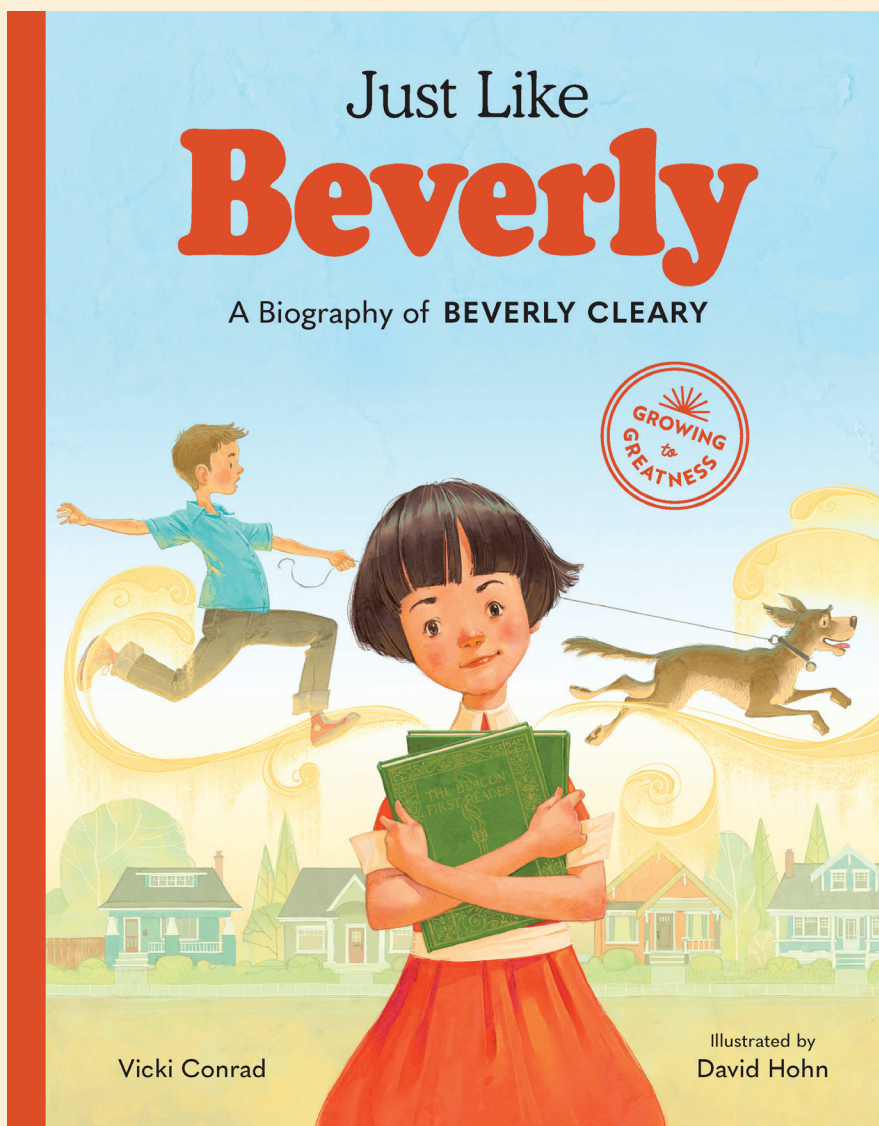




EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



JUST LIKE BEVERLY

A Biography of Beverly Cleary

Written by Vicki Conrad; Illustrated by David Hohn



little bigfoot

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GET MORE OUT OF THIS BOOK

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Before reading, elicit prior knowledge about what children think a biography is. After discussion, explain it is common for famous people, who have a big impact on the world in some way, to write their life's story. This is called an **autobiography**. However, when someone else writes their story, it is called a **biography**.
- Explain that though Beverly Cleary is a famous author, someone else wrote her life's story in this book so it is a biography.
- Ask, "Why would it be a good thing to read about someone's life?" Tell the children it is good to learn about people who have had a positive impact on the world, because they teach how positive choices can give us better lives. Their stories may also reveal how they overcame difficulties in their lives, which can help us learn how to overcome difficulties in our own lives.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

- After reading the book, discuss how the story's **timeline** in the back is like a shortened version of the book. Have the children make a timeline of their own with five to ten important events from their lives. The children can estimate the dates or research specific ones with help from their families. They could include things like when they were born, when they moved to a new house or city, when they learned how to ride a bike or learned a new sport, when they lost their first tooth, when a sibling was born, when they started kindergarten, or when they got a pet.
- Build connections to details in Beverly's life by discussing what her favorite things were and what some of her NOT so favorite things were.
- Ask, "How did Beverly's hard experiences affect her as a child and later as an adult?" (For example: moving schools, contracting smallpox, having a strict teacher who humiliated and punished her, having to read aloud in front of the class.)
- In contrast, discuss pivotal experiences that changed Beverly in positive ways, such as when she had a patient and encouraging

teacher named Miss Marius, when she wrote a book review of *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* that was published in the newspaper, or when her first story "Spareribs and Henry" was published. Think about why these important events helped Beverly go forward and pursue her dreams. Have children share specific ways in which people in their lives have helped and encouraged them. Ask, "What do you think you will be when you grow up?"

- Refer to a West Coast map pointing out cities in Oregon and Washington mentioned in the story: Yamhill, Portland, Seattle, and Yakima. Ask, "Do you know of other famous people who live in the Northwest?"

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES

- Write a letter to Beverly Cleary expressing what details about her life have impressed you. Tell her in what ways you are the same or different from her when she was young.
- Beverly wrote about children, often drawing from her own experiences. Take a paragraph to answer the question, "If you were an author, what topics would you write about?"
- Beverly thought children's books at that time were not interesting and children deserved better. Write about how you could make the world a better place. What talents do you think you will share with the world someday?
- Read Beverly Cleary's famous books! Write a review of one of her books, like she did for *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*.

