



What Can a Small Bird Be?



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY THE
CHARACTER EDUCATION TEEN RESIDENCY PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

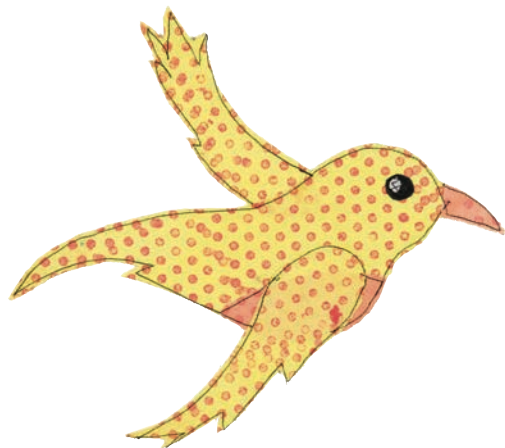
WITH WRITER SUSIE WILDE AND ARTIST MARGUERITE JAY GIGNOUX

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

NORTH CAROLINA MUSEUM OF ART



CouRaGe



There once was a curious bird who wondered,
What can a small bird be?

He flapped his wings and caught a soft breeze through a forest until he came to the edge of a riverbank to see what he could learn.

On the riverbank stood an ancient tortoise wearing an enormous golden straw hat. The tortoise, hunched in his shell, poked his head out to take timid looks at the river. "For years I've wanted to get to the other side."

"Why don't you use that beautiful hat of yours as a raft?" Bird asked.

"I'm too slow, and the currents are too fast. What if I tip over or fall out?"





"Then you can swim." Bird untied Tortoise's hat and held it in the water. Ever so carefully Tortoise placed one short, stubby leg inside, but when he lifted the other, a cackling of crows startled him.

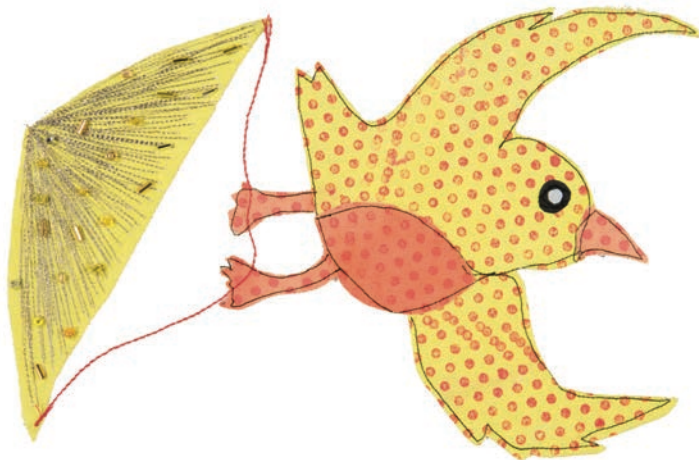
"You foolish old tortoise!" cawed one.

"You can't swim," sneered another. The third just laughed.

Tortoise's voice trembled. "I c-c-can't do it."

Bird pointed. "There are sweet wildflowers and a welcoming sun over there. Don't let those bullies stop you."

"I won't," said Tortoise. "Not this time." Without hesitation he climbed into the hat and pushed off.



As Tortoise neared the opposite bank, a terrible whirlpool snatched the hat from beneath him. Tortoise flailed his legs and surfaced with a mouth full of water.

“Swim, Tortoise!
You can do it!”

Bird called as he rushed to rescue Tortoise’s hat.

When Tortoise looked at the bank, he realized it was getting closer. He cut across the currents until he felt sand between his claws.

Bird greeted Tortoise as he came ashore.
“You were so brave! I knew you could do it!”

“I sure showed those crows, didn’t I?”
Tortoise chuckled.

“And you showed yourself, too.”
Bird winked and placed the hat back
on Tortoise’s shell. 🐉





AFTERWORD

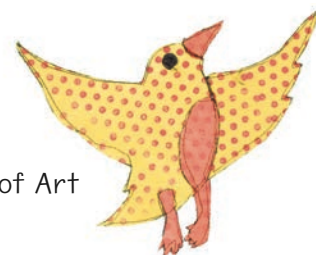
What do you get when you bring twenty-four talented teenagers and their teachers from all over North Carolina, drop them off in an art museum for three days, and challenge them to create a book that will teach character education to young children? The answer is *What Can a Small Bird Be?*, a delightful story about a little yellow bird whose adventures lead him to distant lands, where he lends a helping hand to a wonderful cast of animal friends.


Thanks to funding from the North Carolina General Assembly to support character education in K–12 public schools, the ELA section of the Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Museum of Art had the immense privilege of hosting these creative young people and their dedicated teachers. Under the inspired leadership of artist Peg Gignoux and writer Susie Wilde, we watched the students transform their ideas into images and words that tell the story of what it means to be a good person.

On behalf of our two institutions, we want to thank the school systems that allowed their students and faculty to participate in the Character Education Teen Residency. They represented your schools and communities—and indeed, our state—with the traits they worked so hard to present: courage, kindness, respect, good judgment, integrity, responsibility, self-discipline, and perseverance.

English Language Arts Section
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Education Department
North Carolina Museum of Art





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Written and Illustrated by the Character Education Teen Residency Project Participants
with writer Susie Wilde and textile artist Marguerite Jay Gignoux

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Character Education Teen Residency Writers, Artists, and Educators

TEAM COURAGE – New Hanover High School

Teacher: Sara Scott

Student Artist: Brent Koehler

Student Writer: Lily Sala

TEAM GOOD JUDGMENT– Louisburg High School

Teacher: Dana Church

Student Artist: Andrew Duke

Student Writer: Mia Storey

TEAM INTEGRITY – E.E. Smith High School

Teacher: Jason Edwards

Student Artist: Ivana Woodard

Student Writer: Tyree Parker

TEAM KINDNESS – North Stokes High School

Teacher: Kimberly Anderson

Student Artist: Lydia Richardson

Student Writer: Laresa Roberts

TEAM RESPECT – New Technology High School @ Garinger

Teacher: Carolyn Crutcher

Student Artist: Moe Win

Student Writer: Ivan Gaddy

TEAM RESPONSIBILITY – Caldwell Career Center

Teacher: Tonia Olson

Student Artist: Jefferson Canaveral

Student Writer: Hayley Townsend

TEAM DISCIPLINE – Freedom High School

Teacher: Donny Palmgren

Student Artist: David Fleming

Student Writer: Michael Tyson

TEAM PERSEVERANCE – Swain County High School

Teacher: Dora May

Student Artist: Stevie Loftis

Student Writer: Jonah Winchester

