



Ghost Wolf

Karleen Bradford
illustrated by Allan Cormack
and Deborah Drew-Brook

ISBN: 978-1-55143-341-7

About the Book

Matt's father may have loved this camp when he was a boy, but Matt certainly doesn't. He's never been good at outdoor stuff and is an easy target for the camp bully. Eventually, however, he begins to enjoy himself, but then he makes a bad mistake. He leaves his lifejacket back at the last portage and doesn't remember it until the middle of the night. His next mistake is to think he can go and retrieve it and return to camp before morning. When his flashlight dies and he finds himself lost in the woods in the dark, he thinks nothing worse can happen—until he hears a wolf howl. The wolf seems to want him to follow it, however, and it takes all of Matt's courage to do so. Then he finds the wolf's cub, a half-wolf, half-dog pup whose mother is lying dead beside it. He rescues the pup and in return the wolf guides him back to camp. Could this be the same wolf that his father released from a trap years before? A wolf returning a favor?

About the Author

Karleen Bradford is the award-winning author of twenty-two books for children and young adults. She loves camping and loves wolves, although she has never been fortunate enough to see one in the wild.

About the Writing

Karleen wanted to write about a young boy who is thrust into an environment that is totally strange to him, about his initial fears and dismay, and about his finding the courage to explore these new activities, find enjoyment in them and make friends. She is also dismayed by the bad image of wolves often portrayed in books and in the media, and she wanted to write a story with a wolf as a heroic character, rather than a villain. Research was easy. She used her own experiences as camper and counselor, and read up all that she could about wolves.

Teaching Ideas—Curriculum Connections**Prereading Ideas**

It is scary to face new situations, but is it worth it to learn new skills and find new ways to have fun?

Should a person think carefully about what might happen when tempted to do something they know they really shouldn't? Why are rules important?

What would have happened if Matt had refused to take part in the camp life and not made an effort to make friends?

Classroom Discussion Questions

Are wolves really bad animals? How do humans affect the lives of wild animals when people go into the animals' territory? Is it a good thing to put wild animals in zoos?

Why do some people tease others? Is this really a kind of bullying? What can you do about it?

Why should you think carefully before you break a rule? Are there good reasons for rules?

How important is it to be friends with someone who needs your help, even if you get teased or bullied too?

How important is it to keep learning new things?

Suggested Activities

Have students do a project on wolves and find out as much as they can about the animals. They could also make a list of other animals and birds that are nocturnal, such as the owl that frightened Matt.

Students could dramatize and act out chapter three, and if they wanted to go further, another student or students could tell Matt's dad's story in chapter four.

Students could make a chart of the night sky and identify some of the major stars.

Students could make a map of the portage from one lake to another, the campsite and the path through the woods where Matt got lost.

Students could find out about portages and how they were used by the original First Nations people, as well as the explorers and voyageurs who followed them.

Other Titles and Websites of Interest

<http://www.wolfpark.org/wolfsounds.html>

Shake My Sillies Out by Raffi (Crown Books for Young Readers)

Owl Moon by Jane Yolen (Scholastic or Philomel Books)

Animals in the Forest by Elizabeth de Lambilly-Bresson (Gareth Stevens Publishing)

How to Draw Forest Animals by Barbara Soloff Levy (Dover Publications)

Camp Out!: The Ultimate Kids' Guide by Lynn Brunelle (Workman Publishing Company)

Other Books by the Author from Orca Book Publishers

You Can't Rush a Cat

Awards and Reviews

Resource Links Best of 2006

Canadian Toy Testing Council's Great Books selection

CCBC Our Choice starred review

"This is an exciting story that boys will love. Matt's apprehensions about summer camp are fears with which all children can identify. His need to belong to his group and his growing confidence as he feels accepted on his own terms make Matt an underdog character that the reader wants to see succeed. Recommended." —*CM Magazine*

"This brief story is filled with a sense of supernatural. The soft, eerie charcoal sketches of illustrators Allan Cormack and Deborah Drew-Brook intensify this mystical mood. *Ghost Wolf* would make an excellent junior grades novel study and is also a wonderful story for reading aloud to late primary/early junior grades." —*Resource Links*