

Elsie's lost her  
bird! Can you help  
her find him?

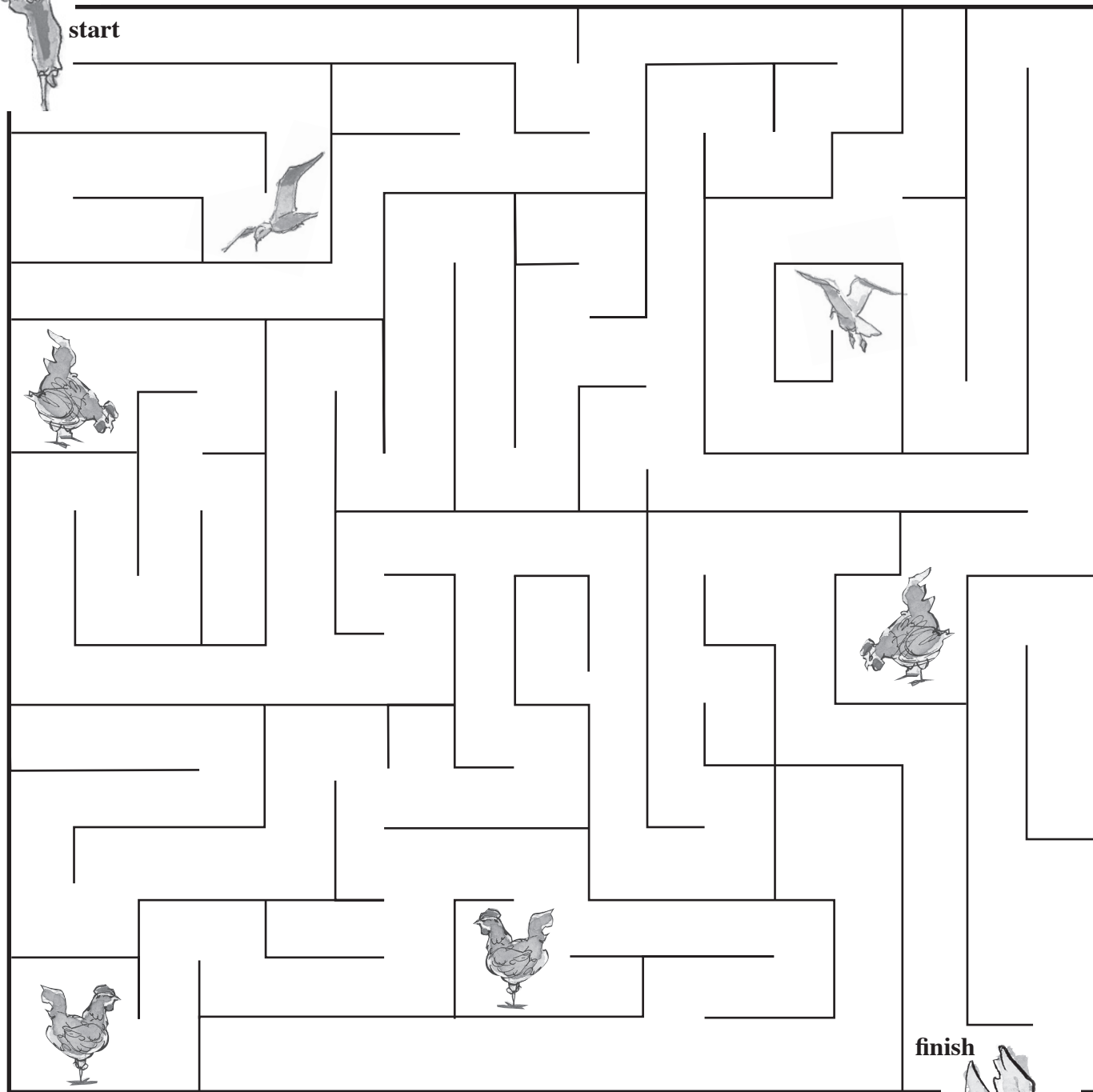
Help Elsie find her way  
through the Nebraskan prairie  
grass and back to Timmy Tune.

*Elsie's Bird*  
by Jane Yolen  
illustrated by David Small  
Philomel Books

A division of Penguin Young Readers Group  
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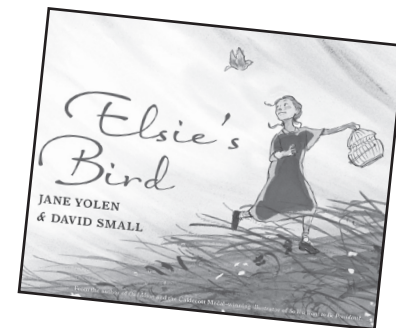


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# About Elsie's Bird

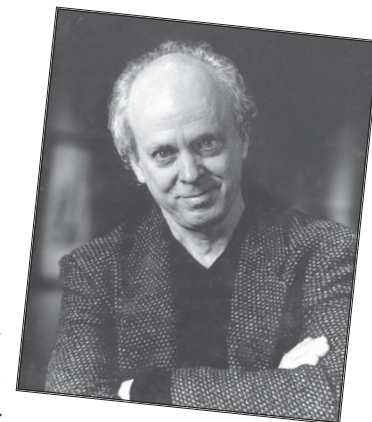
Elsie is a city girl. She loves the noise of the cobbled streets of Boston, Massachusetts. But when her mother dies and her father moves them to the faraway prairies of Nebraska, Elsie hears only the silence, and she feels alone in the wide sea of grass. Her only comfort is her canary, Timmy Tune. His songs fill her quiet days. But when Timmy flies out the window, Elsie is forced to run after him into the tall grass where she's finally able to hear the voice of the prairie—the sweet sounds of birds and wind and grass—and she begins to feel at home.



## Learn more about the Author and Illustrator

**Jane Yolen**, author of hundreds of well-loved books for children of every age, went to the American prairie to discover this powerful story of a girl who, following her beloved canary, comes to love her Nebraska world. But the idea for the story came from her husband, David Stemple, who, over his lifetime, traveled to many faraway places in the world, listening to and understanding birds. Born and raised in New York City, Jane Yolen now lives in Hatfield, Massachusetts and St. Andrews, Scotland.

**David Small** was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, where he was known in school as “the kid who could draw good.” He has illustrated over forty picture books, including the Caldecott Medal-winning *So You Want To Be President?* and the Caldecott Honor- and Christopher Medal-winning *The Gardener*, which was written by his wife, Sarah Stewart. David and his wife live on the edge of a prairie in southwest Michigan, on the banks of the St. Joseph River.



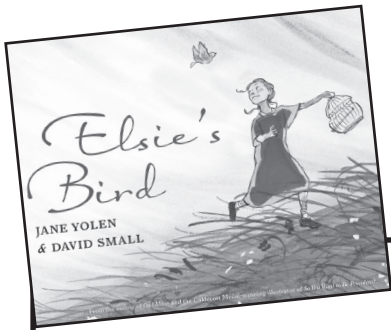
## Story Time Read Aloud Discussion Questions

- Boston is described as a busy place with lots of noise. What kinds of sounds does Elsie hear in her Boston home? Are they anything like the sounds you hear where you live?
- With so many differences between Boston and the Nebraskan prairie, it's no wonder Elsie felt out of place. Compare and contrast the city and the country. Where would you rather live?
- With Timmy Tune's help, Elsie is able to appreciate her new home. What lesson do you think Elsie learns at the end?
- When Elsie runs back to her father, she doesn't put Timmy Tune back in his cage. Why do you think it was important for her to let the bird go?
- It's always a difficult thing to release the things we care about most. What would you have done in Elsie's place? Would you have kept Timmy? Why or why not?



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## Draw YOUR Favorite Pet

Timmy Tune is not just Elsie's pet, he's her best friend. Draw a picture of the animal you'd like as your best friend. Don't forget to write his or her name on the line below!

My Pet's name: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Letter to a Friend

When Elsie and her father moved to Nebraska, Elsie had to leave all her Boston friends behind. Imagine you moved to a new state, far away from where you grew up. Write a letter to your friends and tell them all about your new home. Don't forget the details!

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

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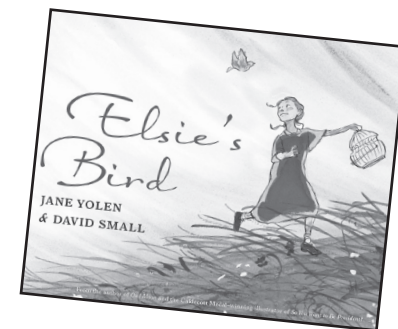
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Your friend,

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P.S. \_\_\_\_\_



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