

Educator's Guide

for

In the Palm of My Hand



Written by **Jennifer Raudenbush**
Illustrated by **Isabella Conti**

DISCUSSION • LEARNING • ACTIVITIES

"A stunning debut picture book . . .

that teaches children about the beauty to be found in the smallest creatures and simplest pleasures nature has to offer."



Jennifer Raudenbush

Jen feels most alive when she's creating stories, especially picture books and middle-grade novels. Jen lives with her husband and teenage son in eastern Pennsylvania, where its natural beauty provides endless inspiration. She also loves to cuddle with her pup, adventure with family, and escape with books.

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Isabella Conti

Isabella was born in Milan under the snow of a cold March, in a leap year. As a little girl, she loved drawing and painting, and she has dedicated her life to exploring the world through illustration.



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On an ambling walk, a child discovers they hold the promise of larger worlds— forests and meadows— in the palm of their hand.

An acorn becomes a tree within a woodland wonderland.

A grain of sand becomes a sandcastle in a kingdom of imagination. By exploring nature's tiniest details, they learn even small things, including them, contain infinite potential.

Reading Suggestions

Read it aloud once without showing the pictures. Ask students to visualize and think about what they see in their minds. Discuss what they see.

Then read again, this time with the illustrations.
How did the pictures match what they imagined?

Discussion Questions

- Read the title of the book. Discuss its meaning.
- This is a very visual book. Discuss some of the beautiful lines. What do they mean? For example, “I blow a meadow of wishes.”
- How does the book use page turns to move the story along? What do you notice?
- Why do you think the author starts with small objects and then moves to bigger ones?
- How do the illustrations help you understand the text?
- Look at the page that shows the raindrops and the umbrella. How has the raindrop journeyed from the depths of the sea?
- What calls you to adventures fantastic and bold?



Activities

1 **Trace your hand and draw a special thing inside of it.** (Or use the template provided.) Use the writing prompt printable to describe what is in your hand.

2 **Extension: Create a group poem out of the things you can hold.** (See template. Each student should fill it out. Then take turns reading your section of the poem. Try including the line, “in the palms of our hands...” as a repeating refrain.

3 The text transitions from one object to another with each page turn. **Map a transition in the book with pictures and labels.** (See printable.) For example, the text moves from acorn to oak tree to caterpillar.

4 **Revisit this part of the text: “I follow a butterfly, airy and graceful.** It flutters and swoops, flutters and swoops, guiding me on a flight of wonder.” Imagine you were following a butterfly on a flight of wonder. What would you see? Where would you go? Write and draw about your adventures. (See printables.)

5 **Extension: Do this as a guided visualization.** What places could you explore? Then act it out as a group.

Activities (cont.)

6

Brainstorm what you know about cycles. What nature cycles do you see in this book? How do the author and illustrator incorporate different cycles into this book? Use the printable to document what you know about cycles.

7

Writing Prompt: Whose hand gives "a squeeze that hugs your heart?" Write about that person and how they make you feel. (See printable.)

8

Draw a self-portrait using the style of the art on the last page of the book as inspiration. What could you draw inside of you?

9

Cut out the monarch butterfly pictures. Put the pictures in correct cycle order. How did you choose what to put first? Explain your process to someone else.

10

Go on a nature walk scavenger hunt. Use the printable to document what you find.



Activities (cont.)

Examine this page in the book that talks about family. Draw a picture of you holding hands with your family. How do these people help you? How do they make you feel?



Revisit the page that shows building a sandcastle. What can you build with your hands? Gather a variety of materials (blocks, recycled materials, boxes) to build some kind of structure. Add labels to your building.



Write and draw about an adventure you've had. Or imagine a new one!

Mentor Sentences

Look at the following sentences from the text.

What craft moves (the author's writing techniques) do you see?

What could you try out in your own writing?

"Soon it will spin a cocoon and unfold its magic." For example, discuss what "unfolds its magic" means. Why didn't the author just say open its wings?

"I blow a meadow of wishes, which whirl and twirl and swirl on the breeze, floating towards a cloud heavy and gray."

"The wild ocean pushes and pulls, pushes and pulls toward land. tumble their treasures onto the shore. Its waves, salty and foaming."

"Like the star-speckled sky, wide-open and limitless..."

Picture Book Text Set that Connects to **In the Palm of My Hand**

Why Am I Me? By Paige Britt, Sean Qualls, and Selina Alko

Zoom By Istvan Banyai

Before We Stood Tall By Jessica Kulekjian,

Illustrated by Madeline Kloepper



Next Generation Science Standard Connections



2-LS2-2 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics

Develop a simple model that mimics the function of an animal in dispersing seeds or pollinating plants.*



K-ESS3-1 Earth and Human Activity

Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants and animals (including humans) and the places they live.



3-LS1-1 From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes

Develop models that describe organisms which have unique and diverse life cycles, but all have in common birth, growth, reproduction, and death.

A Sample of Common Core Standard Connections



With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.



With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.



Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.



Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

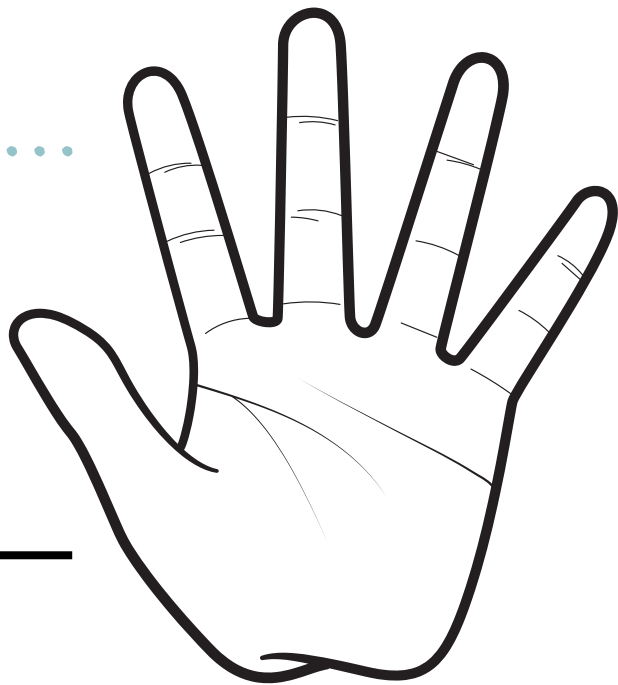
About the Guide

This Educator's Guide was created by Kari Allen. Kari is a teacher with twenty years of classroom experience. Visit her website kariallenwrites.com for more information.

Trace your Hand

Draw something that fits in the palm of your hand.

In my hand, I can hold...



If you were a butterfly on a flight of wonder
where would you go?

Draw what you would see
on a flight of wonder if you were a butterfly.

Make a map of your flight of wonder.

In the Palm of My Hand Group Poem

(Name)

can hold

(list an item)

(describe item with one word)

and

(describe item with one more word)

(write something about your item)

Put the Pictures in the Correct Sequence



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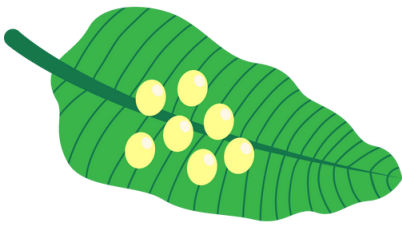
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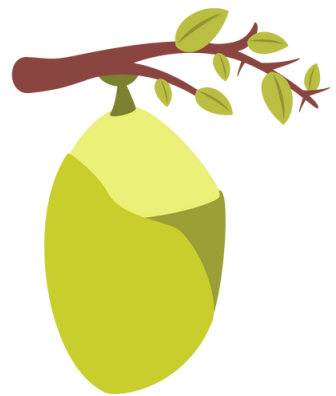
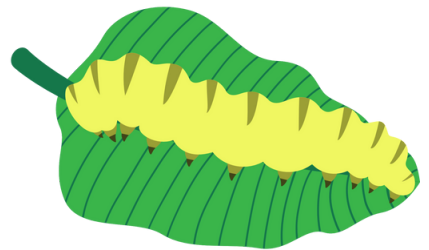


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Butterfly Life Cycle

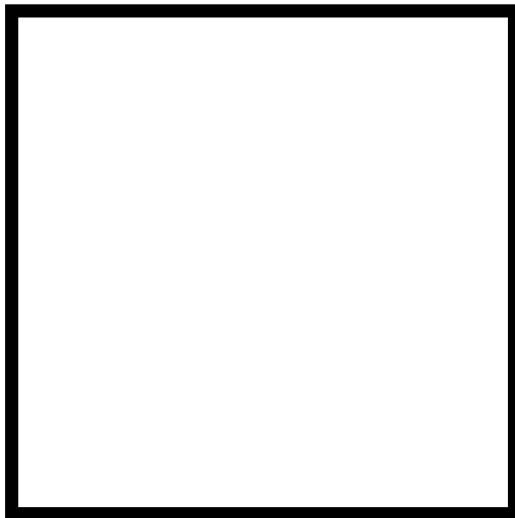
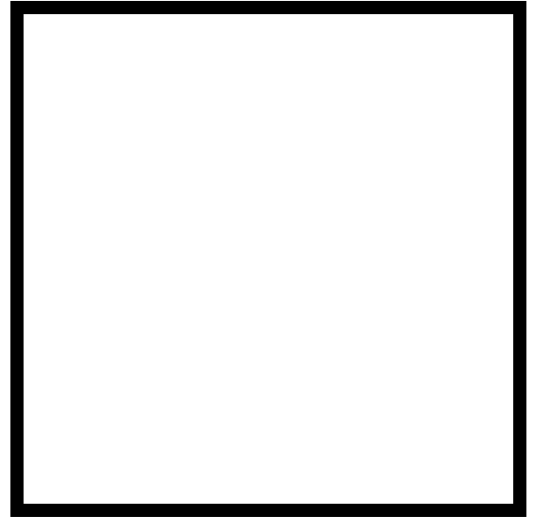
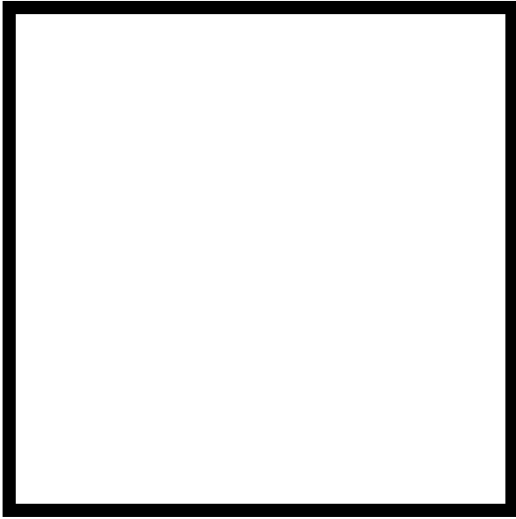
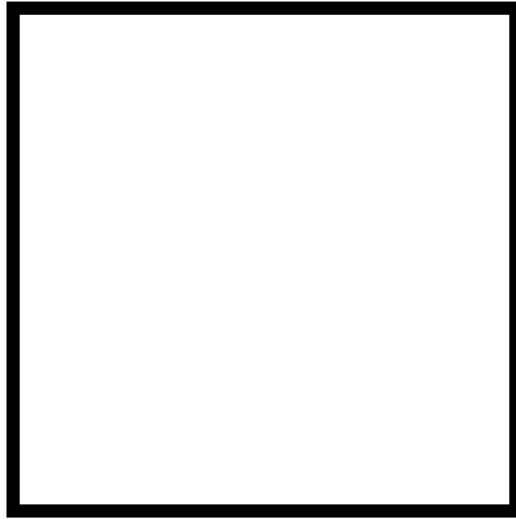
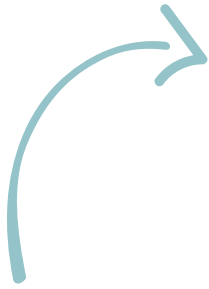
Write the name of each stage on the lines.





Butterfly Life Cycle

Draw the stages inside the boxes.



What is a Cycle?

Make a diagram.

Draw a picture or write a sentence to show your understanding of the word **cycle**.

