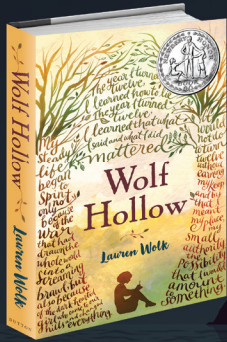


About **Wolf Hollow**  
and **BEYOND the Bright Sea**

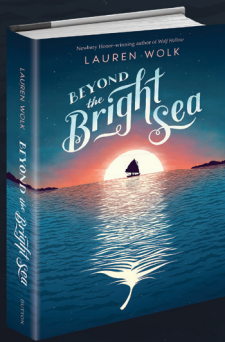
**A 2017 Newbery Honor Book**



Growing up in the shadows cast by two world wars, Annabelle has lived a mostly quiet, steady life in her small Pennsylvania town. Until the day new student Betty Glengarry walks into her class. Betty quickly reveals herself to be cruel and manipulative, and while her bullying seems isolated at first, things quickly escalate, and reclusive World War I veteran Toby becomes a target of her attacks. While others have always seen Toby's strangeness,

Annabelle knows only kindness. She will soon need to find the courage to stand as a lone voice of justice while tensions mount. Brilliantly crafted, *Wolf Hollow* is a haunting tale of America at a crossroads and a time when one girl's resilience, strength, and compassion help to illuminate the darkest corners of our history.

**A moving story of identity and belonging**



Twelve-year-old Crow has lived her entire life on a tiny, isolated piece of the starkly beautiful Elizabeth Islands in Massachusetts. Abandoned and set adrift on a small boat when she was just hours old, Crow's only companions are Osh, the man who rescued and raised her, and Miss Maggie, their fierce and affectionate neighbor across the sandbar.

Crow has always been curious about the world around her, but it isn't until

the night a mysterious fire appears across the water that the unspoken question of her own history forms in her heart. Soon, an unstoppable chain of events is triggered, leading Crow down a path of discovery and danger.

Vivid and heart-wrenching, Lauren Wolk's *Beyond the Bright Sea* is a gorgeously crafted and tensely paced tale that explores questions of identity, belonging, and the true meaning of family.

Praise for  
Newbery Honor-winning

**Wolf Hollow**

"[A] powerful debut . . . beautifully written."

—*The Wall Street Journal*

With a precociously perceptive girl as a main character; a damaged, misunderstood recluse; and themes of prejudice and bigotry, comparisons to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* will abound.

But Wolk gives us her own story—one full of grace and stark, brutal beauty."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

"This exquisite debut confronts injustice and doesn't flinch."

—*People Magazine*

★ "Echoing the tone and themes found in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Summer of My German Soldier*, this WWII story traces the unlikely friendship between a country girl and a shell-shocked veteran . . . Annabelle's astute observations of the Pennsylvania woods and the people who populate *Wolf Hollow* will resonate with many readers as they present a profound view of a complex era tinged by prejudice and fear."

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ "Spare but hauntingly beautiful . . . Perfectly pitched to be used in classrooms in conjunction with *To Kill a Mockingbird*."

—*Booklist*, starred review

★ "Wolk's novel stuns."

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ "The tension builds and never lets up."

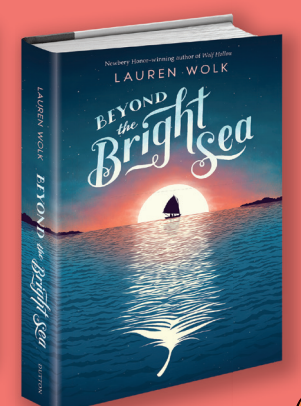
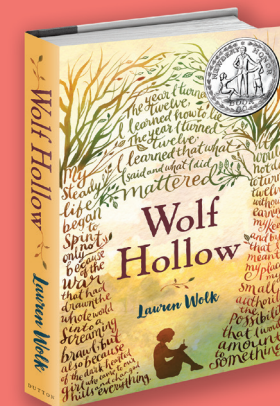
—*The Horn Book*, starred review

★ "The narrative is powerful, complex, and lifelike . . . a truly moving debut."

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

A discussion guide to the works of  
Newbery Honor-winning

**LAUREN  
WOLK**



PenguinClassroom.com



## Discussion Questions for WOLF HOLLOW

1. The author has a clever way of revealing some of Annabelle's physical characteristics: "I [Annabelle] had a hard time imagining why Hitler disliked so many people. 'Who *does* he like?' I asked. My father thought about his answer. 'People with blond hair and blue eyes,' he said. Which made me glad to have hair that was brown. Eyes, too." (pg. 18) How else would you describe Annabelle's appearance? How would you describe her personality?
2. Annabelle says, "The year I turned twelve, I learned that what I said and what I did mattered." (pg. 2) Give some examples of how the actions of one person can affect the lives of others from the story and from your own experience.
3. Discuss the ways photography is important in the story.
4. What are some thoughts and actions that cause Annabelle to feel guilty? Do you feel she holds any responsibility for what happened to Betty or Toby? Explain why or why not.
5. Describe Betty and her behavior. What reasons would she have to kill the quail? Why do you think Betty acts like such a bully?
6. Aunt Lily says, "Your faith in that man is a mystery to me, Annabelle. He's hurt two little girls—Ruth and Betty both—and maybe others." (pg. 209) Why is Aunt Lily so convinced that Toby has caused all the trouble? Why are Annabelle and her mother not afraid of Toby?
7. When Ruth gets hurt, Annabelle's mother says, "What happened to her was just bad luck." Annabelle thinks this explanation "only made things worse. How was anyone supposed to stand up straight and open-eyed when luck could decide everything?" (pg. 72) Do you believe in luck, good or bad? Explain why or why not.
8. Annabelle's mother says, "... think about how it feels when your hands are so cold that they go numb. How it's only when they start to thaw out that you realize how much they hurt." (pg. 278) Explain what Mrs. McBride means by this statement. How does it relate to the story?
9. How and why does Annabelle's relationship with her brother Henry change throughout the book?
10. What surprised you about the ending? Why do you think the author chose this final outcome for her characters? How else could this story have ended? Would any alternative ending feel as truthful?

Lisa Herskowitz is the Head of Children & Family Services at the Northport-East Northport Public Library, a two-building Civil Service library in Long Island, New York. She has been a Youth Services Librarian for over twenty years. Lisa currently holds the executive board position of Past President of the Children's Librarian's Association of Suffolk County (CLASC) after serving four years as the organization's president.

## Discussion Questions for BEYOND THE BRIGHT SEA

1. Osh says, "I ended up here because my country was not really my country. It was just where I lived. Where some of us were less than others. Where it was sport, to hurt us." (pg. 87) What do you think happened that caused him to leave everything behind? What challenges did he face when starting a new life on a small isolated island?
2. The island itself could be considered a major character in the story. Describe the "personality" of the island. How does the island interact with the other characters and influence their actions?
3. What evidence do you have that the story happens in 1925? Do you think this story could have taken place in the present? Explain why or why not.
4. Crow comes to this realization on page 271: "I dried myself off and put on some clean clothes, amazed by the power of such small accomplishments to restore my good mood." What do you think she means by this statement? Describe a situation where this was true for you.
5. Why do names have such profound meaning for Osh and Crow? What physical and behavioral characteristics does Crow share with her feathered namesake? If you were named for an animal, which one would it be and why?
6. Crow says on page 7: "When I asked questions about pearls or tides, he [Osh] did his best to answer them. But when I looked beyond our life on the islands, he became the moon itself, bent on tugging me back, as if I were made of sea instead of blood." Why is Osh so reluctant to talk to Crow about her past? Do you feel he is right to withhold information from Crow? Explain why or why not.
7. Why do you think Crow said she "carried those questions [about her past] around...like a sack that got heavier as the years went by, even though I had become accustomed to the idea of it. Even though I was not unhappy with the life I had. I just wanted to know. To understand. To put the sack down." (pg. 11) Why do you think Crow needs to know where she came from? Do you think she would have been better off not knowing? Explain why or why not.
8. How do Osh and Crow change each other's lives? How would things have been different if Osh hadn't been the one to find Crow floating on the raft?
9. How do the people in the community react toward Crow? How does fear affect their behavior? What is Crow's reaction to the way they treat her?
10. The author shares her father's sage advice "never to underestimate the ocean." (pg. 291) How is this childhood lesson integrated into the story?

A few questions with  
**LAUREN WOLK**  
for  
**BEYOND *the Bright Sea***



### Describe your newest book in four words.

Wild | Mysterious | Intelligent | Magnetic

### If your main character were stranded on a desert island, what book would they bring with them?

Since my character lived in 1925, she could not take the same book I would take (*Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell). But she might take *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London.

### What song would be the anthem for your book?

I'd need two: "Somewhere Out There" from *An American Tail* and "You've Got a Friend" by James Taylor.

### Your book brings readers to the Elizabeth Islands. What role does this place play in the story?

The wild and beautiful Elizabeth Islands are the perfect setting for a story about both isolation and community: about people who are both separated from their families and who form, together, a new and wonderful family.

### What is your favorite writing snack?

I never eat when I write. My hands are too busy! But if I hit a wall, I head for tamari almonds and habanero cheese. They fire up my creative brain.