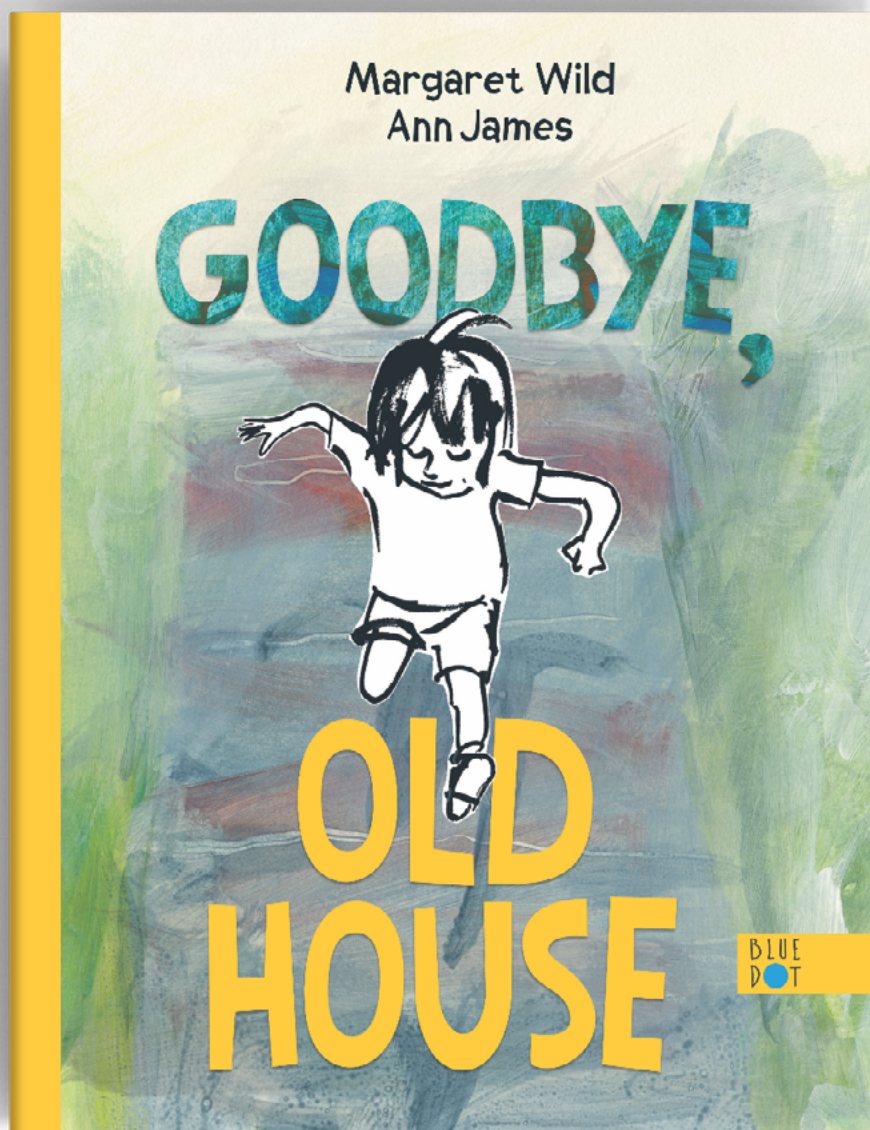




Your Teacher's Guide

from Blue Dot Kids Press



**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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Research

Before Reading

Establish background knowledge. What do the title and cover and inside front-page illustrations tell you about the book?

- Where do you think the story takes place?
- Who will be in the story?
- What might happen in the story?
- Will this be a happy story or a sad story, or will it make you feel a different emotion?



During Reading

As you read, think about the elements of the story.

- Setting: Where and when is the story taking place?
- Point of view: Who is telling the story?
- What is your point of view? How would you respond if you were leaving one home and moving to another? Have you? What was that like?
- Cause-and-effect relationships: What is happening and why?
- Characters: Who is in the story? What are their traits—their characteristics, their motivations, and their feelings?
- Do you think the narrator felt safe? Did they for the whole story?
- Pause occasionally and wonder, *What will happen next?*
- How do character actions contribute to the sequence of events?
- How do the illustrations create mood, emphasize aspects of a character, and show the setting?
- Why do you think this character moved?
- Were you surprised by what happens at the end of the story?
- What are the messages of the book? How are they developed?
- What is the author's purpose for writing this book?



After Reading

Check for understanding.

- Who is the “I” in the story? (Bonus: What is this character’s name?)
- In the beginning of the story, what emotion(s) is the narrator feeling?
- Do those emotions change over the course of the story? What does the narrator feel in the middle and at the end, do you think?
- The narrator is a child, so is probably not leaving one house and going to another one by themselves. Who might be moving with them? Why do you think that?
- Why do we mostly see only the child, even though there are other people in their family?
- The illustrations are a mix of color and black-and-white. How does that choice, by illustrator Ann James, affect the story or how you connect with it and the characters?
- This book is called *Goodbye, Old House*. Based on the story, what are some alternative titles it could have?

Consider the rhythm of the story.

How we tell stories can be as important as what we say. The author of *Goodbye, Old House*, Margaret Wild, chose repetitive and parallel language. Sometimes she said the same things over and over. That’s repetition. Sometimes she said different things, but they were similar, exact opposites, or otherwise related to each other. That’s parallel language.

- Why did she do this? How does it affect how you read, think about, and remember the story?
- What phrases does she repeat?
- Are the phrases at the beginning of the book the same as at the end? How are they similar and different—if they’re not repeated, how are they parallel?

Consider message.

Loss, gain, and feeling safe during change are important in *Goodbye, Old House*. Discuss this. How do the author and illustrator convey these messages? The narrator walks around their old and new homes, saying goodbye and then hello. What are some other ways the narrator could have explored change and expressed their feelings?





Collage Art Project

- Divide your whiteboard or even a whole wall in your classroom into two. Label one side “**Old Home**” and the other “**New Home**.” Think about what you would say goodbye to at your present home, or if you have moved before, think about what you did say goodbye to.
- Then, imagine moving to a new home—or if you have moved before, remember what it was like getting to know your new home. What is something different about your new home that you might say hello to?
- Working together, fill in each half with images of rooms, meals, yards or balconies, neighbors, activities, etc. Collect images from the internet or magazines and draw your own.
- Finally, share what you chose. Together, imagine saying goodbye and hello, just as the narrator in *Goodbye, Old House* did.

Goodbye/Hello Cards

In *Goodbye, Old House*, the narrator says goodbye to one home and hello to another. In this writing activity, write a goodbye letter to one thing and a hello letter to the thing that will replace it. You may write goodbye to lunch and hello to dinner; goodbye to being the only kid at home and hello to a new sibling; goodbye to school and hello to vacation; etc. You may want to write each letter in the style of *Goodbye, Old House*, using repetition and parallels.

Research

A large part of Blue Dot Kids Press's focus is on the environment and our place in it. In this research section, we think about “home” beyond the structure where we sleep and eat. Our planet is also our home. People move from one part of our planet to another for lots of reasons. As Earth's climate changes, more and more people may even move because where they used to live becomes too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry. Some may be called climate refugees. Refugees are forced to move because of big changes beyond their control, like war; if climate changes enough, that could force people into new homes too. Even if you never move, your home environment will probably change as the earth's climate changes.

1. **Learn about climate refugees:** Find out who in the world may be leaving their homes because the climate there has changed. Why do they leave? Where do they go?
2. **Learn about the past right outside your door and also imagine the future:** What did your hometown look like a hundred years ago, fifty years ago, ten years ago? Specifically, did there used to be a type of plant or animal or a river or forest there, but it's not there anymore? Why is it gone? Are there any plants, animals, or geographic features that are in danger of disappearing in the next ten, fifty, or one hundred years? Why might they? And what can be done to try to keep them around?



[Blue Dot Kids Press](#) inspires curiosity with beautifully crafted stories that connect us to each other and the planet we share. Written and illustrated by impassioned **storytellers and artists from around the world**, our books engage young readers' innate sense of **wonder and empathy**, connecting them to our global community and **the pale blue dot we call home**.

As an **independent, mission-driven**, children's publisher based in San Francisco, California, and Wellington, New Zealand, our **passion for nature and its stewardship** are evident in every book we publish—as well as in our business practices.

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