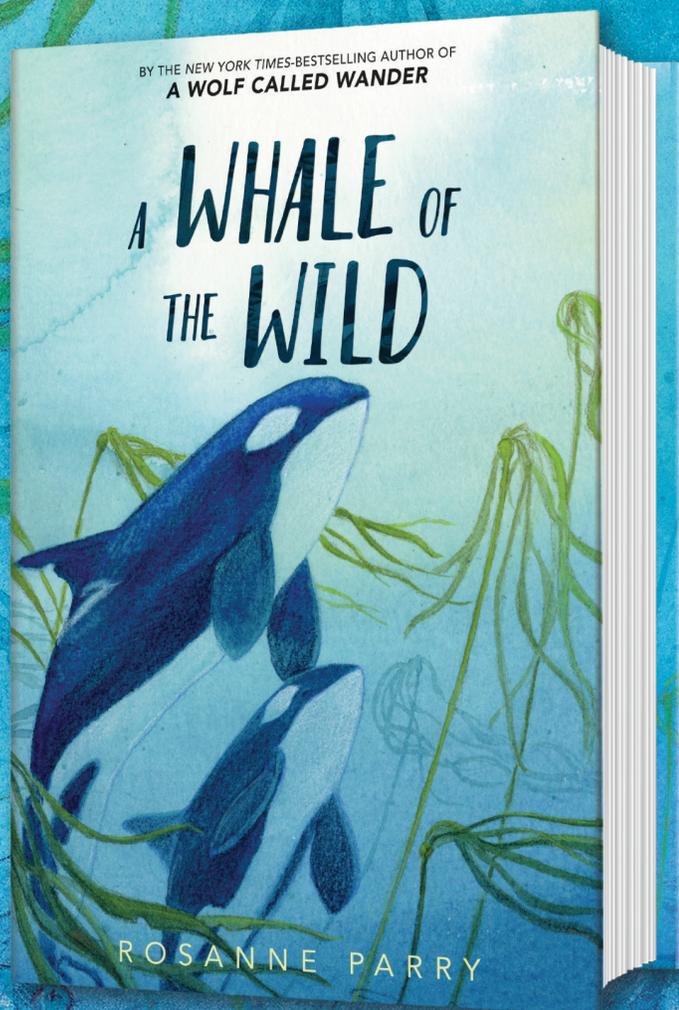


ROSANNE PARRY

EDUCATORS' GUIDE

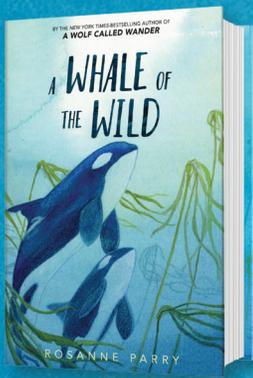


Educators' guide prepared by Connie Rockman, Youth Literature Consultant.



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A WHALE OF THE WILD

By Rosanne Parry • Illustrated by Lindsay Moore

Grades 3–7 • 9780062995926 • \$17.99

Booktalk

For Vega and her family, salmon is life. And Vega is learning to be a salmon finder, preparing for the day when she will be her family's matriarch. But then she and her brother Deneb are separated from their pod when a devastating earthquake and tsunami render the seascape unrecognizable. Vega must use every skill she has to lead her brother back to their family. The young orcas face a shark attack, hunger, the deep ocean, and threats from human activity on their journey. Will Vega become the leader she's destined to be?

Discussion Questions

1. Describe each member of the kinship. Why do you think they are named after stars or constellations in the night sky? What do their names indicate about their personalities? Which of the younger ones would you want to have for a brother or sister? What role do each of the adults play in the daily life of the whales?
2. Discuss the meaning of the term "wayfinder." Is there more than one meaning to the word? What does Greatmother mean when she says to Vega, "Eat a little beauty every day...It will give you strength" (p. 3)? What is Vega's reaction?
3. How does Vega feel when she takes the family too close to a human boat during her first attempt at being the leader? Why do you think her mother asked her to be the wayfinder at this particular time? Why does she swim away from the family after their close call?
4. Describe Vega's feelings about her cousin Aquila. How has their relationship changed from when they were younger? How do Vega's feelings toward Aquila change over the course of the events described in this story? How do their roles change after the difficulties they encounter?
5. Discuss Greatmother's saying, "Always remember, together is better than apart" (p. 63). What is the importance of the stories and memories that Greatmother relates to Vega and Aquila? Can you compare them to personal or historical stories that humans pass on through their generations?
6. Describe Vega's emotions when her baby sister dies. Why does she take Capella's body away? Why does she want to take the baby's body to rest in Blood Cove? Compare Deneb's experiences to Vega's as he tries to follow her. Why does he leave the family to find Vega?
7. Describe how Vega and Deneb survive the earthquake and tsunami. Discuss the importance of the family legends that help them understand what is happening and how the different types of sea creatures support one another in a crisis.
8. Discuss the relationship between the orcas and the humans. Why does Greatmother say, "The wayfinders do not agree about whether humans make families" (p. 93)? How do Vega's feelings about humans change as she observes them? Why does Deneb help humans back to their boats? How do they assist the humans to help the salmon?
9. Describe the way Vega and Deneb's environment changes when they go into the Blue Wilderness. Why does the sight of the enormous whale fill Vega with hope and wonder rather than fear? How does she use her knowledge of the sea and sky to find her way homeward?
10. How does Vega know where the salmon need to go? What does she do to help the salmon get back to the river? In how many ways does she save her family? What does Deneb mean when he says, "Vega knows more than she thinks she does!" (p. 285)?

Extension Activities

Dangers in the Salish Sea. Study the map in the back of the book. Find the location of the Salish Sea on a map of the United States. Make your own map of this region and identify the sources of danger to the wildlife that live in these waters. Create graphic images on your map to indicate how life-threatening each of these dangers are to the orcas in particular.

Writing from a Different Perspective. The orcas in this story describe other inhabitants of the area in terms they understand; for example, they talk about a human's "flippers" and "grabbers." Choose one of the other creatures listed at the back of the book, or humans who live in this area, and write a short story from their perspective. Describe the orcas the way that creature or person might see them.

Be a Friend to the Orcas. Choose one of the suggestions listed under "How Can I Help the Orcas?" Write up a plan for what you can do individually to help the environment, and then expand that plan into what you can do with other people to make an impact. Ask your friends and family for help with your plan. Make a timeline and set deadlines to put your plan into action.

A Special Kind of Navigation. You can get a sense of how echolocation works for the orcas by reading this story. Now do some research on what scientists have learned about the ways different animals use this unique skill. Make a list of these animals and the various ways they get around in their own environment using echolocation.

<https://www.discoverwildlife.com/animal-facts/mammals/what-is-echolocation/>



Photo by Veranda Studios

About the Illustrator

Lindsay Moore is an artist and writer with roots in Northern Michigan. Her first book, *Sea Bear*, received three starred reviews. She studied marine biology and fine art at Southampton College on Long Island and figure drawing at the Art Students League in New York City. She earned her master of science in medical and scientific illustration from Medical College of Georgia (now part of Augusta University) and has received recognition for her work from both the Association of Medical Illustrators and the Australian Institute of Medical and Biological Illustration. She lives in Bowling Green, Ohio.



A WOLF CALLED WANDER

By Rosanne Parry • Illustrated by Mónica Armijo

Grades 3–7 • 9780062895936 • \$16.99

Booktalk

Swift, a young wolf cub, lives with his pack in the mountains learning to hunt, competing with his brothers and sisters for hierarchy, and watching over a new litter of cubs. Then a rival pack attacks, and Swift and his family scatter. Alone and scared, Swift must flee and find a new home. The trip is full of peril, and Swift encounters forest fires, hunters, highways, and hunger before he meets a mate and they start a new pack of their own.

Inspired by the extraordinary true story of a wolf named OR-7 (or Journey), who traveled a remarkable one thousand miles across the Pacific Northwest, this is an irresistible tale of survival. It invites readers to experience and imagine what it would be like to be one of the most misunderstood animals on earth.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe each of Swift's sibling pups. How do their names describe their personalities? Which of them would you want to have for a brother or sister? Describe the adult wolves in Swift's pack. What role does each of them play in keeping the pack safe?
2. What does Mother mean when she tells Swift to "Wait until you have a fighting chance" before venturing outside the den (p. 5)? How do the adults in the pack teach the pups about survival in the outside world? What are the most important things Swift learns from them to help him survive on his own?
3. Compare the characters of Swift and Sharp. How are they similar and how are they different? What different paths do they choose when the pack is attacked and scattered? What do you think Father meant by his last song, "Carry on. Carry on. Carry on..." (p. 44)?
4. Why does Swift head away from his home territory? Discuss his thought: "...if my pack is not in the mountains, then it is no home to me" (p. 48). What makes him choose a different path than Sharp? Why doesn't he try to join the two wolves he spots attacking a sheep? What does he mean when he says, "They must have learned to hunt from watching coyotes" (p. 53)?
5. How does Swift survive his injuries after trying to hunt an elk on his own? What help does he receive from the raven? How do they help each other to survive? Why does Swift follow the raven away from the territory that is familiar to him?
6. Why did Swift's mother tell him "Men are the worst of all dangers" (p. 70)? How does Swift experience the world of men? What does he mean when he talks about a black river, lightning, and noisemakers? Why do you think men were hunting Swift and his brother?
7. How does Swift feel when his raven ignores him after they encounter more birds? What does he mean when he says, "My raven has her pack now" (p. 141)? What advantages does he gain after the raven leaves him on his own again?
8. How is Swift affected by watching the foal being born? What are his emotions as he watches the herd of wild horses? Why does Swift risk his life to lead the cougar away from the horse herd?
9. How do Swift's instincts help him escape the wildfire? What are the signs that tell him he has found a place where he can make a new home? How does he find his mate?
10. Why does Swift create a new name for himself when he meets his mate? What does the new name mean to him? How, exactly, has he changed from the "young wolf that ran away from his home ground" (p. 197)?

Extension Activities

Myths about Wolves. There are many myths about dangers that humans might experience from wolves, but few of them are true. Look up the facts about wolf populations and the ways they help conservation and ecosystems, especially during and after the recent reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone Park.

The Social Network of Wolves. Wolves, as you have learned from this book, are social animals that are happiest when they are part of a pack. Research the facts about wolf families and how they interact and communicate with each other.

Discuss these lines from "The Law for the Wolves," by Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) and how they relate to what you have learned about wolf families:

*"Now this is the law of the jungle, as old and as true as the sky,
And the wolf that shall keep it may prosper, but the wolf that shall break it must die.
As the creeper that girdles the tree trunk, the law runneth forward and back,
For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack."*

Partners in the Wild. In the story, Swift partners for a while with a raven that helps him hunt and find his path. Look up information about the symbiotic relationship between wolves and ravens. Write a report about the activities between wolves and ravens that have been observed by naturalists. How many ways can these "partners" benefit each other in the wild?

Where Wolves Wander. Using the map in the back of the book, trace the path of OR-7, the real-life wolf that inspired the story about Swift. Divide your class or reading group into teams to research different habitats along that journey, creating a complete picture of each area, including terrain, water sources, food sources, and suitability for sustaining a wolf pack.

Be a Wolf Explorer. Want to learn about life as a wildlife explorer? Visit or7expedition.org. Then follow the path of OR-7 with a team of people who attempted to retrace his steps in the wild to learn more about the habits and special characteristics of the wolf. Make a list of the equipment you would need to join such an expedition.



Photo by Mónica Armiño

About the Illustrator

Mónica Armiño is a Spanish illustrator based in Madrid. She has an extensive knowledge of both digital and traditional techniques and has published several books with various publishers and agencies in Europe and the US. Mónica Armiño also works in the animation industry as a character designer, background artist, and color and texture artist for feature films and preschool TV series such as the award-winning *Puffin Rock*.



Dear Readers,

There are many things to love about killer whales—they're incredibly smart, live in every ocean, grow to the size of a school bus, and leap completely out of the water. But the thing I find most compelling is that they are a complete matriarchy. Females lead their families, deciding when and where they will travel and hunt. Every female character I've ever written (or read) deals with the patriarchy in some way. It's been a revelation to think about what it means to be a girl who knows she will rule completely someday—and it won't be a hard-won fight but an inescapable obligation. Fascinating! And what does it mean to be a young male in a society where you will follow your mother and sisters always. It was so energizing to write this, and it couldn't be more timely.

I traveled with the illustrator, marine biologist Lindsay Moore, a magical thousand miles around the Salish Sea. We soaked in the sounds and sights and textures. We spoke to scientists, marine educators, indigenous storytellers, fishermen, and whale watchers. We've spent the months since pouring all that magic into *A Whale of the Wild*, a story modest in length but large of heart. The ocean is patient zero in the epidemic of global warming. Step one in making change is caring—feeling an intense and personal connection to the wild places of the world. This is the story to open hearts and motivate change. I'm grateful for your help in finding homes and hearts for this story to live in. Thank you!

Rosanne Parry



Photo by Brian Garaths

About the Author

Rosanne Parry is the author of the acclaimed novels *A Wolf Called Wander*, *Heart of a Shepherd*, *Second Fiddle*, and *Written in Stone*. She has taught writing at schools, conferences, educational nonprofits, and online at the Loft Literary Center. She and her family live in an old farmhouse in Portland, Oregon. She writes in a tree house in her backyard.