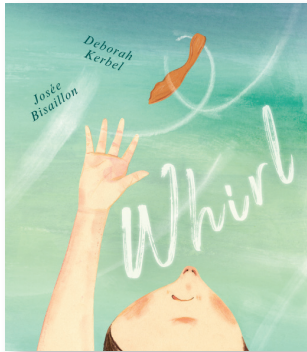


Whirl

Discussion Guide by Deborah Kerbel



Book written by Deborah Kerbel and
illustrated by Josée Bisaillon

About the Book

A stray maple seed, sometimes called a maple key or whirligig, is picked up by the wind and begins a long, wordless journey through a local neighborhood. Eventually, it finds a place to rest, where a family that encountered the whirligig on its journey takes a walk in the forest and meets the seed again—this time as a brand new maple sapling! This gentle meditation on the cycle of life wordlessly draws connections between humans and nature. The dynamic and detailed artwork supports visual literacy and will spark discussion about plant life cycles. The whirligig's journey on the wind may encourage readers to venture into green spaces and observe them with care and curiosity.

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think this book is called 'Whirl'?
- What is a seed?
- What other kinds of seeds can you think of? Where do you find them? Can you describe their shape and color?
- Samaras, whirligigs, maple keys, whirlybirds, twisters, whirlers, polynoses, and helicopters are all different names for maple seeds. Why do you think there are so many? Do you have any different names or nicknames? Which name do you think fits best, and why?
- What season is it in the beginning of the story? What season is it at the end? How do you know?

ISBN

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CURRICULUM LINKS

Language Arts: Literacy Behaviors; Reading Skills and Strategies; Media Literacy

Science: Needs and Characteristics of Living Things, Daily and Seasonal Changes; Inquiry-Based Learning

READING LEVELS

Grade: K and up

Fountas & Pinnell: A

Lexile® Measure: NP

Common Core: RL.K.1, W.K.1, SL.K.1, L.K.4

Activities

- Go for a nature walk and collect a variety of interesting items. Using a piece of paper and a glue stick, create your own 'found object' artwork like the little girl on pages 14 to 17.
- On a windy day, test out which of these items will fly the farthest: a dandelion fluff, a leaf, a feather, a blade of grass, a green maple seed, and a brown maple seed.
- Next time you find a maple seed, plant it in an area with lots of space and light. Then come back in a few months to see if a maple tree sapling has started to grow.



