

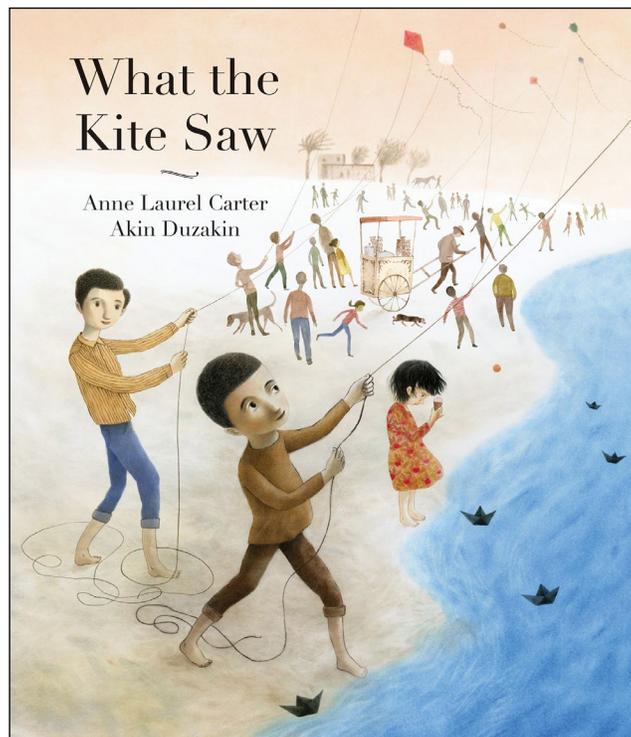


# GROUNDWOOD STUDY GUIDES

## What the Kite Saw

*Written by Anne Laurel Carter*

*Illustrated by Akin Duzakin*



**In this memorable story, a young boy finds solace flying his kite from the rooftop after soldiers take his father and brother away.**

### **CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

Ages 4 to 8 / Grades K to 3

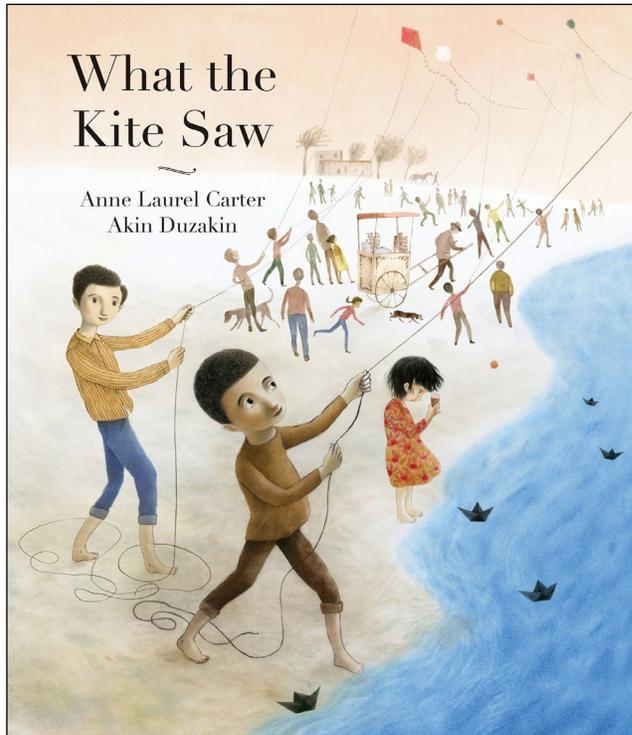
JUVENILE FICTION / War & Military / Language / The Arts

Full-color illustrations / 8.5 x 10 / 32 pages

Hardcover with jacket / \$18.95 / 978-1-77306-243-3

Ebook / \$16.95 / 978-1-77306-244-0

[groundwoodbooks.com](http://groundwoodbooks.com)



## BOOK DESCRIPTION

Without his father and brother, the young boy's life is turned upside down. He and his family have to stay inside, along with everyone else in town. At suppertime, he can't stop looking at the two empty places at the table and his sister can't stop crying. The boy looks out the window and is chilled to see a tank's spotlight searching the park where he plays with his friends. He hears shouts and gunshots and catches sight of someone running in the street — if only they could fly away, he thinks.

Each day the curfew is lifted briefly, and the boy goes to the park to see his friends. One day, inspired by the wind in the trees, he has an idea. Back at home he makes a kite, and that night he flies it from his rooftop, imagining what it can see.

In this moving story from Anne Laurel Carter, with haunting illustrations by Akin Duzakin, a young boy finds strength through his creativity and imagination.

## PRE-READING QUESTIONS

Consider the title of this book. What do you think this book will be about? What do you think the kite will see? Do you think this will be a happy or sad book? Why?

Below are ten key words from the book. Draw the first picture that comes to mind for each word. If there is a word you don't know, try to guess or use a dictionary.

If completing this exercise in a class, use these words to play Pictionary. Split the class into teams. Each team member takes a turn coming to the board. They are told a word and must draw it on the board while the rest of the class guesses what it is, earning points for their team.

- |          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| Curfew   | Loudspeaker |
| Soldiers | Ball        |
| Tank     | Gun         |
| Curtains | Peek        |
| Park     | Kite        |



## POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

### BASIC QUESTIONS

What happens in this story? What is the main problem the main character and his family face? How do they attempt to address or resolve that problem? What kind of feeling(s) does the book end on? What is your favorite part of the story, and why?

### FLY A KITE

What does the kite mean to you in this story? How did flying a kite make the main character and those around him feel? Why do you think it was important for them to fly kites?

Make a simple kite out of paper or other materials by looking up instructions online. When you are finished, and after any wet materials have had a chance to dry, take the kite outside to fly it. You may need to wait for a windy day for this to work! If you want, you can let go of your kite to see what happens.

Afterwards, draw a picture about what your kite may have seen while it was in the air.

### APT ADJECTIVES

Pick five adjectives that describe the book or characters in it and explain how each of them applies.



## SPEED DISCUSSION

Write the following questions on the board and give students a few minutes to think silently about how they would answer them in a conversation:

1. What confused you about this story?
2. What surprised you about this story?
3. What inspired you in this story?
4. What bothered you about this story?
5. What is something from your own life that this story reminded you of?

Then, ask students to choose a partner. Explain that every round will last five minutes (or a similar time frame that is long enough to briefly discuss one question but fast enough to give students a sense of urgency or excitement). At the start of each round, announce which question they should discuss (in a random order). When five minutes have passed, make a sound and instruct students to rotate to a new partner before you announce the next question. The objective is to give each partner a chance to share their thoughts briefly in each round and keep the discussion moving.

## MOVIE REVIEW

Pretend that you have seen a movie based on this book. Write a review of that movie. Was it enjoyable or not? Why? What kinds of choices were made when turning the book into a film? Were there special effects? Music? Who were the actors?

Alternatively, pretend you are a director in charge of turning this book into a film. Write an explanation of how you would do this, using the questions above as guides.



## THE PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

At the end of the book, the author explains that *What the Kite Saw* was inspired by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one of the world's most intractable (or long lasting) conflicts today. Dig deeper on the internet about how this conflict started and how it continues to affect people's lives in the Middle East. Specifically, try to find instances of Palestinian children flying kites. Why do you think they do this?

The author also explains that while inspired by this particular instance, the events that occur in this book could happen anywhere “children love to fly kites and are threatened by war.” Where else in the world could this story take place? Could it ever happen where you live?

## WAR AND PEACE

When there are wars, it is easy for people to feel that they are powerless and have no control over the danger that threatens their lives. In this story, a courageous child mobilizes a group of friends to fly kites. Why was this important? How can doing something like flying kites be an act of resistance? What are the children resisting? What words would you use to describe their actions?

What are situations in your own life that make you feel small, powerless, sad or helpless? What is something small and inspiring you can do to remind yourself and others that there is reason to hope?

## ILLUSTRATIONS

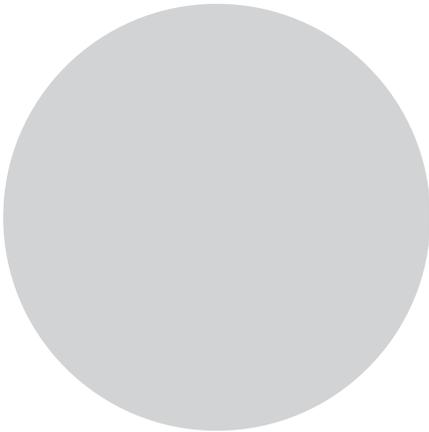
How would you describe the illustrations in this book? What qualities do all the illustrations have in common? What scenes are unique from others?

Choose your favorite illustration from the book and write a paragraph about why you chose it and how the illustration helps convey the events of the book.

## AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR BIOGRAPHIES



**Anne Laurel Carter** has a Master of Fine Arts in Writing for Children and Young Adults from Vermont College of Fine Arts. She has published over twenty books, including *The Shepherd's Granddaughter*, winner of the CLA Book of the Year for Children Award and the Society of School Librarians International Best Book Award. It was also named a Jane Addams Children's Book Award Honor Book and a USBBY Outstanding International Book. Anne's picture books include *Rocky Waters*, illustrated by Marianne Dumas, and *Under a Prairie Sky*, illustrated by Alan and Lea Daniel, winner of the Mr. Christie's Book Award.



**Akin Duzakin** is an illustrator and author who studied industrial design in Turkey before moving to Norway where he majored in visual communication at Oslo's National Academy of Craft and Art Industry. Since then, Duzakin has illustrated fifty children's books. He is passionately interested in the picture-book genre and its ability to engage the whole family. He has received a number of awards for his work, including a Special Mention for the BolognaRagazzi Award for the original Norwegian edition of *Why Am I Here?* by Constance Ørbeck-Nilssen. He has been nominated twice for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.