



# ***A House That Once Was***

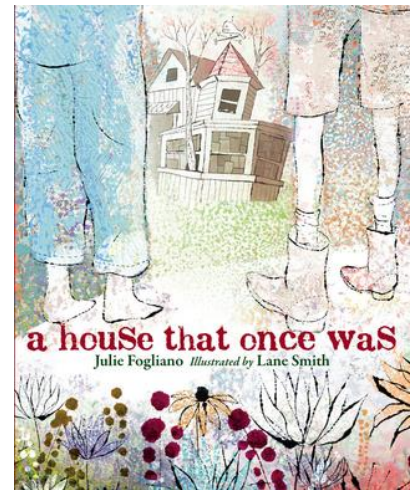
Written by Julie Fogliano

Illustrated by Lane Smith

Grades 1-5

Date of Publication: 2018

ISBN: 978-1-62672-314-6



## **Discussion Questions**

### **Before Reading**

- Look closely at the house. Do you think someone lives there? Why or why not?
- What do you think the title means? What is a house that once was?

### **During Reading**

- Why is the path to the house covered in weeds? Who lives in the house now? Why do you think these creatures live there?
- Does the house that once was make you feel a particular way? Is it a place you'd like to visit? Why or why not?
- What can we learn about the people who once lived in the house by looking at the things they left behind? Who do you think might have lived in the home, based on the clues the children discover?
- Why do you think the family left the house? Where might they have gone instead?

### **After Reading**

- Do you think the house that once was could still be a home?
- Why are some buildings taken care of, and others not? Is there a building in your neighborhood that no one uses anymore? What do you think that is?
- If you were to leave your house, what stories do you think your home would tell about you and your family?



**LOS ANGELES  
CONSERVANCY**

## Suggested Vocabulary Words

**Creaking:** making a high-pitched sound when an object is being moved

**Leaning:** to move in a sideways position

**Peeling:** remove outer cover

**Portrait:** a painting, drawing, or photograph of a person

**Wandering:** traveling without a plan; exploring

**Winding:** to move in a twisting path

## Activity Ideas

### The House I Live In

- Instruct students to draw one room in their home, or in a building or place they are familiar with. Encourage them to include specific items that are in it, such as furniture, clothes, books, toys, flowers, pictures, etc.
- Split the class into pairs or small groups. Have the students show their drawings to their partner or the other students. Instruct the group to guess what they can learn about the student—what they like, who their other family members might be, what the space feels like--by looking at their classmates' drawings.

### Community Walk

- Research a few historic buildings in the neighborhood. Plan a visit to one or more. Provide students with the following questions and encourage them to make observations of their own:
  - o Write down three things you see.
  - o Write down two things you hear.
  - o Write down one thing you can touch or feel.
  - o What is one thing you learned about a person in relation to this building from visiting it??
- Following the field trip, put three large post-its or poster boards around the classroom. Place one of the three symbols at the top.



- Instruct students to write down their observations on the corresponding post-it.
- Lead a discussion about the observations they made and the information they learned. Ask students what is important about the building they visited, and what might be lost if it were torn down or abandoned. How does the building tell the story of the people who use it?

