

EXPLORE MORE BOOK GUIDE

Activities, tools & resources for learning with this book!



MEET AUTHOR CASEY W. ROBINSON

Casey W. Robinson grew up in Maine and used to keep a shoebox of favorite words and phrases under her bed. She now lives with her family just west of Boston, in a yellow house overflowing with books. When she's not writing, Casey manages book events for her local indie bookseller. Her debut picture book, *Iver & Ellsworth*, was a finalist for the Crystal Kite Award and Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award. Her latest picture book, *Small Things Mended*, is a Kids' Indie Next Pick. Read more bout Casey [HERE](#).



MEET ILLUSTRATOR NANCY WHITESIDES

Nancy (she/her) is an author and self-taught illustrator born and raised in the Philippines, and later moved to the US. Her illustration debut, *Grief is an Elephant* with Chronicle, was accepted into the prestigious Original Art Show at the Society of Illustrators in New York, and included in Travis Yonker's prediction list for the New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Books of 2023. Nancy also illustrated *Small Things Mended*, a Kids' Indie Next List Pick, with Rocky Pond Books, Spring 2024.

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Getting Started: **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

Don't Despair... Repair!

1. What is the difference between mend, fix, and repair?
2. What kinds of things can be mended, fixed, repaired? Make a list and try to categorize them.
3. How would you mend a broken heart? Do you think being with others can help a sad heart? Why?
4. Can you think of a way to make someone smile? Have you ever done that? How did it make you feel?
5. Have you ever broken something that was special to you? Did you or someone else fix it? How did you do it? Can you share a story with your friends about what happened? How did it make you feel?
6. Can you discover anything about Cecil by looking at the pictures in his house?

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.

Interpersonal Skills Students demonstrate positive interpersonal skills and analyze how interpersonal skills affect participation in the arts.

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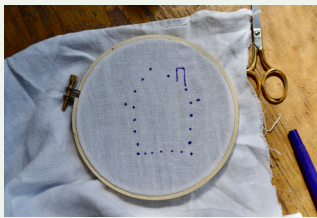
LET'S CREATE (AND DO)! Book-Inspired Art

1. Are there people who sew in your community? Ask them to help you host a **Plushie Hospital** where kids can bring their damaged plushies for repair.

Supplies needed



Running stitch sample



Washable marker outline



Running Stitch for house outline



French knots for flowers and doorknob

PRACTICE SEWING

- Use an embroidery hoop to secure fabric (burlap or similar works best for beginners), thread a large needle (they make plastic needles that are great for really young children).
- Start your project by practicing a simple line pattern or running stitch. Saying the phrase, "**up through the bottom, down through the top**" is a great way to help remember where to put the needle and not get the thread wrapped around the hoop.
- After students are well practiced with basic lines, move on to drawing a shape with a washable marker.
- We made a house by using the basic running stitch in a line. Branch out with more stitches and techniques as your skill improves.

2. BUILD A BIRDHOUSE!

3. Host a community dinner to bring people together and create smiles!
4. Get your class to pledge to do Random Acts of Kindness throughout the year. You can get some great ideas [HERE](#). Make a poster about which acts your class will do. Can you get another class to join you?
5. Start your own [MAKER SPACE](#).

LET'S DIVE DEEPER! Explore More

1. Look at the **Front Matter**, specifically the Title Page. Can you find any of the illustrated items throughout the book? How many did you find?
2. Nancy Whitsides, the illustrator, was raised in the Philippines. Research the Philippines to learn more about this location.
3. Start a **MAKE DO AND MEND CLUB**.

Here are some words from the book to get your Word Wall started

Ker-chunk, Clink, Shu le

Whoops!

Tinkered, Tweaked, Twisted

Tick Tick Tock, Pling!

Jaunty

Delighted

Hummed

Trinkets, Treasures, Doodads, Thingamajigs, Wonkey

Matted

Frowned

Promises

Pried, peered, poked, pulled, picked

Mused

Ventured

Tidying, gathering

Scrumptious, salted, slices

4. In Casey's bio, she says she "grew up in Maine and used to keep a shoebox of favorite words and phrases under her bed." This video has tips on how to create and use a **WORD WALL** to save your own favorite words and phrases.

5. You can also **WATCH** President & Mrs. Obama read *The Word Collector* aloud, by Peter H. Reynolds.

6. Maine recently passed a "**RIGHT TO REPAIR LAW**". Look into it and see what it's all about.

7. Learn about **REPAIR CAFE**—spaces where you can learn to mend things!

Front Matter:

Consisting of the title page, dedication page and copyright page. Pay attention to any pictures that the illustrator may have added here, they could surprise you and may be important to the story line. Notice the typography. Does the lettering tell you anything?

LET'S READ MORE!

Text to Text Connections

