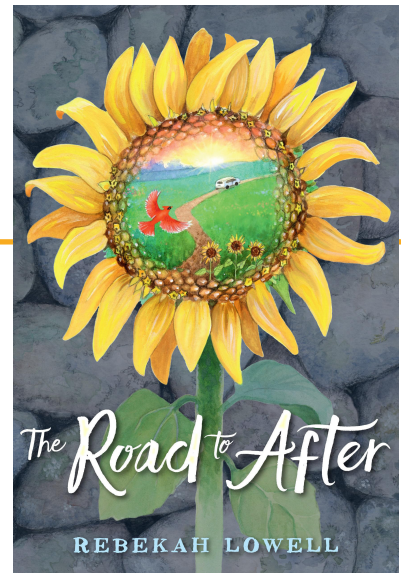


EXPLORE MORE BOOK GUIDE

Activities, tools & resources for learning with this book!



Meet the author and illustrator



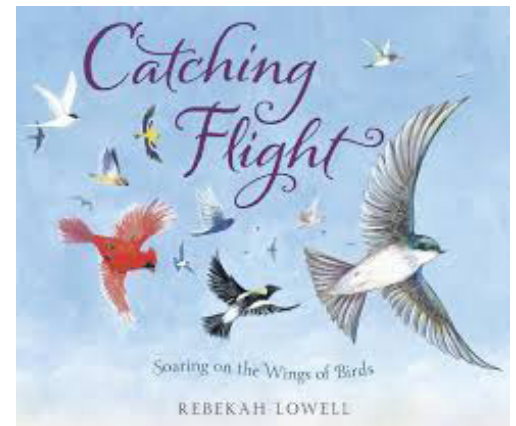
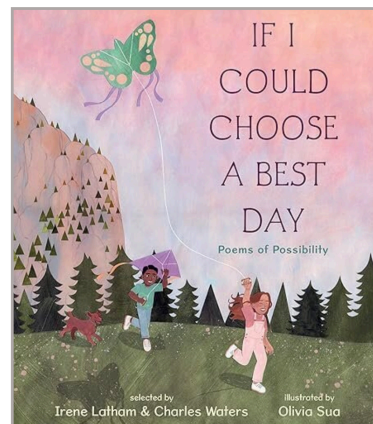
Rebekah Lowell is an author-illustrator whose curiosity about nature fuels her creativity. Her childhood, filled with wildflowers, finds its way into her work. A mother of two and survivor of domestic abuse, she is passionate about resiliency, freedom, and hope.

Rebekah has won the Maine Duck Stamp competition in 2011, 2014, 2017, and 2020. She has published two books, *Catching Flight* and *The Road to After*, as well as, her work was also included in *If I Could Choose A Best Day*.

Visit her [WEBSITE](#).

My hope is to share my love of the natural world and show you how resilient, strong, and beautiful it is, and that you have all of those things inside of you, too.

~ Rebekah Lowell



EXPLORE MORE BOOK GUIDE

LET'S BEGIN! BEFORE READING THE BOOK

Use the Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) questions below to orient readers, and to help guide a group discussion. Begin by taking a quiet moment to look closely at the book jacket, allowing time for observation and contemplation of the images.

- *What is going on in this picture?*
- *What do you see that makes you say that? (provide evidence)*
- *What more can we find?*

Watch this [VIDEO](#) for a quick VTS demo

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Please contact Alison Johnson at Island Readers & Writers, 207-460-6828 or ajohnson@islandreadersandwriters.org.

LET'S TALK!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as a life lasts...There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature - the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter.

~ Rachel Carson

EXPLORE EMOTIONS

I wonder what it felt like the first time this family...

- Drove in someone else's car
- Drove their own new car
- Got a library card
- Slept in their new apartment
- Played with other kids
- Played in a sprinkler
- Took a long walk on a trail
- Any others?

STANDARDS

Covered throughout this Explore More Book Guide:

SL.1. Prepare for and participate in conversations across a range of topics, types, and forums, building on others' ideas and expressing their own.

SL.2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

SL.3 Present information and supporting evidence appropriate to task, purpose, and audience so listeners can follow the line of reasoning and incorporate multimedia when appropriate.

R.4. Read various texts closely to determine what each text explicitly says and to make logical inferences; cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the texts.

R.5 Provide an accurate summary of various texts; determine the central idea(s) or theme(s) and analyze its development throughout each text.

R.6. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

R.8 Analyze the structure of various texts, including how the features and components relate to each other and the whole.

R.9. Assess how perspective or purpose shapes the content and style of various texts.

R.10 Evaluate the argument and specific claims in various texts.

L.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style in writing and speaking, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Poetry: Literary texts- Students read fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry, within a grade appropriate span of text complexity.

Learning About Self-Knowledge and Interpersonal Relationships:

A1 Self-Knowledge and Self-Concept
A3 Interpersonal Skills

Learning To Make Decisions, Plan and Create Opportunities, and Make Meaningful Contributions:

C3 Influences on Decision-Making
A2 Dimensions of Health

E1 Interpersonal Communication Skills

1. How does journaling and drawing help this family? Why do you think the mother draws twisted trees? (page 64)

2. On page 73 the bee sticks to the car window while they are driving to their new life in Virginia. After watching it for a while, Lacey notices it fly away, "The bee knew it was the exact right time to let go." What do you think the significance of this quote is? Have you ever had to let go of something?



Artist [CHARLIE HEWITT](#)

3. What does *hope* feel like to you?

4. Why do you think Lacey wants to see a magnolia tree when they go south? How do you think she knew about them?

5. They get a punching bag for their home and while using it Lacey thinks of all the hurtful things her father did to them. Have you ever had such big emotions that you felt that hitting something would make you feel better? Did it?

6. Water is an important theme in this book. The author mentions the beach, the creek, even

Lacey's new friend is named *Brooke* (brook). On page 87

Mama says, "Water never finds its way in a straight line, ...It always finds a way through. No matter the obstacles, it keeps flowing." Why do you think mama said this and do you think it's true?

7. What kinds of things does Lacey learn when visiting friends' homes? (Look at page 133) Does visiting different friends' houses give you new ideas?

8. Discuss page 154 "I thought getting better meant always getting better, but it doesn't."

9. In a lot of cases, *Before* is used as a noun. What do you think this means?

**Is Life
like
Water?**

LET'S CREATE (AND DO)! Book-Inspired Art

Start a [NATURE JOURNAL](#) for your own emotional wellness and creativity. You can write or draw to express yourself and include observations from the natural world around you.

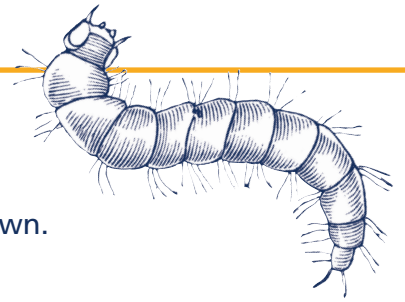
Research sunflowers, find out the different varieties, origin, who eats them, where they grow, and any folklore about them. Make a poster by labeling the parts of your flower and adding all your favorite research.

WHAT DO YOU CARRY WITH YOU?

Fear, family, memories, love, a sunflower in a pot? List things you carry with you, physically and in your heart. Then draw yourself in the center with all the things from your list circling around you. The things closest to you, with the things most important being the closest to you.



Lacey is interested in all things nature. On page 77 she finds cicada exoskeletons and keeps them in a jar. Have you ever made a collection from nature? Explore different insects and see if you can find exoskeletons of your own. Draw your findings.

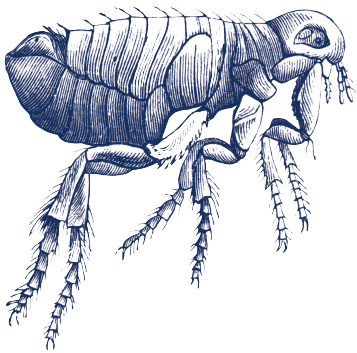


MAKE YOUR OWN STEPPING STONES

On page 76 there is a page titled, *Middle Ground*. Lowell talks about the “space between” here. This space has stepping stones. Try making your own stepping stones out of concrete, plaster of paris, or even paper if you are keeping them inside. Decorate them with things from nature or your own drawings.

At the end of the book it is spring and Peper takes the girls out to search for fiddleheads. Jenna calls them *furled fronds*. Research and make a fern’s life cycle map. You can also make fiddleheads out of pipe cleaners. Use this [WEBSITE](#) for ideas.

LET’S DIVE DEEPER! Explore More



- [ALL ABOUT EXOSKELETONS](#)
- [WRITING IN VERSE](#)
- [YOUTH EDUCATION RESOURCES](#)

LET’S READ MORE! Text to Text Connections

