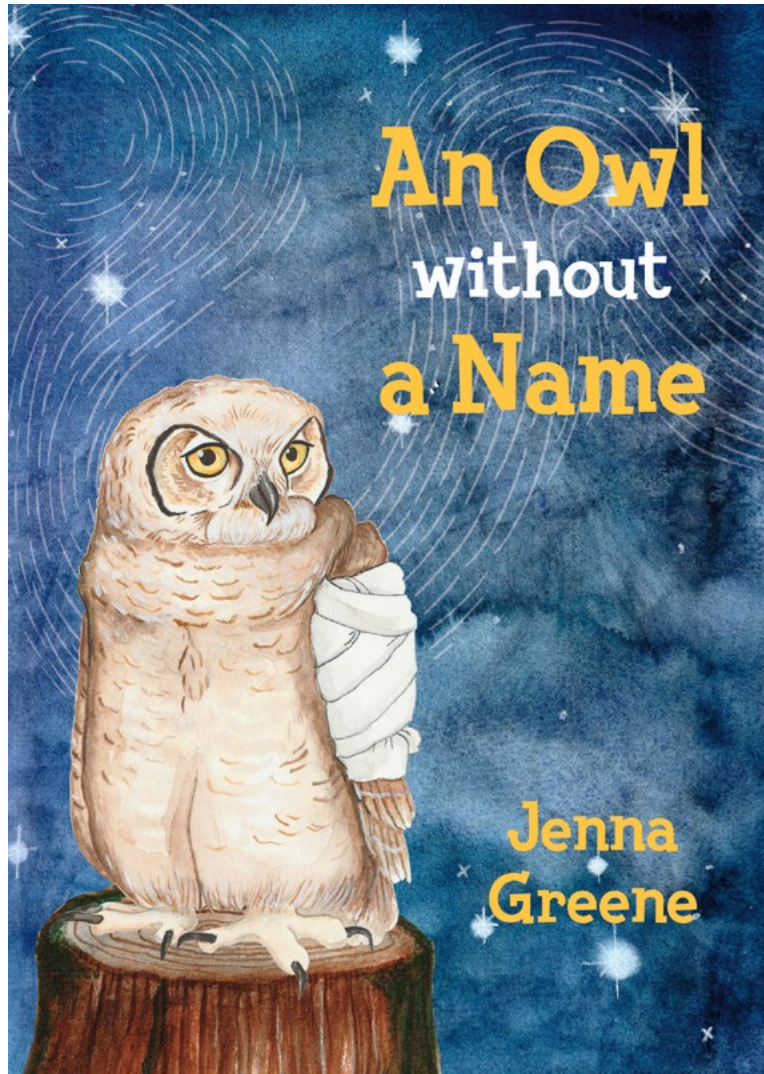


# Teacher's Guide

## *An Owl without a Name* by Jenna Greene



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Written and developed by Jenna Greene & Monica Miller.  
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## ABOUT THE BOOK

When a young Great Horned Owl wakes up to find himself on the ground with a broken wing, he can't figure out where he is, how he got there, or how to get back to the tree where he lives with his parents and older sister. Is this a test, to see if he's ready to leave the nest? Is he being punished for something? Before he knows what's happening, he's whisked away to a rescue centre, where he meets other owls who are also recovering from injuries before they can be released back into the wild.

Lonely, confused, and very self-conscious of the fact that he doesn't have a name, the young owl slowly adapts to his new surroundings. He makes friends, finds his courage, heals from his injury, and realizes that identity is about more than a name that is given to you. It's about the character that you develop, especially when you face hard times. Heartwarming, whimsical, and inspirational, *An Owl without a Name* is an uplifting tale for young readers.

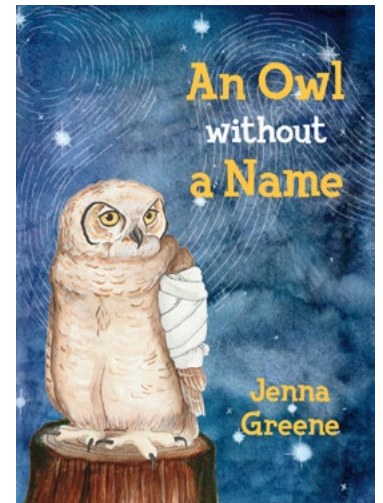


photo credit: Tanya Plonka

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**JENNA GREENE** is an author of YA and children's fiction, best known for the award-winning Reborn Marks series, and co-host of the Jot Notes podcast, where she interviews authors from all over the world. When not writing or podcasting, she can be found in the classroom, teaching Grades 1 and 2.

For more information, visit [jennagreene.ca](http://jennagreene.ca).

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**KIMIKO FRASER** is an illustrator and historian-in-training. She grew up constantly making—drawing, painting, knitting, sculpting, bookbinding, etc.—and has never learned how to stop. She is the illustrator of *Her Courage Rises: 50 Trailblazing Women of British Columbia and the Yukon* and the Trailblazing Canadians series. She holds a bachelor of arts (honours History, major Visual Arts) from the University of Victoria. She works with many mediums to create her illustrations, including watercolour, digital, ink, and tea. Most of her work is inspired by her interest in plants, history, and folktales.



photo credit: J. King York

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

### AGE / GRADE SUITABILITY

- Ages 5–12
- Kindergarten–Grade 6
- Themes of identity, loss, adventure, self-discovery, compassion, family, change, friendship, forgiveness, self-awareness, innocence, wildlife rescue, and animal welfare

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- Use a variety of comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading, listening, or viewing to deepen understanding of text
- Exchange ideas and perspectives
- Recognize the importance of story in personal, family, and community identity
- Recognize the structure and elements of story
- Identify, organize, and present ideas in a variety of forms
- Apply a variety of thinking skills to gain meaning from texts

### SCIENCE

- Discover basic needs and adaptations of animals.
- Life cycles; similarities and differences between offspring and parent
- Experience and interpret the local environment
- Evaluate appropriate data to collect to answer research questions

### ART

- Inquiry through purposeful play
- Explore relationships between science and the arts

### SOCIAL STUDIES

- Distinguish continuity and change, similarities and differences
- Gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions

## BEFORE BEGINNING: THE ORIGIN STORY

### FROM THE AUTHOR, JENNA GREENE:

“In June of 2022, my husband and daughter located an owl stuck at the base of a wire fence behind our house, at the back edge of our property. We could tell the animal was hurt and upset. We gave it space but kept an eye on it, then contacted the Alberta Birds of Prey Centre, which is 30 kilometres from our house and a place our family visits regularly.

“A nice man named Colin came and helped detangle the owl from our fence. He explained that it was a male Great Horned Owl who was probably just a few months old, and explained what may have happened to him. Then he took the owl, who my daughter named Snowy, to the centre for care.

“We visited the owl a few weeks later, where he was in a habitat with others his age. We were told if he was healthy enough, he’d be released back into the wild.”



## INITIAL EXPLORATIONS

- Ask students to draw what an owl looks like. Encourage them to include the location or environment where it might live (its habitat). This could be an opportunity to further discuss different owl species and which owls are native to your bioregion.
- Show students several photos of different birds (e.g., ducks, geese, gulls, songbirds, raptors). Have students observe and identify similar characteristics among these birds. This can be incorporated into discussing adaptations, which are behavioural or physical traits that help animals survive in their natural habitat.
- Discuss some real-life events (experienced by students) that might inspire a story.
- Brainstorm what “identity” means. What factors influence an individual’s identity? What defines *your* identity? For older students, this could involve a discussion of social responsibility and how an individual’s identity is impacted and affected by their society or community.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you know about your name? Are you named after someone or does your name have a special meaning? If you could change your name, what would you change it to, and why?
2. The owl is away from his tree home. Have you ever been away from home? How far did you travel and who did you go with? What feelings did you have before travelling compared to during and after the trip?
3. The owl is injured at the beginning of the story. Have you ever hurt yourself? How did it feel? What helped you feel better?
4. This story takes place at the Alberta Birds of Prey Centre. What can you find out about this place? What is its purpose?
5. There are many types of birds of prey: owls, hawks, falcons, eagles. Do you have a favourite? Which one would you like to know more about?
6. A person is much more than a name. So, how do we know who we are?  
**SUGGESTION:** Students can draw a web or make a list of things they like to do (e.g., collect coins, take dance lessons, karaoke, play ringette, etc.).
7. Have you ever had someone treat you poorly? What happened? How did you get over this hurt and forgive them?
8. What traits do you look for in a friend? What traits make you a good friend?
9. **TASK:** Learn a new skill or try something new (e.g., weaving, pottery, sign language, skating, skipping rope, etc.). How did it go?

## ACTIVITY: BIRDS OF PREY

Have each student pick a bird of prey for a research project. They will compile information and original artwork to present, display, and/or submit.

Have students include at least one drawing of their bird species. For older students, ask them to label the anatomical features of the bird.

### Include information about:

- Habitat: Where does it live? How does it live?
- Diet: What does it eat?
- Physical characteristics: What does it look like? What noises or calls does it make?
- Behaviour: How does it hunt? Does it migrate? What else does it do?

### For older students, these topics can be expanded to also look at:

- Taxonomy
- Life cycle
- Anatomy
- Mating behaviour
- Human impact (climate, habitat, etc.)

### Common names of different birds of prey:

- |            |            |                 |
|------------|------------|-----------------|
| • Buzzards | • Hawks    | • Owls          |
| • Eagles   | • Kestrels | • Secretarybird |
| • Falcons  | • Kites    | • Seriemas      |
| • Harriers | • Osprey   | • Vultures      |

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Visit a bird of prey centre or raptor rescue centre.
- Go bird-watching as a class—there may be a local nature centre or habitat restoration group offering field trips in your area. Before the trip, brainstorm what types of birds you think you will see (predictions). During the outing, record what birds you spot—sometimes working in pairs or small groups can be helpful. Afterward, compare your observations with your predictions from before the trip.
- Dissect an owl pellet—you may be able to order these from your local raptor rescue centre.
- Draw your own owl! The Audubon Society offers an owl drawing tutorial with free printable worksheets: <https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids#week2>.

## ACTIVITY: PARTS OF THE BIRD

*This sheet can be printed out for students to work individually or in groups.*

Identify the body parts of this Great Horned Owl



beak/bill

breast

chin

eyes

feathers

head

horns (plumicorns)

tail

talons

wings