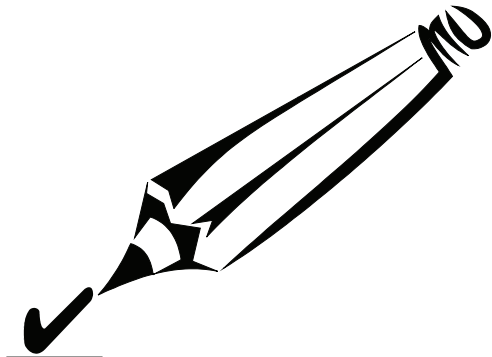
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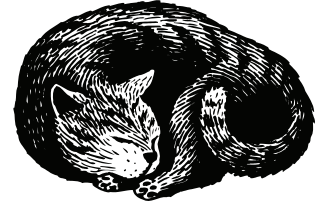
_____ *I, Doko:
The Tale of a Basket*



The Cats in Krasinski Square

by Karen Hesse

illustrated by Wendy Watson



Synopsis

It is Krasinski Square, Poland, during World War II. There are lots of cats running around. They used to belong to people, but now they are left on their own. They eat mice, but they miss their owners. So I pet them and talk to them.

People on the other side of the wall are starving. We come up with a plan to sneak food to them. On the day of our plan, we find out that the German soldiers have heard about our plan, and will be in the square with their dogs waiting to capture us. So we come up with a plan to confuse the German soldiers and their dogs. We gather all of the cats, and put them into baskets. We take the cats in the baskets to the square. When the German dogs start to go to the people trying to sneak in the food, we open our baskets and let the cats loose. The dogs start to chase the cats instead; the people sneaking in the food are safe. We drop the food over the wall for the starving people on the other side.



Hooks

- It is a time of war, and people are starving. Have you ever been hungry? How did it feel? How do you think it would feel to be starving?
- If you knew of people who were starving, do you think that you could help them? Even if it was dangerous? What could you do?

The Cats in Krasinski Square

Meet the Author—Karen Hesse



Karen Hesse, who is from Maryland, has written and received national awards for both her novels and picture books. When she was in the fifth grade, her teacher told her that she could become a professional writer someday. Before that happened, however, Ms. Hesse worked as a waitress, an agricultural laborer, and at many other jobs. Many of her books, including *The Cats in Krasinski Square*, are based on significant moments in history. She writes poetry, some of which she's developed into full length novels, including *Out of the Dust* and *Aleutian Sparrow*. Ms. Hesse's books often feature aspects of her Jewish roots, and in each of them family plays an important role. She looks forward to writing, which she does on a computer, every morning. For more information about Karen Hesse, see: <http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-hesse-karen.asp>



Meet the Illustrator—Wendy Watson

Wendy Watson grew up in Vermont and learned about art from her parents. She has illustrated more than 20 of her own stories and has also worked with more than 30 other writers, including her sister, Clyde Watson (*Father Fox's Pennyrhymes*), Patricia Hubbell (*Rabbit Moon*), Jan Wahl (*Button Eye's Orange*), and Karen Hesse (*The Cats of Krasinski Square*) as their illustrator. She has also illustrated collections of classic material, including *The Poems of Longfellow*. Ms. Watson has received many awards for her illustrations, which are gently colored and offer cleanly lined details. For more information about Wendy Watson, see *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (New York: Continuum, 2000).

Connections for *The Cats in Krasinski Square*



Children and the Holocaust--Historical Fiction

- Hoestlandt, Johanna Kang. *Star of Fear, Star of Hope*. Walker Books for Young Readers, 1996.
- Johnston, Tony. *The Harmonica*. Charlesbridge, 2004.
- Innocenti, Roberto. *Rose Blanche*. Creative Editions, 2003.
- Polacco, Patricia. *The Butterfly*. Philomel, 2000.

Children and the Holocaust--Nonfiction

- Abells, Chana Byers. *The Children We Remember*. HarperTrophy, 2002.
- Adler, David A. *Child of the Warsaw Ghetto*. Holiday House, 1995.
- Volavkova, Hana. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. Schocken, 1994.

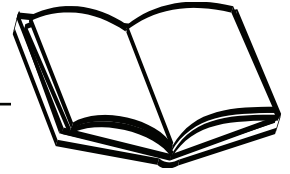
Other Titles by Karen Hesse

- Aleutian Sparrow*. Aladdin, 2005.
- Just Juice*. Scholastic, 2001.
- Lavender*. Scholastic, 2000.
- Letters from Rifka*. Henry Holt and Co., 1992.
- A Light in the Storm: The Civil War Diary of Amelia Martin*. Scholastic, 2003.
- Out of the Dust*. Scholastic Press, 1997.
- Phoenix Rising*. Henry Holt and Co., 1994.
- Poppy's Chair*. MacMillan, 1993.
- Stowaway*. Margaret K. McElderry, 2000.
- A Time of Angels*. Hyperion, 1995.
- Wish On a Unicorn*. Henry Holt and Co., 1997.
- Witness*. Scholastic Press, 2001.

Selected Titles Illustrated by Wendy Watson

- Bierhorst, John. *Is My Friend At Home?* Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2001.
- Hubbell, Patricia. *Rabbit Moon*. Marshall Cavendish, 2002.
- Pellowski, Anne. *Betsy's Up-and-Down Year*. Saint Mary's Press, 1998.
- Pellowski, Anne. *Stairstep Farm*. Saint Mary's Press, 1998.
- Pellowski, Anne. *Willow Wind Farm*. Saint Mary's Press, 1998.
- Showers, Paul. *Sleep Is For Everyone*. HarperCollins, 1997.
- Watson, Clyde. *Father Fox's Pennyrhymes*. HarperCollins, 2001.
- Watson, Clyde. *Love's A Sweet*. Viking, 1998.
- Watson, Wendy. *Holly's Christmas Eve*. HarperCollins, 2002.

Center Ideas for *The Cats in Krasinski Square*



These are ideas to integrate into art, math, science, literature and social studies as determined appropriate by the teacher.

- In September 1939, the capital of Poland, Warsaw, was overtaken by the attacking German army. All Jewish men, women and children were forced to live within certain streets within the city. All non-Jews were moved out and a high brick wall was built to keep the Jewish people in and separated from the non-Jewish who lived outside the walls. Food was scarce within the walls yet many within the city joined a resistance group to offer aid to those in need.

In small groups or centers have the students discuss the conditions that the book depicts. They can compare and contrast the lives of the children before and after the fall of Warsaw, using the before and after lives of the cats as a parallel comparison.

- Discuss and explore the way illustrator Wendy Watson uses somber colors and shadows to emphasize the gravity of the situation and the harsh conditions of the lives of the Warsaw ghetto. In the art center make colors available for mixing the somber colors of the book illustrations. The students can illustrate a book poster about the book using the paints for illustrating the poster.
- The students can research facts about the war and organize these facts into a report. In centers, they can form timelines showing that period in history.
- Using maps and research, the students can find other nations that were involved in the war, helping them to understand the term “World War”. They can pinpoint the countries involved on both sides of the conflict on the map.
- In the writing center, the students can compose lists of “rules to live by” regarding how to treat other people. They can compare the similarity between individuals who may bully at school or in the neighborhood with nations who bully or mistreat on a large scale basis.
- Have the students bring newspaper articles that demonstrate samples of inhumanity as well as examples of generosity and helpfulness. Create a contrast board.

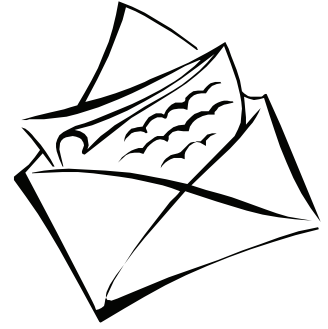
Writing Prompts / Discussion Questions for *The Cats in Krasinski Square*



- During the Holocaust, many Jewish people were required to live in a “ghetto,” the most famous being the Warsaw Ghetto. What is a ghetto? Can you think of a time in the history of the United States when we required a certain type of people to live in a “ghetto” type facility? Do you think ghettos exist today? Explain your reasoning and give examples.
- The two sisters in the story were secretly helping the Jewish people in the Warsaw Ghetto get food because not much food was provided and the Jewish people could not leave to get food on their own. Is there a time you have helped a person or a group of people in need? What did you do to help them? How did you come up with your idea and what was your plan of action?
- In the story, the two Jewish sisters and their friends were going to help smuggle food to the people living in the Warsaw Ghetto. Their plan was intercepted by the Gestapo and some quick thinking and problem solving had to take place. When was there a time where you had something planned, then an obstacle suddenly got in your way? What had you planned, what was the obstacle, and how did you solve the problem?

Coming on Home Soon

by Jacqueline Woodson
illustrated by E. B. Lewis



Synopsis

Ada Ruth's Mama has gone North to work while the men are at war. Ada Ruth tries to be brave, and not to cry. Ada Ruth and her Grandmother wait for Mama to come home. Ada Ruth writes to her Mama, but has not heard back. On snowy morning, a small kitten scratches at the door. Grandmother says, "Do not get attached- we can't keep it." As time passes, Ada Ruth still does not hear from her Mama. Ada Ruth and her Grandmother listen to the radio about the war. The kitten follows them everywhere, until she becomes one of the family. One afternoon, after their walk, the postman finally stops at their house. It is a letter from Mama. It says, "Tell Ada Ruth I'll be coming on home soon." With the small black kitten beside them, they read Mama's letter over and over. Finally, Mama is coming home soon.



Hooks

- It is a time of war, and while the men go off to fight, the women have to work. How would you feel if your father was off fighting the war? Do you know anyone whose father is gone for some reason?
- How would you feel if your mother had to start working and she had to go someplace else to work? Would you feel lonely? Think about how you would feel.

Meet the Author—Jacqueline Woodson



Jacqueline Woodson was born in Ohio and has been writing books for children and teenagers for more than 15 years. She has won many awards for several of her books, including *Coming on Home Soon*. Ms. Woodson's literary career began early; she was the editor of her school magazine when she was in the fifth grade. She moved a lot during her childhood and, because of her race and gender, thought hard about what it means to be outside the dominant culture's mainstream. Later, many of her novels, including *Miracle's Boys* and *Hush*, have explored the themes of family and identity. Her picture books, including *The Other Side*, also show how individual children experience social and identity issues. To learn more about Ms. Woodson, see:

<http://www.jacquelinewoodson.com>



Meet the Illustrator—E. B. Lewis

E. B. Lewis grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he started his formal art education when he was in sixth grade. In college, he studied graphic design and art education, developing his watercolor technique and preparing himself for a career as a teacher. His works in watercolor are displayed in and collected by fine art galleries as well as becoming story illustrations. He has received several awards for his illustration work, including those in *Talkin' about Bessie*, by Nikki Grimes, and *Down the Road*, by Alice Schertle. Jacqueline Woodson's *Coming on Home Soon* is illustrated in Mr. Lewis's rich, nostalgic, and realistic style. For more information about E. B. Lewis, see "Storyopolis" at: <http://www.storyopolis.com/portfolio-dbp.asp?ArtistID=368>

Connections for *Coming on Home Soon*



American Life During World War II--Fiction

- Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Lily's Crossing*. Delacorte, 1997.
Hest, Amy. *Love You, Soldier*. Candlewick, 2000.
Paulsen, Gary. *The Quilt*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2004.
Ray, Deborah Kagan. *My Daddy Was a Soldier: A World War II Story*.
Holiday House, 2000.

American Life During World War II--Nonfiction

- Colman, Penny. *Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II*.
Crown Books for Young Readers, 1998.
Panchyk, Richard. *World War II for Kids: A History with 21 Activities*.
Chicago Review Press, 2002.
Whitman, Sylvia. *V is for Victory: The American Home Front During World War II*.
Lerner, 1992.

Multigenerational Stories

- Burrowes, Adjoa J. *Grandma's Purple Flowers*. Lee & Low, 2000.
Flournoy, Valerie. *The Patchwork Quilt*. Dial, 1985.
Hoffman, Mary. *Amazing Grace*. Dial, 1991.
Howard, Elizabeth Fitzgerald. *Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later)*.
Clarion, 1991.

Other Titles by Jacqueline Woodson

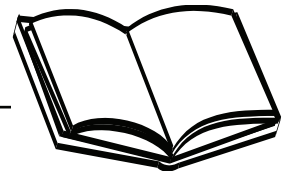
- We Had a Picnic This Sunday Past*. Hyperion, 1998.
The Other Side. Putnam Juvenile, 2001.
Sweet, Sweet Memory. Jump at the Sun, 2000.
Our Gracie Aunt. Jump at the Sun, 2002.
Visiting Day. Scholastic, 2002.
Show Way. Putnam Juvenile, 2005.

Jacqueline Woodson has also written many novels for middle school and young adult readers.

Other Titles Illustrated by E.B. Lewis

- Antle, Nancy. *Staying Cool*. Dial, 1997.
Curtis, Gavin. *The Bat Boy & His Violin*. Aladdin, 2001.
Echewa, T. Obinkaram. *The Magic Tree*. Morrow Junior Books, 1999.
Kurtz, Jane. *Faraway Home*. Gulliver Books, 2000.
Kurtz, Jane. *Fire on the Mountain*. Aladdin, 1998.
Lewis, E. B. *The New King*. Viking Penguin, 1999.
Mollet, Tolowa M. *Big Boy*. Clarion, 1994.
Raven, Margaret Theis. *Circle Unbroken*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004.
Rodman, Mary Ann. *My Best Friend*. Viking Juvenile, 2005.
Schertle, Alice. *Down the Road*. Harcourt, 1995.
Woodson, Jacqueline. *The Other Side*. Putnam Juvenile, 2001.

Center Ideas for *Coming on Home Soon*



- Brainstorm ways that Ada Ruth could help around the house while her mom is gone. List the chores for Ada Ruth, then discuss and list jobs or chores that the students do at their homes. Keep adding to the list as they think of additional helpful tasks that would be appropriate for their age level. They may share personal information regarding a time when they were needed to help out in their own families or when their parents or caretakers had to be away from home.
- In the writing center, the students can compose stories of helping their families in different real or unreal situations—such as life in the pioneer days, life on a farm, a day on Mars, etc.
- Ada Ruth’s mama is working on the railroad in Chicago. List the various jobs at which the parents of the class are employed. Depending on the age and interest of the class, discussions can include wages, unions, work conditions and safety. Let the discussion be the guide. In the writing center, small groups can write rules of safety, etc. for the workplace of assorted jobs.
- Find Chicago on the map. Learn facts about it as a city: the population, weather, products as well as location.
- In the writing center, the students can compose letters they feel Ada Ruth would write to her absent mother.
- Discuss a resume. In the writing center the students can compose their own resumes. This is a time they can focus on their positive traits, talents and skills. These can be shared and/or be a part of a student of the week or month as appropriate.
- E.B. Lewis is famous for his watercolors and has provided beautiful, but somber illustrations for this book. In the art center the students can mix and paint using watercolor as their medium. They can discuss the use of color and intensity to help tell a story and provide the mood for the tale. It will be interesting to contrast bright, cheerful colors with rich, more somber colors. This can be an ongoing discussion and art center point throughout the year as individual books and class books are authored and illustrated.

Writing Prompts / Discussion Questions for

Coming on Home Soon



- In this story, Ada Ruth's Mama goes to Chicago to work for the railroad. Ada Ruth stays behind with her grandma. Often, a parent has to go on a business trip or vacation and children stay home with a relative or babysitter. Think of a time when one or both of your parents left for a trip and you stayed behind. Who did you stay with and what did you do to occupy your time? How did you feel when your parents left, what thoughts were going through your head while they were gone, and how did you feel when they returned?
- Ada Ruth is very sad when her Mama leaves to go work up north. The author and illustrator have collaborated to convey to the reader the mood of the story. Find examples in which the author and illustrator have collaborated to convey mood. What is the mood being conveyed? What are other ways you could convey this mood to readers?
- What word choices does the author use to indicate this story took place long ago? Research this time period and find the equivalent for today's time.
- While Ada Ruth's Mama is gone, Ada Ruth writes letters to her. Writing letters is a good way to communicate to others your feelings and thoughts. Write a letter to someone special to you and tell them how much you love them or enjoy their presence. Be sure to include at least five to six examples or memories of why they are so special to you.
- When the kitty wanders into the house, the grandma tells Ada Ruth they cannot keep it. Why do you think the grandma said that? Have you ever wanted something and your parents said you could not have it? Write a letter to your parents persuading them to let you have this item. Be sure to include what it is you want, the reasons why you think you should have it, any positive effects it would have on you or your family, what you would do to take care of it, and the general information of cost and obtaining it.

I, Doko: The Tale of a Basket

by Ed Young



Synopsis

Doko (the basket) lives with a family. He has held all sorts of things in his lifetime - a baby, wood for cooking, a body to be buried, a dowry, another baby. Doko has been passed down to a new generation. When Grandfather becomes old and no longer able to work, his son decides to take him to leave on the temple steps, so that the priests will take care of him. This is the same son who was once a baby carried in Doko! When the Father puts Grandfather into Doko the basket and sets off to the temple, the Grandson comes running after him and says to his Father, "Be sure to bring Doko back." When Father asks why, his son tells him, "So I have him when you are old and it is time to leave you on the temple steps!" The son turns around, bringing Grandfather back into the house.

Hooks

- This family uses their basket for everything! Have you ever seen a basket big enough to hold a baby, wood, or even a full grown man? What would you use that basket for?
- Have you ever seen someone carrying a man in a basket on his back? If you did, what would you think?

Meet the Author/Illustrator—Ed Young



Ed Young was born in China and now lives in New York state. He has worked as a children's author and book illustrator for more than 40 years, winning many awards and commendations for his work. He has also taught at several colleges in the United States. He illustrates his own stories, retells traditional folktales, as he has in *I, Doko: The Tale of a Basket*, and also illustrates storybooks by other authors and editors. He has been drawing since he was a very young boy. Mr. Young emigrated to the United States as a teenager and entered a career in advertising design. He did not realize, at first, that children's book illustration could be a satisfying expression of his art but he has come to enjoy children's stories and folktale retellings for young audiences. Many of the tales he retells and illustrates are Asian in origin, such as *The Terrible Nung Gwama* and *The Lost Horse*. He also illustrates stories that originated in Europe, such as *Seven Blind Mice* and *Pinocchio*. He likes to read aloud to children and see how they respond to different illustrations. To find out more about Mr. Young, see *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (Continuum, 2001).





Baskets

Sentance, Bryan. *Art of the Basket: Traditional Basketry from Around the World*.
Thames & Hudson, 2001.

Folktales of the World

Cole, Joanna. *Best-Loved Folktales of the World*. Anchor, 1983.
Forest, Heather. *Wisdom Tales from Around the World*. August House, 1996.
Yolen, Jane. *Favorite Folktales from Around the World*. Pantheon, 1988.

Folktales of Nepal

Kipp, Eva, et al. *The Golden Umbrella*. Pilgrims Publishing, 2002.
Kipp, Eva. *Nindra Maya*. Pilgrims Publishing, 2002.
Shrestha, Kavita Ram. *From the Mango Tree and Other Folktales from Nepal*.
Libraries Unlimited, 1997.

Folktales of Nepal Available Online

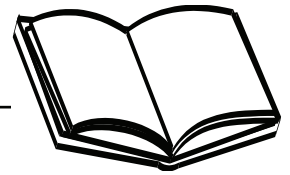
Gersie, Alida. *The Woodcutter and Death: A Tale of Nepal*.
www.spiritoftrees.org/folktales/gersie/woodcutter_death.html
Lall, Kesar. *A Mystery: The Seven Sisters*.
www.peacecorps.gov/wws/guides/Nepal/myst.html
Parajuli, Sharshwat. *My Own Life Is Happy*.
www.roomtoread.org/shs/teachers/nepal_stories.html

Other Titles by Ed Young

Beyond the Great Mountains: A Visual Poem About China. Chronicle Books, 2005.
Little Plum. Philomel, 1994.
Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story From China. Putnam Juveniles, 1996.
The Lost Horse: A Chinese Folktale. Voyager, 2004.
Monkey King. HarperCollins, 2001.
Mouse Match: A Chinese Folktale. Harcourt, 1997.
My Mei Mei. Philomel, 2006.
Night Visitors. Philomel, 2001.
Red Thread. Philomel, 1995.
Seven Blind Mice. Philomel, 1992.
The Songs of the Dragon King: A Chinese Legend. Atheneum, 2004.
Voices of the Heart. Scholastic, 1997.
What About Me? Philomel, 2002.

Ed Young has also illustrated dozens of books by other writers, including Nancy White Carlson, Andrea Cheng, James Howe, Tony Johnston, Audrey Osofsky, and Jane Yolen.

Center Ideas for *I, Doko*



- Doko is a basket that has contributed to the well-being of a family for three generations. The students can interview their parents or grandparents to determine if they have important items that have been handed down through their families.
- Baskets can be studied from different cultures, with many different uses. Pictures and research can be contributed for a study center. Illustrations and descriptions of baskets from many nations and cultures including the American Indian tribes can be found by the students in the library, classroom resources, family pictures and from the internet.
- Baskets are often objects of great beauty and intricate weaving, in addition to being useful objects. The students can list all the baskets they use in their homes and the unique use for each one. Samples can be displayed at school.
- In the art center, students can weave using grasses, if available, cord or paper strips.
- Clay vessels can be created and painted as a part of the study of vessels that are useful to our society and those of other nations.
- Wangel teaches his father a lesson that transforms the thoughts and hearts of the entire village. This lesson is the respect and reverence that the elders are entitled to receive from their family and friends. In the writing center, the students can write about an important elderly person in their life.
- Write a list of jobs that students could do to help an elderly person in their family or neighborhood. If possible a trip could be made to a residential home for the elderly. The students could read to the residents or sing several songs learned in the classroom.
- Elderly citizens in the neighborhood of the school can be invited to come and read to the students, share their stories, etc.
- Gold markers can be used in the writing center to “edge” the pages, similar to those pages in the book.

- Various grasses and reeds are commonly used in basket weaving. The students can research the type of grasses used, where they grow and the type of habitat they would commonly thrive in.
- Many old cultures use assorted paints made from vegetable and fruits to color their baskets and containers. The students will enjoy making paints and dyes, after researching which fruits and vegetables are used and how to prepare them. They can use them in the art center after preparation.



Writing Prompts / Discussion Questions for *I, Doko : Tale of a Basket*



- Before reading the book, ask yourself what does the quote, “What one wishes not upon oneself, one burdens not upon another” mean to you. After reading the book, have your thoughts on this quote changed? Write down your understanding of the quote using examples from the story.
- The basket in this story has lived through generations of this family. As the father is leaving to take the grandfather to the temple, Wangal asks him if he would bring back the basket when he is done. Why do you think Wangal asks his father to bring back the basket? After Wangal, the son, asks his father to bring the basket back, why does the father change his mind and not take the grandfather to the temple steps? Explain if you believe this was a clever thing for Wangal to do or not.
- Many different cultures use baskets in a variety of ways. What were some of the different uses for the basket in this story? What other ways are baskets used?
- From whose perspective is the story told? Why do you think the author chose to tell the story from this perspective? Now write a journal entry from the perspective of an object.
- Today we are very lucky to have grandparents and elderly people with whom we can spend time. Write a story about a special time you have spent with a grandparent or person much older than you. What did you do with them, where did you go, what did you learn from your time together?