

READ★PRAY★WONDER★PLAY

A GUIDE TO SHARING STORIES WITH CHILDREN

I Love You, Blue

By Barroux

With sparse words yet large sweeping pictures, this story shows the friendship of a young sailor and a whale named Blue. While the relationship is founded on helping one another, there are other themes that emerge as well. A dark storm appears, and the sailor is tossed overboard. This may bring up feelings of fear, especially in younger children. Later the sailor discovers that Blue is suffering from swallowing plastic bags that have been discarded in the ocean. By engaging with this story, children of all ages can learn more about taking care of the earth, our waters, and our sea life.

Before reading the story together, look at the cover and wonder what this book might be about. Imagine together what it might be like and feel like to be the sailor on the blue ocean. Wonder to whom or what "Blue" refers.



★ ★ WONDER TOGETHER ★ ★

- The story begins with a beautiful, calm ocean but quickly turns into a dark storm. How do you think the sailor feels? What do you think "mayday" means? Who shows up for you when you are afraid?
- How does the friendship form between the sailor and the whale? What do you and your friends do to help one another?
- What does the sailor discover when they go to help Blue? How does it make you feel to see that Blue has swallowed all those plastic bags?
- Taking care of the creatures that we share the earth and the waters with is an important part of being human. What are some ways that you take care of the earth and the creatures with which we share it?

★ ★ EXPLORE THE STORY ★ ★

- Name things and/or draw pictures of items you like that are blue.
- Learn what "mayday" means and its history as well as other words or signals used to call for help.
- Talk together about ways you can help a friend. Choose one and do it.
- *With older children:* Research the pros and cons of paper and plastic shopping bags. Make an informed decision together for your household. Consider using reuseable shopping bags when you can. Come up with a system to remind one another to use your reuseable bags.
- Do an internet search for "reusing plastic bags" and implement some ideas in your home.
- Do an internet search for "plastics and the ocean for children" and learn about the effects plastics have on marine life.

PRAY

Creator God, thank you for giving us such an amazing world with earth and waters and creatures of all shapes and sizes to share it with. Help us love our fellow creatures by caring for them and being good caretakers of your creation. Amen.



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Habits are routines or actions that we do regularly, consciously or unconsciously. Helping your child develop positive habits is a key role in parenting. Parents and caregivers are role models when it comes to developing habits. Supporting good habits requires both motivation and discipline.

The story of the sailor and Blue can help children build positive habits around how they care for the earth. From the very beginning of the story of God's creation of the earth and all that is in it, we learn how pleased God is with all there is—the waters, the land, the sea life, the birds in the air, and the animals on land. God entrusted people with the care of creation. We still have that mandate and the earth and its creatures are in need. Creating good earth care habits with your children can have a positive impact not only on them, but on the world as well.

The sailor learned that Blue, the whale, was in danger from plastic bags. People use and discard plastic bags and other trash that eventually makes its way into the ocean where marine animals can ingest them or be trapped by them. At the end of the book, the author provides several ways you can learn more about protecting our oceans, particularly from plastics, as well as organizations that are working to protect whales and other sea life. Explore these websites together. Have a conversation about what action steps your family can take to reduce plastic pollution.

Marine animals are not the only creatures that are endangered. Together, do an internet search for "endangered animals for kids." Read and/or watch videos about endangered animals. Choose an animal that your child is interested in and dig a little deeper to learn what can be done to protect that animal and its habitat.

MORE TO READ & DO

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW TO LEARN MORE

ADDITIONAL BOOKS ON SCIENCE, NATURE, & THE ENVIRONMENT

- [*Saving Delicia*](#), by Laura Gehl & Patricia Metola
- [*Apple and Magnolia*](#), by Laura Gehl & Patricia Metola
- [*The Good for Nothing Tree*](#), by Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, & Annie Bowler
- [*The Marvelous Mustard Seed*](#), by Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, & Margaux Meganck
- [*El maravilloso grano de mostaza*](#), by Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, and Margaux Meganck
- [*The Marvelous Mustard Seed*](#) (Korean), by Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg &, and Margaux Meganck
- [*Babbit and Joan, a Rabbit and a Phone*](#), by Denise Turu

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