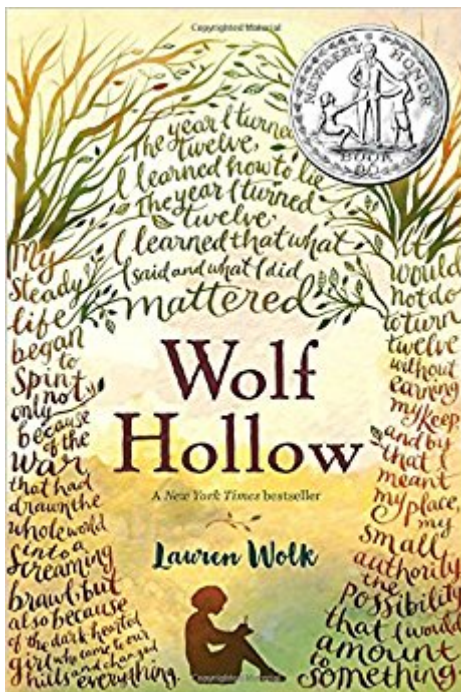


The book was found

Wolf Hollow



Synopsis

A 2017 Newbery Honor Book New York Times Bestseller A young girl's kindness, compassion, and honesty overcome bullying. An NPR Best Book of the Year A Booklist Best Book of the Year An Entertainment Weekly Best Middle Grade Book of the Year Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Year A Shelf Awareness Best Book of the Year A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year A Wall Street Journal Best Children's Book of the Year An ALA Notable Children's Book

"This exquisite debut confronts injustice and doesn't flinch. People [A] powerful debut . . . beautifully written. The Wall Street Journal "Wrenching and true. . . comparisons to Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird will abound. But Wolk gives us her own story one full of grace and stark, brutal beauty. The New York Times Book Review "When reviewers draw a parallel between Mockingbird and Lauren Wolk's Wolf Hollow, they are being neither hyperbolic, nor lazy. They are merely doing justice to Wolk's beautiful story. NPR, Best Books of 2016 Growing up in the shadows cast by two world wars, Annabelle has lived a mostly quiet, steady life in her small Pennsylvania town. Until the day new student Betty Glengarry walks into her class. Betty quickly reveals herself to be cruel and manipulative, and while her bullying seems isolated at first, things quickly escalate, and reclusive World War I veteran Toby becomes a target of her attacks. While others have always seen Toby's strangeness, Annabelle knows only kindness. She will soon need to find the courage to stand as a lone voice of justice as tensions mount. Brilliantly crafted, Wolf Hollow is a haunting tale of America at a crossroads and a time when one girl's resilience, strength, and compassion help to illuminate the darkest corners of our history. "The honesty of Wolf Hollow will just about shred your heart, but Annabelle's courage and compassion will restore it to you, fuller than before. This book matters. Sara Pennypacker, New York Times bestselling author of Pax "An evocative setting, memorable characters, a searing story: Wolf Hollow has stayed with me long after I closed the book. It has the feel of an instant classic." Linda Sue Park, Newbery Medalist and New York Times bestselling author

Book Information

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[Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Country Life](#) #9 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s](#) #18 in [Books > Children's](#)

[Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8 •Eleven-year-old Annabelle lives in a rural Pennsylvania community in 1943. The continued fighting of World War II haunts everyone, but life is mostly peaceful until Betty Glengarry's arrival. Betty is cruel and threatening and thrives on inflicting pain. At first, Annabelle is slightly comforted to know that Toby is watching out for her. Toby is a local vagabond, a World War I veteran of few words who has become something like a friend of Annabelle's family. Meanwhile, Betty's violent malice only grows, until one day she goes missing. Toby immediately becomes the prime suspect in Betty's disappearance. Annabelle is sure of Toby's innocence and is determined to prove it. Readers are alerted from the outset that this is the story of how the narrator loses her childish naivete in a life-altering way. The narrative is powerful, complex, and lifelike. There are pointlessly cruel people, courageously kind people, and those who simply pass the gossip. Despite the jaded feelings that come with witnessing unjust persecution, the heart of this story is ultimately one of hope and empathy. Thematically, this book raises some of the same issues as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but with social status rather than racism as the basis for injustice. Vicious bullying is also a highly relevant topic, and this aspect is sure to spark important conversations. VERDICT Highly recommended for purchase; a truly moving debut. •Sara White, Seminole County Public Library, Casselberry, FL

“This exquisite debut confronts injustice and doesn’t flinch.” People Magazine “Not all books with literary aspirations told from a child’s point of view are created equal. But when reviewers draw a parallel between *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Lauren Wolk’s *Wolf Hollow*, they are being neither hyperbolic, nor lazy. They are merely doing justice to Wolk’s beautiful story.” NPR, “Best Books of 2016” “Drawing comparisons to *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Wolk’s lovely novel features a quiet young girl named Annabelle who is stirred to action by a cruel new student Betty when Betty starts bullying a strange (but, as Annabelle knows, kind) World War I veteran named Toby.” Entertainment Weekly, “Best Middle Grade Books of 2016” “[A] powerful debut | beautifully written.” The Wall Street Journal “Wrenching and true | With a precociously perceptive girl as a main character; a damaged, misunderstood recluse; and themes of prejudice and bigotry, comparisons to Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* will abound. But Wolk gives us her own story – one full of grace and stark, brutal beauty.” New York Times Book Review “Echoing the tone and themes found in *To Kill a Mockingbird* | Annabelle’s astute observations of the Philadelphia woods and the people who populate *Wolf Hollow* will resonate with many readers as they present a profound view of a complex era tinged by prejudice and fear.” Publishers Weekly, starred review | “The spare but hauntingly beautiful language paints every early morning walk to school, household chore, emotion, and rational and irrational thought in exquisite detail | Perfectly pitched to be used in classrooms in conjunction with *To Kill a Mockingbird*.” Booklist, starred review | “[Wolk] realizes her setting with gorgeous immediacy, introducing the culture of this all-white world of hollows, hills, and neighbors with confidence and clear-eyed affection. Trusting its readers implicitly with its moral complexity, Wolk’s novel stuns.” Kirkus Reviews, starred review | “The tension builds and never lets up. The storytelling here is dignified and the tone is memoir-ish, because Annabelle is remembering the story in the past | The portrait of Betty, an unredeemed sociopath, pulls no punches, and Toby is a nuanced and poignant character, an unlikely hero.” The Horn Book, starred review | “The narrative is powerful, complex, and lifelike | Thematically, this book raises some of the same issues as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but with social status rather than racism as the basis for injustice | VERDICT: Highly recommended for purchase; a truly moving debut.” School Library Journal, starred review | “Lauren

Wolk's nuanced and nerve-wracking middle-grade debut takes a close, dark look at how dangerous it is to make assumptions of guilt or innocence based on appearances—and how telling the truth and standing up against injustice are essential, even if the wrongs are not always righted. Wolk has a clean and poetic way with words and her story is finely crafted, haunting and unlikely to be forgotten. Shelf Awareness, starred review
"Marvelous" A powerful middle-grade tale of friendship, and courage. You know that sense of finishing a book and immediately wishing for someone to talk to about it? That's how I felt about this stunning new middle-grade novel. Lauren Wolk also writes poetry, and here she fastens words together lyrically to create images and characters that not only float off the page, they tear your heart out. Annabelle's courage and heart will make it a perfect read aloud also. "Wolf Hollow" is just that wonderful. The Christian Science Monitor
"Wolk is a writer of uncommon power, and this is an uncommonly clear-eyed look at both the depths and heights of the human spirit. A book meant to be discussed and pondered. Grade: A+ Cleveland Plain Dealer
"Annabelle is an earnest, independent and caring character, well supported by a vividly drawn cast—the kind, the cruel and the gossips in between. Coming-of-age novels specialize in moral dilemmas but rarely as well. San Francisco Chronicle
"A compelling coming-of-age story. This is a novel for our times and a book that matters. San Diego Union-Tribune
"Things aren't at all simple in Wolf Hollow, and that's the great strength of Lauren Wolk's first novel for middle school readers. Wolf Hollow is fascinating and fast-paced, driven by Wolk's exquisite plotting and thoughtful, fine-tuned writing. Reminiscent of To Kill a Mockingbird, this isn't a book full of happy endings; instead, it gives young readers a ringside seat at real-life moral complexities. BookPage
"Must not be missed. A sweeping, profound book on the deep courage it takes to be a compassionate human, Wolf Hollow will stay with readers long after the last page is read, and in all probability, long into adulthood. Books to Borrow, Books to Buy
"Superb. beautifully written. A compelling story [that] will have readers young and old alike thinking about it a long time after the final page has been turned. Examiner
"Wolk's elegantly told tale is voiced in the past tense by narrator Annabelle, living in rural Pennsylvania in 1943, and opens with the sentence, "The year I turned twelve, I learned how to lie." Wolk explores the many paths those words open onto with a story that charts a course through bigotry, prejudice, kindness and coming of age with a struggle between right and wrong. Cape Cod

Times

“An emotionally intense YA debut from author and poet Lauren Wolk that will get kids thinking about compassion, justice, the importance of speaking out, and how to judge someone’s character

The novel reinforces the idea that to be happy with yourself you have to fight for what’s right and do what you can to help whenever you can.

Common Sense Media

“This is the story of the residual effects of war, the harmfulness of bullying, and several different types of prejudices. Annabelle makes an admirable character, as she’s smart, honest and caring, but also flawed and therefore humanized. The plot, in which I had initial trepidations due to the subject matter, turned out to be a much different tale than I’d realized and the protagonist and her family a lovely set of personalities. This book will appeal to readers young and old looking for a mid-20th century setting.

Historical Novels Review

“Deeply compelling and beautifully written

Originally author Lauren Wolk wrote this as a novel for adults. When it was adapted into a book for kids she didn’t dumb it down or change the language in a significant manner

There will be people who compare it to To Kill a Mockingbird but to my mind it bears more in common with The Crucible. So much of the book examines how we judge as a society and how that judgment can grow out of hand

A book unafraid to be uneasy.

School Library Journal

“Brings the reader into a beautifully described world that shows the dark side of humanity as well as the angelic side.

Provincetown Banner

“This book is nuanced with complex adult characters and their motivations alongside the pre-teen protagonist and her classmates and younger siblings. Simply put, it’s moving for an adult to read with multiple deaths, the trauma of military service during wartime, loneliness, and the impact of lies and deception. For an elementary school student, it’s a lesson in bullying, sticking by your family, and friendship

Wolk’s lyrical language compliments the Pennsylvania town circa 1945 navigating audiences through life after two world wars.

Albany Times-Union

“Lauren Wolk’s Wolf Hollow is nominally a book for young people, but its prose is so exquisite, its story so reminiscent of other great works of historical fiction, To Kill a Mockingbird in particular, that I can recommend it primarily and for adults... Wolf Hollow is not a comfortable book; the story is sometimes brutal. But it is a powerful, memorable story of love, and of the courage needed to defend it.

Utah Daily Herald

“A riveting read that will keep readers on the edge of their seats. There are abundant lessons in Wolf Hollow, about judging others, about dealing with those who treat you badly, and forgiving at all costs. A period book with an admirable

protagonist *Wolf Hollow* is an addictive read from first page to last. •The Missourian “Give this one to children with a passion for justice or an enthusiasm for historical fiction. •Roanoke Times, gift guide

I am not what you might call a very brave reader. This is probably why I primarily consume children’s literature. I might puff myself up with a defense that lists the many fine aspects of this particular type of writing and believe it too, but sometimes when you catch me in a weak moment I might confess that another reason I like reading books for kids is that the content is so very “safe” in comparison to books for adults. Disturbing elements are kept at a minimum. There’s always a undercurrent of hope running through the book, promising that maybe we don’t live in a cold, cruel, calculating universe that cares for us not one jot. Even so, that doesn’t mean that I don’t sometimes have difficulty with books written for, oh say, 10-year-olds. I’m not proud of it, but I do. So when I flipped to the back of *Wolf Hollow* mid-way through reading it, I want to tell you that I did so not because I wanted to spoil the ending for myself but because I honestly couldn’t turn another page until I knew precisely how everything was going to fall out. In her debut children’s book, Lauren Wolk dives head first into difficult material. A compelling author, the book is making the assumption that child readers will want to see what happens to its characters, even when the foreshadowing is so thick you’d need a knife to cut through it. Even when the ending may not be the happy one everyone expects. And you know what? The book might be right. It is fair to say that if Betty Glengarry hadn’t moved to western Pennsylvania in the autumn of 1943 then Annabelle would not have needed to become a liar later. Betty looks the part of the blond, blue-eyed innocent, but that exterior hides a nasty spirit. Within days of her arrival she threatened Annabelle and said in no uncertain terms that unless she brought something special she’ll take it out on the girl’s little brothers. Annabelle is saved from Betty’s threats by Toby, a war veteran with issues of his own. That’s when Betty begins a more concentrated campaign of pain. Rocks are thrown. Accusations made. There’s an incident that comes close to beheading someone. And then, when things look particularly bad, Annabelle disappears. And so does Toby. Now Annabelle finds herself trying to figure out what is right, what is wrong, and whether lies can ever lead people to the truth. Right off the bat I’m going to tell you that this is a spoiler-rific review. I’ve puzzled it over but I

can't figure out how I'd be able to discuss what Wolk's doing here without giving away large chunks of plot. So if you're the kind of reader who prefers to be surprised, walk on. All gone? Okay. Let's get to it. First and foremost, let's talk about why this book was rough going for me. I understand that "Wolf Hollow" is going to be categorized and tagged as a "bully book" for years to come, and I get that. But Betty, the villain of the piece, isn't your average mean girl. I hesitate to use the word "sadistic" but there's this cold undercurrent to her that makes for a particularly chilling read. Now the interesting thing is that Annabelle has a stronger spine than, say, I would in her situation. Like any good baddie, Betty identifies the girl's weak spot pretty quickly (Annabelle's younger brothers) and exploits it as soon as she is able. Even so, Annabelle does a good job of holding her own. It's when Betty escalates the threat (and I do mean escalates) that you begin to wonder why the younger girl is so adamant to keep her parents in the dark about everything. If there is any weak spot in the novel, it's a weak spot that a lot of books for middle grade titles share. Like any good author, Wolk can't have Annabelle tattletale to her parents because otherwise the book's momentum would take a nose dive. Fortunately this situation doesn't last very long and when Annabelle does at last confide in her very loving parents Betty adds manipulation to her bag of tricks. It got to the point where I honestly had to flip to the back of the book to see what would happen to everyone and that is a move I NEVER do. But there's something about Betty, man. I think it might have something to do with how good she is at playing to folks' preexisting prejudices. Originally author Lauren Wolk wrote this as a novel for adults. When it was adapted into a book for kids she didn't dumb it down or change the language in a significant manner. This accounts for some of the lines you'll encounter in the story that bear a stronger import than some books for kids. Upon finding the footsteps of Betty in the turf, Annabelle remarks that they "were deep and sharp and suggested that she was more freighted than she could possibly be." Of Toby, "He smelled a lot like the woods in thaw or a dog that's been out in the rain. Strong, but not really dirty." Maybe best of all, when Annabelle must help her mother create a salve for Betty's poison ivy, "Together, we began a brew to soothe the hurt I'd prayed for. I shall restrain myself from describing to you fully how elated I was when I realized the correlation between Betty down in the well and the wolves that

were trapped in the hollow so very long ago. Betty is a wolf. A duplicitous, scheming, nasty girl with a sadistic streak a mile wide. The kind of girl who would be more than willing to slit the throat of an innocent boy for sport. She's a lone wolf, though she does find a mate/co-conspirator of sorts. Early in the book, Wolk foreshadows all of this. In a conversation with her grandfather, Annabelle asks if, when you raised it right, a wolf could become a dog.

"A wolf is not a dog and never will be . . . no matter how you raise it. Of course you might call Toby a lone wolf as well. He doesn't seek out the company of other people and, like a wolf, he's shot down for looking like a threat. What Wolk manages to do is play with the reader's desire for righteous justice. Sure Annabelle feels conflicted about Betty's fate in the will but will young readers? There is no doubt in my mind that young readers in bookclubs everywhere will have a hard time feeling as bad for the antagonist's fate as Annabelle does. Even at death's door, the girl manages to twist the knife into Toby one last time. I can easily see kids in bookclub saying, "Sure, it must be awful to be impaled in a well for days on end . . . buuuut . . . Wolk may have done too good a job delving deep into Betty's dark side. It almost becomes a question of grace. We're not even talking about forgiveness here. Can you just feel bad about what's happened to the girl, even if it hasn't changed her personality and even if she's still awful? Wolk might have discussed after Betty's death the details of her family situation, but she chooses not to. She isn't making it easy for us. Betty lives and dies a terrible human being, yet oddly we're the ones left with the consequences of that. In talking with other people about the book, some have commented about what it a relief it was that Betty didn't turn into a sweet little angel after her accident. This is true, but there is also no time. There will never be any redemption for Betty Glengarry. We don't learn any specific details about her unhappy home life or what it was that turned her into the pint-sized monster she is. And her death comes in that quiet, unexpected way that so many deaths do come to us. Out of the blue and with a whisper. For all that she spent time in the well, she lies until her very last breath about how she got there. It's like the novel *Atonement* with its young liar, but without the actual atoning. Wolk says she wrote this book and based much of it on her own family's stories. Her memories provided a great deal of the information because, as she says, even the simplest life on a Pennsylvanian farm can yield stories, all thanks to a child's perspective. There will be people who compare it to *To Kill*

a Mockingbird. But to my mind it bears more in common with *The Crucible*. So much of the book examines how we judge as a society and how that judgment can grow out of hand (the fact that both this book and Miller's play pivot on the false testimony of young girls is not insignificant). Now I'll tell you the real reason I flipped to the back of the book early. With *Wolf Hollow* Wolk threatens child readers with injustice. As you read, there is a very great chance that Betty's lies will carry the day and that she'll never be held accountable for her actions. It doesn't work out that way, though the ending isn't what you'd call triumphant for Annabelle either. It's all complicated, but it was that unknowing midway through the book that made me need to see where everything was going. In this book there are pieces to pick apart about lying, truth, the greater good, minority vs. majority opinions, the price of honesty and more. For that reason, I think it very likely it'll find itself in good standing for a long time to come. A book unafraid to be uneasy. For ages 9-12.

Wolf Hollow by Laura Wolk for Grades 5-8 In her first novel for young readers, author Lauren Wolk does not sugarcoat the effects of bullying, prejudice, rumors, hate and war. In Pennsylvania's Wolf Hollow young Annabelle lives in the midst of heavy times, of wars past and present. While she has experienced only silent kindness from wandering World War I vet, Toby, new girl Betty Glengarry is determined to make Annabelle and Toby the victims of her merciless bullying. When tales and rumors fly, when Betty disappears and a manhunt begins, Annabelle is forced to make critical decisions, adult decisions, in order to do what's right. This is a heavy topic for upper elementary and middle school students, but it's an important book of heart, social responsibility and the power of one. Read it WITH your kids for great discussion opportunities.

This was full of good lessons and suspense. I read before giving to our granddaughter and it passed my scrutiny. No sexual content, no filthy language. There is disturbing things that happen, and it is sad, but I feel good giving it to our 14 year old granddaughter, and am contemplating giving a copy to our 12 year old granddaughter also. Kindness is a virtue, don't lie, good verses evil. Trust your parents. Bullying. There is a lot there. Not a light easy read. Will make children think.

The characters in this novel are real & authentic. Love, love, love the character development.

Annabelle's voice is strong & her kind and curious nature leads you into the heart of the story. I found the beginning of the book enthralling and I was unable to put the book down. However, as the story began to shift and move toward resolution I felt like the target audience was being missed. I am not sure middle grade readers will stick out the change of pace & tone.

Well-written young adult book, perfect for middle school. Though it is set in the 1930s, it has connections to current times, particularly as it relates to bullying and those who are considered different in some way. Good as a read aloud or individual.

A story written with many life lessons entwined throughout. It was refreshing to read something without four letter words as adjectives. I would recommend this book to the preteen generation as well as their parents.

I really can not write a review any better than the one done by "Delicate Flower". It is perfect. I did love this book as it is an ode to our beautiful language and how it best goes together by the author. The beauty of the learning curves developed throughout the narrative are amazing. One could most definitely see the end coming but not all of it. This is a book anyone with a depth of heart would enjoy. I highly recommend it,

Possibly 4.5 stars but I just finished via Audible and though have not yet fully processed can say that this story is quite gripping, at one point even rendering me breathless to learn what would happen next -an intensity of interest that snuck up on me- the tension is that thick and not a little bit vexing. I cringed at some accounts of what I'm calling sadism rather than bullying, somewhat surprised by the dark nature detailed in a book for middle-graders but finding, upon relief of it giving way to other intriguing aspects of story, it to be the right amount depicted to clearly capture the often unexplainable -even if (one hopes is) rare- mean and evil that can emerge in and be acted out by humans, including young humans. Lovely characters and relationships, too plus a notably refreshing respect for children by the adults. That the 11 year old protagonist is smart and tenacious as compassionate is satisfying. Still, there is a twinge of disappointment and sorrow left with me in the end, which is not consoled by recognition that there is no lack of truth shown here. "Sometimes things come out right and sometimes things don't."

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