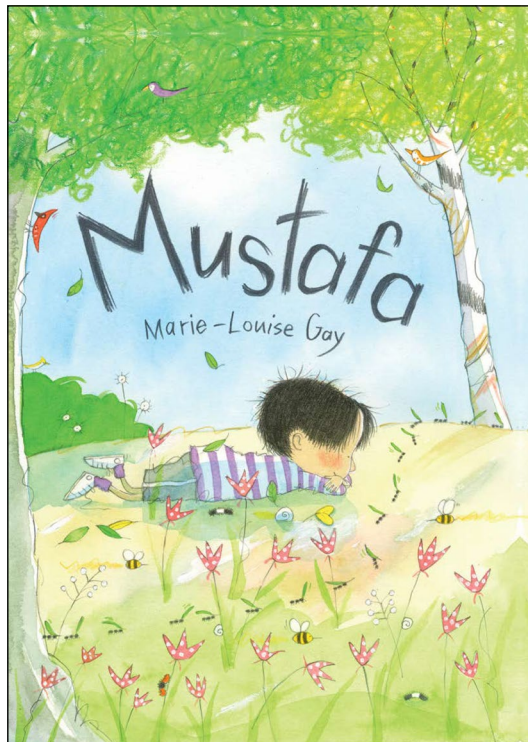




GROUNDWOOD STUDY GUIDES

Mustafa

Written and illustrated by
Marie-Louise Gay



**Young Mustafa feels invisible in his adopted home until a
“girl-with-a-cat” extends a welcoming hand.**

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Ages 4 to 8 / Grades K to 3

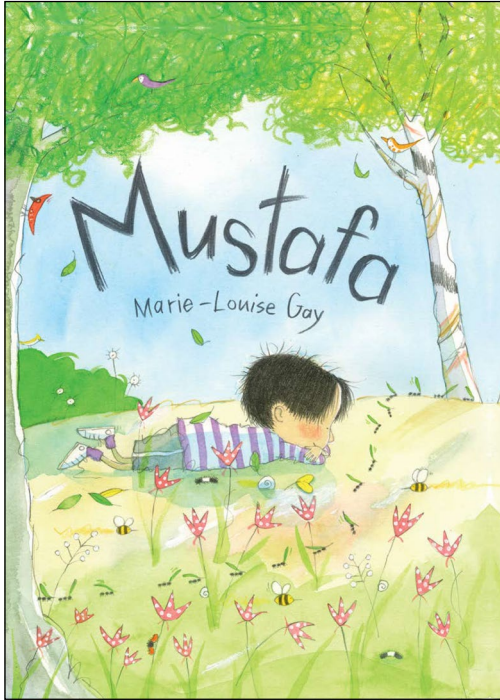
JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Emigration & Immigration

Full-color illustrations throughout / 8 x 10.5 / 40 pages

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BOOK DESCRIPTION

Mustafa and his family traveled a long way to reach their new home. Some nights Mustafa dreams about the country he used to live in, and he wakes up not knowing where he is. Then his mother takes him out to the balcony to see the moon — the same moon as in their old country. In the park, Mustafa sees ants and caterpillars and bees — they are the same, too. He encounters a “girl-with-a-cat,” who says something in a language that he can’t understand. He watches an old lady feeding birds and other children playing, but he is always looking in from the outside and he feels that he is invisible. But one day, the girl-with-the-cat beckons to him, and Mustafa begins to become part of his new world. Marie-Louise Gay’s remarkable ability to write and illustrate from the perspective of a young child is movingly exhibited in this gentle, thoughtful story about coming to feel at home in a new country.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

As a class, perform a “picture walk” through the book. Based on the illustrations, what do students think *Mustafa* will be about? Will it be funny? Sad? Serious? Can students identify the main characters? What can students tell about these characters based solely on the pictures? Record the predictions and compare them with the real story once the class has read it.

This story encompasses many themes, including friendship, compassion and empathy. What do these concepts mean? Discuss with students and have them give examples.

Ask students: Have you ever moved from one place to another? A new school, neighborhood, town, region or country? How did you feel?

VOCABULARY

While reading the book aloud to the class, have students identify unfamiliar and interesting words to create a vocabulary list. Define the words as a class using an array of strategies to determine meaning, including context, accompanying illustrations in the story and the dictionary if needed. Have students make real-life connections by using these new words in a sentence. Can students think of other words with similar meanings that could be used?



POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

SETTING THE SCENE

Mustafa is a story of a boy and his family coming to a new country. The book opens with a very cinematic sequence. As a class, look at the cover, the dedication page and the first spread. How do these pictures work together? What part of the story do they represent? How do these illustrations show the passage of time? How do these pictures set up the story? What overall impression do students get from this opening?

PICTURES AND WORDS

As a class, re-read *Mustafa* and closely examine the illustrations. Discuss how the words and pictures work together to tell a story. What information do students learn from the pictures? What information comes from the text? For example, when Mustafa first goes to the park he finds some treasures to share with his family, and the flowers remind him of his grandmother's teacups. Do we understand those details better from the pictures or the words? Review other parts of the book this same way and have students identify how the story is told. Be sure to have students cite specifics from the book (text and illustrations) to support their responses.

THINK-PAIR-SHARE — ALL ABOUT THE BOOK

Break students into pairs and have them re-tell the story to each other, identifying the beginning, the middle and the end. After they have re-told the story, have them talk about the following questions: Who are the main characters? What is the “Big Idea” of the story? What is the main problem? How does Mustafa feel at the beginning of the story? How does he feel by the end? Come together and have pairs share their insights with the class.

PICTURES IN THE DIRT

One day, while he is in the park, Mustafa draws a picture of an airplane in the dirt. He then draws the house he used to live in and other things he remembers from his old home. As a class, examine this page and identify what he has drawn. Based on his drawings, what was life like for Mustafa? What sort of experiences do students think he had? When the girl-with-the-cat, Maria, arrives, what pictures does she draw? Why do the things she draws differ from what Mustafa drew? What is the author hoping to tell the reader by having Maria draw butterflies and flowers over Mustafa's drawings of explosions and broken trees? Does it provide a preview of how this new home might help change Mustafa's view of the world?

WHAT WAS HE THINKING?

This book describes what Mustafa does, but it does not tell exactly what he is thinking. The pictures and words provide clues, but readers need to figure out his motivation for themselves. For example, when the girl-with-the-cat speaks to Mustafa, he runs away. Review these passages as a class. Why do the students think Mustafa reacted that way? Have students write or dictate a brief opinion piece discussing what they think Mustafa is thinking and feeling.

HOW DID THAT MAKE MARIA FEEL?

When he goes to the park, Mustafa meets the girl-with-the-cat, Maria. She speaks to him several times before he relaxes and becomes friends with her. As a class, review the scenes where these characters interact. In each one, Mustafa leaves. Why does he do that? How must it make Maria feel? How does she respond? Ask students to put themselves in Maria's place. How would they have responded? What did they learn from Maria's approach to Mustafa?

ANOTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

This story is told in the third person, with Mustafa as the point-of-view character. Discuss with students how other characters have different points of view. Break the class into pairs and assign each one a passage from the book. Working with an adult if necessary, have them rework this part of the story from the point of view of the other character who appears in this scene — like the lady who feeds the pigeons or the accordion player in the park. Come together as a class and read the book together. When you come to a scene you have assigned to a pair of students, have them act out their new version of the scene. Encourage them to use different voices and mannerisms for different characters.

I'M NEW HERE

While it does not dwell on his turbulent past, the story hints at the violence that drove Mustafa and his family from their old home. At the same time, it focuses on where he is now and what is going on in his life as he adjusts to his new home. Every child can relate to these experiences, and that helps make *Mustafa* an approachable way to introduce an important, contemporary issue to students. Like Mustafa, everyone has had the experience of coming to a new place. How does it feel to be a stranger and how do we make friends and become part of the community? Have students discuss how it felt for them to be the “new kid” in a group — a new town, a new neighborhood, a new school or starting an activity or sport for the first time. How were their experiences similar and different from Mustafa’s? Does the book do a good job of capturing how it feels to be the “new kid”?

YOU ARE WELCOME

After many failed attempts, Maria finally figures out how to “break the ice” with Mustafa. What can students learn from their interactions? Have students ever seen a “new kid” who had trouble fitting in? What did they do to help? Why is it sometimes hard to help out a newcomer? What are other ways students can think of to help a new member of their school or community feel welcome and included? Make a class list of these ideas and post the list in a prominent area of the school.

STELLA AND SAM AND MUSTAFA AND MARIA

Marie-Louise Gay is also the creator of the popular Stella and Sam books. Select a couple books to read as a class. Once students are familiar with these different stories by the same author, come together as a class to compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of these similar characters. Make character maps of Mustafa, Stella and Sam. How are they the same and how are they different? Do they have similar experiences? Do students think they would get along and be friends? How would Maria fit in?

AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS?

At the end of the book, Mustafa and Maria are friends. Come together as a class and discuss what kind of fun they will have now that they are friends. After the class has generated some ideas, have each student make up a new page in the story, drawing an illustration of a brand-new adventure. Students can then write or dictate a short narrative describing what the friends are doing. Work with students to strengthen their writing by making suggestions and having them revise their compositions. Gather all the illustrated pages and make a new book “Mustafa and Maria.” Hold a “read-in” where each child reads the page they created to the class. Post these on a wall in the classroom and make copies for everyone in the class to take home and share with their families.

A DEEPER VIEW

Mustafa tells the story of a family that is emigrating overseas in the hopes of finding a better life. The story remains a personal one, showing the emotions and adventures of this boy and his family. It is also a good way to humanize immigrants, a group of people who are often viewed as strange or different. Background information about the immigrant experience will help students make connections with the events in the book and encourage them to explore and ask questions. Team up with a social studies teacher or use other resources available in the community to develop a unit to educate students about the real-world issues this story addresses.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Author's Website — Learn more about Marie-Louise Gay and her books here:
<http://marielouisegay.com/>

Teaching Children About Refugees:
<https://therefugeecenter.org/blog/teaching-children-refugees/>

NAEYC Welcoming Refugee Children into Early Childhood Classrooms:
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/aug2017/welcoming-refugee-children-into-classrooms>



KINDERGARTEN

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

Key Ideas and Details

- With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.
- With prompting and support, identify characters, settings and major events in a story.

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

- Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
- With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).
- With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.

WRITING STANDARDS

Text Types and Purposes

- Use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favourite book is . . .).
- Use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred and provide a reaction to what happened.

WRITING STANDARDS CONTINUED

Production and Distribution of Writing

With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

Comprehension and Collaboration

Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

- a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).
- b. Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges.

Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.



LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.

- a. Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing duck is a bird and learning the verb to duck).
- b. Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., -ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word.

With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- a. Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
- b. Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms).
- c. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colourful).
- d. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., walk, march, strut, prance) by acting out the meanings.

GRADE 1

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

Key Ideas and Details

- Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- Describe characters, settings and major events in a story, using key details.
- Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting or events.
- Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.

WRITING STANDARDS GRADE

Text Types and Purposes

- Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion and provide some sense of closure.
- Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order and provide some sense of closure.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

Comprehension and Collaboration

Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

- a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- b. Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.
- c. Ask questions to clear up any confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.

Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

- a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- b. Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word.
- c. Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., look) and their inflectional forms (e.g., looks, looked, looking).



LANGUAGE STANDARDS CONTINUED

With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- a. Sort words into categories (e.g., colours, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.
- b. Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes).
- c. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy).
- d. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., large, gigantic) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings.



GRADE 2

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

Key Ideas and Details

- Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
- Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson or moral.
- Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.
- Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.
- Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

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

WRITING STANDARDS

Text Types and Purposes

- Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons and provide a concluding statement or section.
- Write narratives in which they recount a well elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order and provide a sense of closure.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

Comprehension and Collaboration

Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

- a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- b. Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.
- c. Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.

Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

- a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., happy/unhappy, tell/retell).
- c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional).
- d. Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).
- e. Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases.

Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings

- a. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).
- b. Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).

GRADE 3

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

Key Ideas and Details

- Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- Recount stories, including fables, folktales and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Craft and Structure

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.
- Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
- Compare and contrast the themes, settings and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).

WRITING STANDARDS

Text Types and Purposes

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

- a. Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
- b. Provide reasons that support the opinion.
- c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, for example) to connect opinion and reasons.
- d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details and clear event sequences:

- a. Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
- c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.
- d. Provide a sense of closure.

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising and editing.

Range of Writing

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

Comprehension and Collaboration

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- c. Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic and link their comments to the remarks of others.
- d. Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat).
- c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion).
- d. Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- a. Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps).
- b. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are friendly or helpful).
- c. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered).

AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR BIOGRAPHY



Marie-Louise Gay is an internationally acclaimed children's book creator. She has won two Governor General's Literary Awards, the Vicky Metcalf Award for Children's Literature and the Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award. She has also been nominated for the prestigious Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award and the Hans Christian Andersen Award. Her popular Stella and Sam series has been translated into more than fifteen languages and is loved by children all over the world. She lives in Montreal, Quebec.