



Tony the Janitor

Deana Swanson

Telling stories can help children empathize with others who are different from them. Here is a true story from my childhood I share with my students to help them see things from another person's perspective.

Tony worked as a janitor in the public school I attended. He was a nice, very quiet, hardworking man.

Tony's arm was severely scarred and deformed, his elbow permanently bent at a ninety-degree angle. I remember seeing Tony sprinkling cherry-smelling disinfectant on a child's vomit in the lunchroom or scrubbing vomit off the carpet in the classrooms. I remember seeing him with mops, brooms, and plungers, unclogging toilets—cleaning up messes I couldn't stand to look at or smell, much less touch.

I remember that hardly anyone ever talked to Tony or told him thank you or even said hello to him. The staff would give him his orders, and he would cheerfully obey. I think I tried to smile at him, but he was so used to the way students treated him that he never paid attention to us spoiled middle-class students.

I remember the last time I saw Tony one year, the last day of fourth grade. The

last day of school was a joyous and exciting event. We were free for the summer, free to run barefoot in the grass, swim, ride our bikes, and sleep until ten in the morning. I remember walking out the school door to see hundreds of students taking their papers out of their notebooks and folders and throwing them up in the air. Thousands of papers.

The wind was blowing hard that day, and there was a six-foot chain-link fence around the ball field at the end of the school property. All of those papers were flying through the air, across the grass, and piling several feet up the fence.

Hundreds more papers blew across the field, rolling toward the fence. The field was full of them. And still more students threw still more papers into the air. At first I thought it was glorious, like confetti sprinkled all over the schoolyard. Then I stopped, frozen in that moment, thinking how wasteful and ridiculous the whole thing was. Other students passed by me, throwing the last of their papers into the air.

Then I saw Tony. He stood at the far end of the schoolyard by the fence, a large black trash bag in his hand. He picked up a few papers and put them into the bag, a seemingly fruitless endeavor, since thousands more papers kept rolling across the field.

I will never forget the sight of Tony and the realization of the impact of our thoughtlessness. I pulled my hand out of my backpack. I would not throw my papers like that.

Selected and adapted from *I Am a Teacher, and I Love It!* a book of inspiration and ideas for teachers. See page 2.



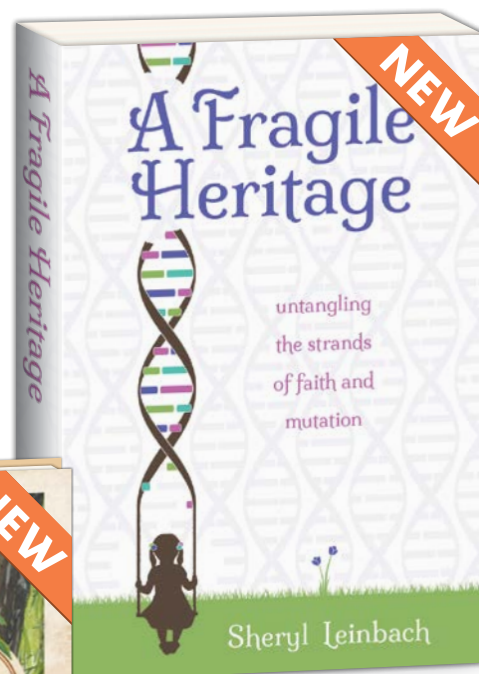
A Fragile Heritage

Sheryl Leinbach

The doctor spoke sympathetically, but his words were devastating. "Yes, it is genetic. This mutation happened because you are Mennonites." The doctor's words felt like an indictment of their heritage of faith and the God who had preserved it.

Combining one family's story with fascinating research on genetic disease, *A Fragile Heritage* traces the strands of heritage, faith, and mutation through generations and addresses questions about genetic mutations resulting from the overlapping ancestry of many Mennonites and Amish today. Foreword by Kevin A. Strauss, M.D.

265650 **\$14.95** 476 pages, 6 x 9

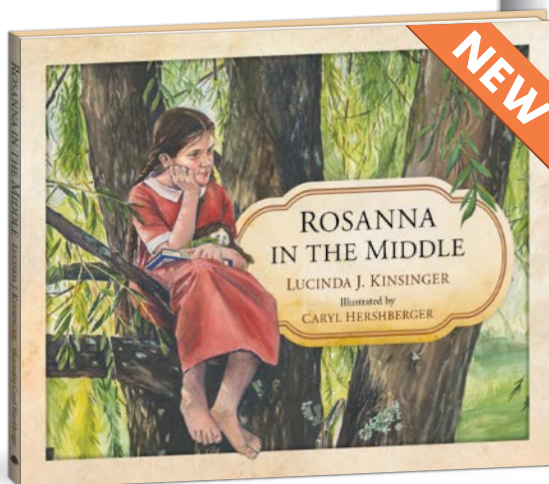


Rosanna in the Middle

Lucinda J. Kinsinger

Rosanna's grandmas tell her stories about her ancestor who came to America long ago and a Chinese mother who suffered for her faith. Rosanna learns to see herself as part of the much larger family of God. Based on actual events, this children's story from the author of *The Arrowhead* is illustrated with colorful paintings.

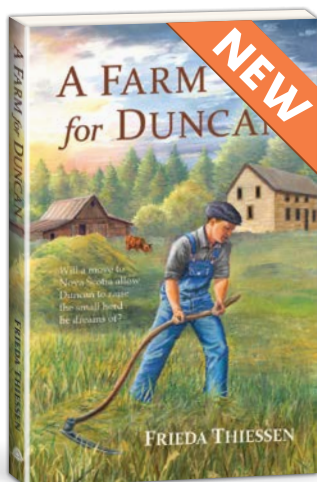
265670 **\$17.25** 48 pages, 10 x 8



When Sparrows Sing Janis Good

Dewdill pitched in with chores in spite of her weak leg. She was responsible enough to care for a neighbor lady who also suffered from polio. One evening Dewdill found her patient lying still and quiet, barely breathing. What could she do to save Mrs. Hopewell's life? Set in the years after the Great Depression, *When Sparrows Sing* is a true story of difficult times, determination, and trust in the heavenly Father.

265655 **\$10.95** 152 pages, 5 1/4 x 8 1/4

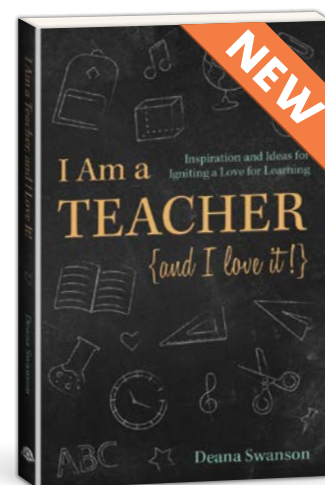


A Farm for Duncan

Frieda Thiessen

As a lad growing up in Scotland, Duncan MacLean enjoys working with cattle. But their small croft barely provides hay for two cows, and some years, the tacksman takes their calves. Then the laird of Glen Mor sells his land, and his crofters are forced to move. Duncan's family decides to book passage across the Atlantic. Historical fiction for adolescents.

265505 **\$11.95** 280 pages, 5 1/4 x 8 1/4



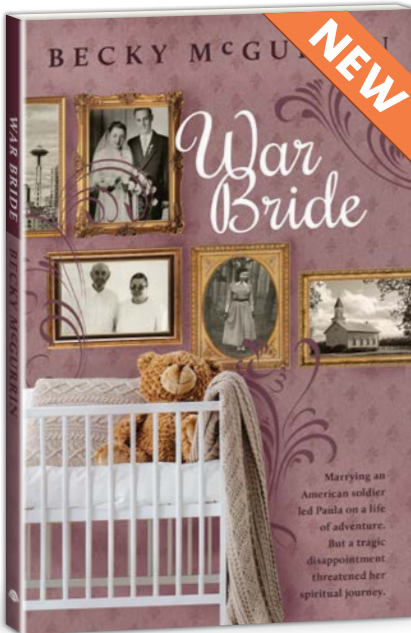
I Am a Teacher, and I Love It!

Deana Swanson

How can I help my students enjoy learning? This book of stories, seasoned advice, and ideas for specific classes and hands-on projects answers that question. Read it from cover to cover or turn to it as an occasional resource.

242305 **\$11.50**
227 pages, 5 1/4 x 8 1/4

Books by Becky McGurkin



War Bride

"Have you lost your mind?" Mama shouted. "An American soldier!"

Grandpa stepped in. "Paula assures me that he is a polite young man. She's always shown good judgment."

"That makes this even more shocking." Mama turned toward Paula. "Why can't you find a nice German boy to date?"

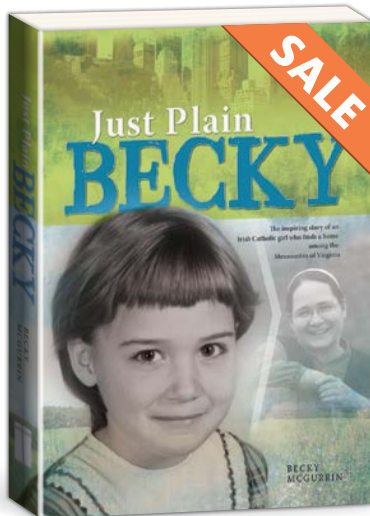
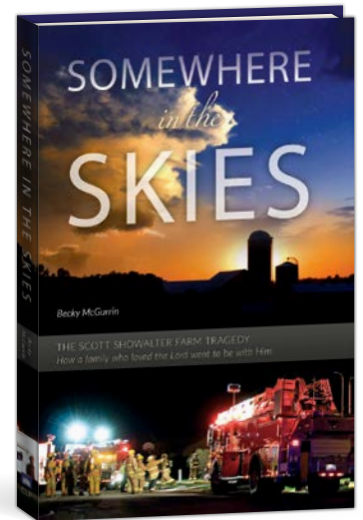
This true story follows Paula and Jack Thomas from post-war Germany to the United States where they filled their lives with work, travel, and a longing for a baby who would never come. Paula knew Jack loved his German war bride, but his care could not take away her ache—or her bitterness. But there was Someone who could.

265885 **\$9.95** 143 pages, 5¼ x 8¼

Somewhere in the Skies

Phyllis was working in the farmhouse kitchen when a farm worker banged frantically at the door. "Come quick!" he shouted. "Scott's in trouble." Phyllis dropped the spoon she was holding and bolted out the door. Her girls followed close behind. This moving true story of a farm tragedy tells how five souls who loved the Lord went to be with Him, and how God provided for the two girls left behind. It reminds us that while life on earth is fragile, there is a hope beyond for those who are prepared.

264940 **\$11.95** 144 pages, 5¼ x 8¼



Just Plain Becky

Becky and her husband were committed to providing a haven of love for their children, but their neighborhood was increasingly dangerous and running counter to their commitment. Becky tells how their family moved from Buffalo, New York, to a strange new world in the rural Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, where they joined a Mennonite church.

264702 **\$5.95** 262 pages, 6¼ x 9¼

A Drop of Mercy

Heinrich glared at the soldier, pity draining from his heart.

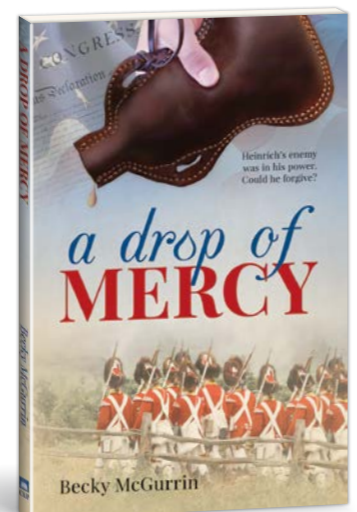
"Is this what you want?" Heinrich asked, holding up his cider skin.

The soldier's face lit up. "Aye. Bless you for it."

Heinrich spat. "Not even a drop. Here's your mercy." He turned the skin upside-down and squeezed every last drop of cider onto the ground.

Heinrich walked away from the wounded soldier, but he could not get away from the wretchedness he felt in his heart. How could God show him mercy when he had been so ruthless? Set in the American Revolution, *A Drop of Mercy* is the fictional story of a young man finding his way—and finding hope—through the smoke and confusion of a war that crashed into his backyard.

265230 **\$9.95** 142 pages, 5¼ x 8¼



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Phonics Foundations uses the Orton-Gillingham method of instruction to teach students with dyslexia to read and spell. The course does not diagnose dyslexia. The student begins by taking two assessments and then completes tailored lessons targeting the areas needing remediation. A student may not need to complete all six units. Units 5 and 6 are expected to be available by mid-2024.

For more information, order a free print copy of the brochure *Introduction to Phonics Foundations* or download it from our website.

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The Starter Pack includes the Training Book and Assessment Book. The Training Book provides instructions on how to teach the course.

The Assessment Book includes two assessments. The Phonological Awareness Assessment tests the student's ability to hear and manipulate sounds. The Letter and Sound Assessment tests the student's ability to hear sounds and connect them with the symbols that represent the sounds.

Teacher's Guides and Student Workbooks

The Teacher's Guides provide instructions, answers, and activities for each unit. Because Unit 1 is solely auditory training, there is no student workbook for Unit 1.

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The Teacher Cards include three sets of cards. Teaching Cards are used to introduce new phonemes or rules. Rule Review Cards introduce and review spelling rules. Instruction Cards list procedures for the teacher.

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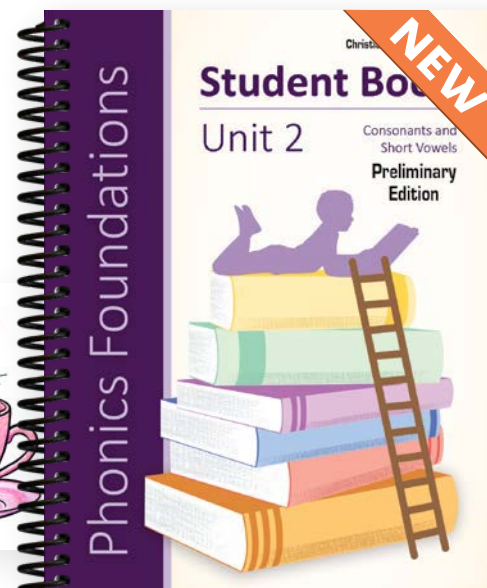
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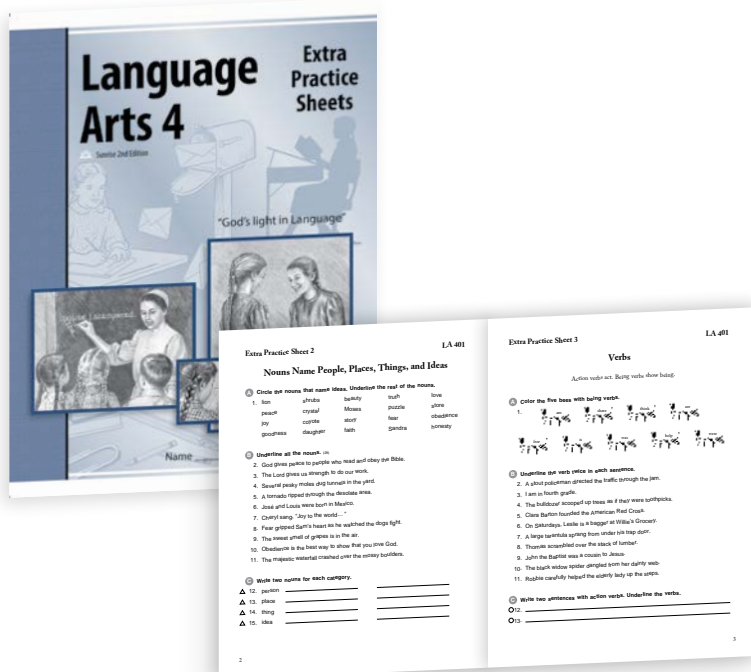
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When your student needs extra practice in language arts or math, you can turn to these worksheets to reinforce skills. The worksheets are reproducible.

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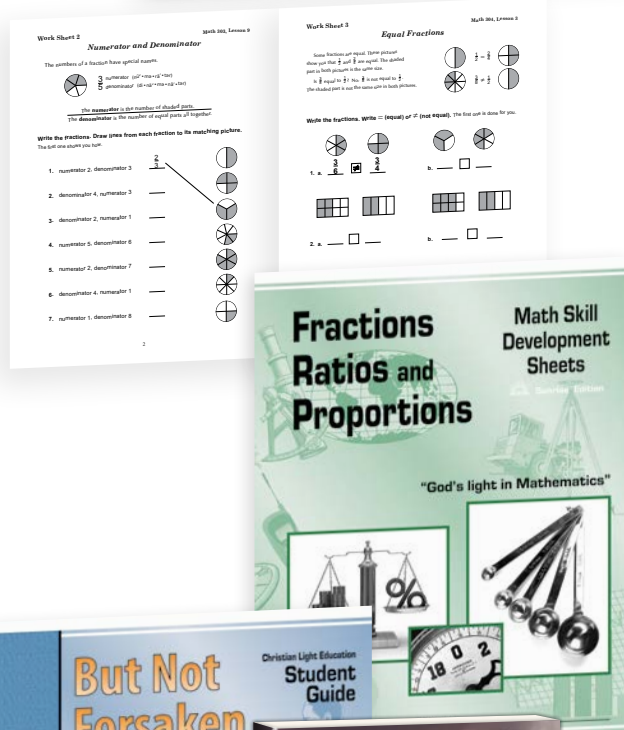
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Students complete this sixteen-lesson study guide while reading *But Not Forsaken*. They learn what it was like to be a refugee family after World War II while studying literary techniques such as foreshadowing, allusion, and flashback. The study guide includes two quizzes and one test. Recommended for Grades 7 and 8.

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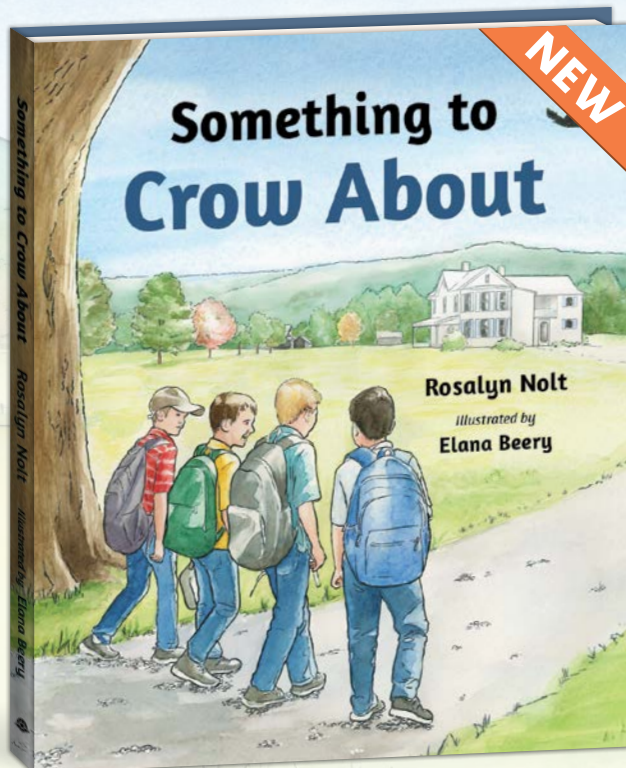
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Help for
students with
dyslexia.
See page 4.

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Something to Crow About

Rosalyn Nolt

*I wish I could go back and change the things I
handled wrong,
But could I make things better now? It's been this
way so long!*

On his first day at a new school, Jeremiah shoves a classmate to the ground. Too proud to apologize, he tries to act tough when the other boys pick on him in retaliation. Jeremiah is lonely and miserable until a crow he befriends teaches him a lesson. Told with rollicking rhymes, *Something to Crow About* is an entertaining story with a serious message about kindness and friendship.

265660 **\$14.75**

36 pages, 6¾ x 8