

Teacher's Guide

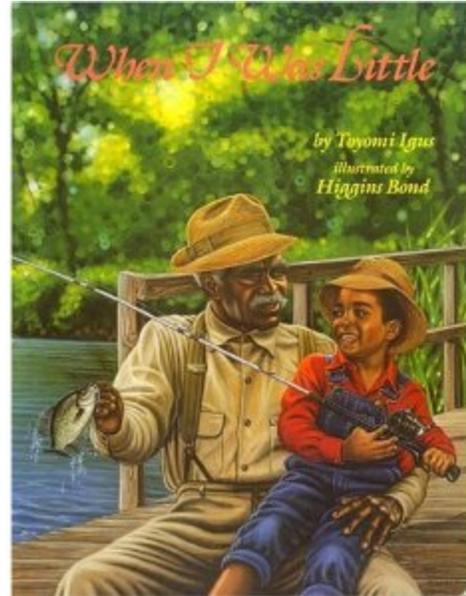
## **When I Was Little**

Written by Toyomi Igus

Illustrated by Higgins Bond

Published by Just Us Books

Target ages: 6-9



### **Book Description**

While fishing with Grandpa, Noel learns just how different life was when Grandpa was little. This intergenerational story illustrates how even as many things change, the most important things stay the same. --Winner of the Multicultural Publishers Exchange Book Award of Excellence

### **Themes**

Child-grandparent relationships, sharing memories, generational differences, change

### **Pre-Reading Discussion**

- Look at the cover. What do you think the book is about?
- What are some memories you have from when you were little?
- Does the cover make you think of any special people or places?

### **Discussion Questions**

- Why is the book named *When I Was Little*?
- Some of the illustrations in the book are in color, while others are in black and white. Why do you think the illustrator chose to do this?
- What is Noel's favorite thing to do when he visits his Grandpa?
- What are some of the differences between Grandpa's childhood and Noel's life today?
- What are some of the modern conveniences Grandpa didn't have?
- Do you think Noel likes life better today or back when Grandpa was little? Why or why not?
- At the end of the book, Grandpa says "Things sure are different now, but it's good to see that the important things stay the same." What do you think this statement means?

### **Define these words/phrases**

Favorite

Dinosaurs

Phonograph

Fisherman

Automobile

Struggle  
Ice box

### **WRITING/LANGUAGE ARTS**

- A. What are some differences between the city and the country. Have students compare and contrast the two, then write an essay about which they'd prefer to live in and why.
- B. Was life harder for children when Grandpa was little, or for Noel today? Have students explain their answer using examples from the book and from their own lives.
- C. *When I Was Little* shows how things change over time. Using the book title as an introduction, ask students to write about things that have changed in their life or in the world in general, since they were babies.
- D. Make students reporters for a day. Assign them to interview someone who was born before 1960 to find out what life was like when they were little. Interviews can be in question and answer format, or can be written as a feature article.

### **ART**

- A. Ask students to illustrate their favorite line from the book.
- B. To encourage the celebration of special memories and special people, have students draw or make a collage of their favorite memory, and write a caption that describes why it was so special.

### **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

- A. In the book, Grandpa didn't have tv growing up. What did he do for fun and entertainment instead? Have students make a list of things they could do for fun if they didn't have a tv. Encourage them to do at least one of the things on that list every day for a week, then talk about it with the rest of the class.
- B. Do a class show and tell, in which students bring in something that will show students who they are, where they're from, what they like, etc.

### **About the Author**

Toyomi Igus is the author and editor of several books for children, including *The Two Mrs. Gibsons*, *Going Back Home*, and *I See the Rhythm*. She is also the author of *Book of Black Heroes: Great Women in the Struggle*, published by Just Us Books. Former Editor and Publications Director for UCLA's Center for African American Studies, she lives in California.

### **About the Illustrator**

Higgins Bond grew up in the East End of Little Rock, Arkansas, and her family's home was located opposite the levee of the Arkansas River. She started painting at age twelve but began considering art as a career only after starting as a psychology major and later changing to advertising design at Memphis College of Art.

**Additional classroom resources are available at the Teacher/Librarian Center of [www.justusbooks.com](http://www.justusbooks.com).**

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