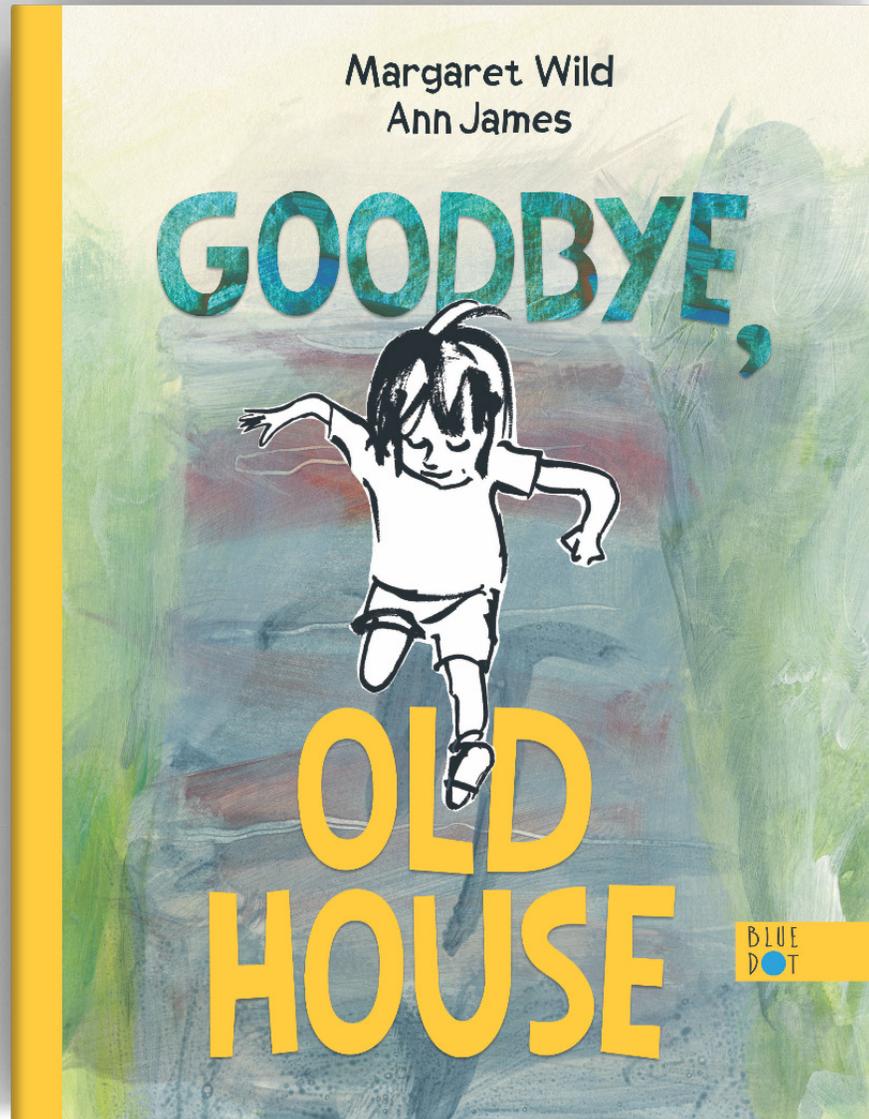


Art Activities Guide

from Blue Dot Kids Press, w/ illustrator Ann James



**Honor Book: CBCA 2020 Awards, Book of the Year,
Early Childhood**

Goodbye, Old House, written by Margaret Wild and illustrated by Ann James
Pub Date September 14, 2021 | ISBN 9781736226452 | Ages 3-7



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Blank Drawing Pages

Drawing with Feeling—“Putting Yourself in the Picture”

Drawing is a natural language. Every child has their own voice and stories to tell.

The art activity below encourages children to choose a particularly happy personal memory and imagine looking at themselves in this moment in a particular place. They’ll illustrate it using a similar technique used by Ann James in the picture book, *Goodbye, Old House*.

Class Preparation

The class has a talk about feelings. All sorts. And make a ‘Feelings’ list.

Discuss as a class:

- How do we show our feelings?
- Discuss body language and facial expressions. Class members can act out some of these—especially body language.
- How do we ‘read’ other people’s feelings?
- What is *empathy*?



Remembering

Ask children to remember some great moments in their own lives, moments that are special to them (eg. reading in bed, hugging my dog). Together, make a ‘Good Times list’ of feelings (eg. happy, good, pleasant, cosy, gentle, warm, kind, funny, playful, busy).

Ask children to share some specific great moments that fit with these words:

- **Cosy** (eg. reading in bed, hugging my dog)
- **Happy** (eg. jumping in puddles, riding my bike)

Art Activity: Putting Myself in the Picture

MATERIALS: white cartridge paper; black fine felt-tipped pens; acrylic paints; and paint brushes.

1. Choose a time you remember feeling one of these feelings in the 'Good Times list'. Watch yourself like in a movie. Recall:

- ▶ Where are you?
- ▶ What are you doing?
- ▶ What are you wearing?
- ▶ What's your body language? Look at your expression.



From left to right: Ann's examples for steps 2, 3, and 4!

2. Practice pictures of YOU (use black pen).

- ▶ Draw yourself lots of times doing what you remember doing: kneeling, running, riding . . . If you are on a bike or in a boat, draw that too!
- ▶ Keep drawing more versions and redrawing ones you like until you can choose one or two to cut out.

3. Paint your place (use paints).

- ▶ Now create the place you are in . . . outside, inside, at the beach. What colors match your memory and feelings?
- ▶ You can paint a few alternatives to try different ideas.

4. Put yourself in the picture!

- ▶ Move your cut-out self around the painted place, find the right spot and stick yourself into place.

5. An Exhibition.

- ▶ Children write a line describing their feelings in the moment they have illustrated.

Drawing from Memory and Imagination—“Out of the Hat and Out of My Head”

Drawing is a very instinctive activity for children. It makes a direct connection to the eyes, heart and hand and has been used to tell stories for thousands of years. But when we can't draw what we want to draw we might easily give up trying. It's important to know that we draw best what we know and love—and what we've drawn before.

I like to draw 'out of my head' which means, from my memory. It's where our imagination is and our dreams are made. We fill up our *visual memory* by looking closely at things.

This exercise shows kids how to build visual memory and create lots more for the imagination to work with—great for kids to learn early before they lose drawing confidence.

Class Preparation

Invite the class to talk about what they like to draw (e.g cars, people, animals). Introduce the exercise by saying we can all build on what we can draw well. We just need to fill our memories with more visual information.



Art Activity: Out of the Hat and Out of My Head

MATERIALS: a fun hat, enough small/interesting objects for each person in the class, graphite pencils (no erasers!), and printed drawing pages from this guide.

In a fun container, like a large hat, place all the small objects. Each child will take an object from the hat, hold it in their hand and turn it around to see it from all sides. They will be drawing it four times, then they will hide the object and draw it once more—from memory!

Guide the class through the following steps:

- ▶ Start with the 4-grid drawing page. Draw your object in section 1.
- ▶ Draw your object again in section 2.
Advice from Ann: “Draw lightly at first and then use darker lines when you are happy with placement and use shading if you like, as you get to know your object better.”
- ▶ Draw your object again in section 3.
- ▶ Draw your object again (yes, again!) in section 4.
- ▶ Hide your drawings and your object (maybe under your chair).
- ▶ On the other drawing page (full sheet), draw your object from memory!
- ▶ Compare all your drawings—how are they similar and different?



Out of the Hat!

1

2

3

4

Out of Your Head!

