

Discussion and Activity Guide

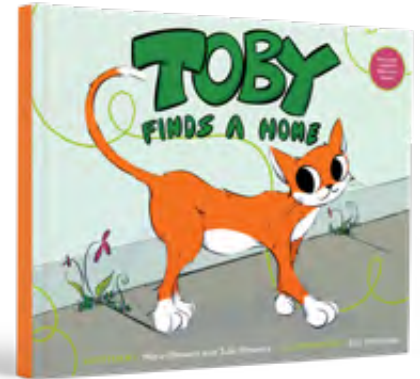
Toby Finds a Home

Education Standards: **SEL 3, ELA K.RL.1, K.RL.2, K.RL.3, 1.RL.1, 1.RL.2, 1.RL.3, 2.RL.1, 2.RI.3, SS K.14, 1.19, 1.20, 1.21, 2.6**

About the Book

Toby Finds a Home follows the journey of a hungry stray cat who discovers a free cafe. There, Toby meets a diverse group of people also facing hunger and homelessness, including a teenager living in a van, a mom and daughter in need of a little help, and an older man who lost his apartment. Together, they find comfort and support at the cafe, forming a community that helps each other through tough times.

The story is inspired by Blanchet House of Hospitality in Portland, Oregon, a nonprofit cafe that offers food, clothing, and transitional housing programs. As scenes of homelessness become more visible in our communities, this book can be a good way to start learning and talking about a complex issue.



Toby Finds a Home by Marie and Julie Showers. Illustrations by Eva Wrzesinski. ©2024 Published by Blanchet House.

After Reading

The following questions can help children relate Toby's story to their neighborhood or community.

1. In the beginning, Toby is hungry and without a home. Has your family ever found or fed a lost cat or dog? What did you do?
2. Have you ever seen a person sleeping on the sidewalk, in a tent, or on a park bench? How did that make you feel? After reading this book, how might you feel if you saw someone sleeping outside?
3. Where are other places you have stayed besides your home? Explain that while many people may experience hardship, most will not become homeless or hungry because they have family and friends who can help them, while others do not.
4. What's something you learned from reading the book? It's important to learn about all the people who live in our community so we can better understand and help each other.

Activities and Service Learning

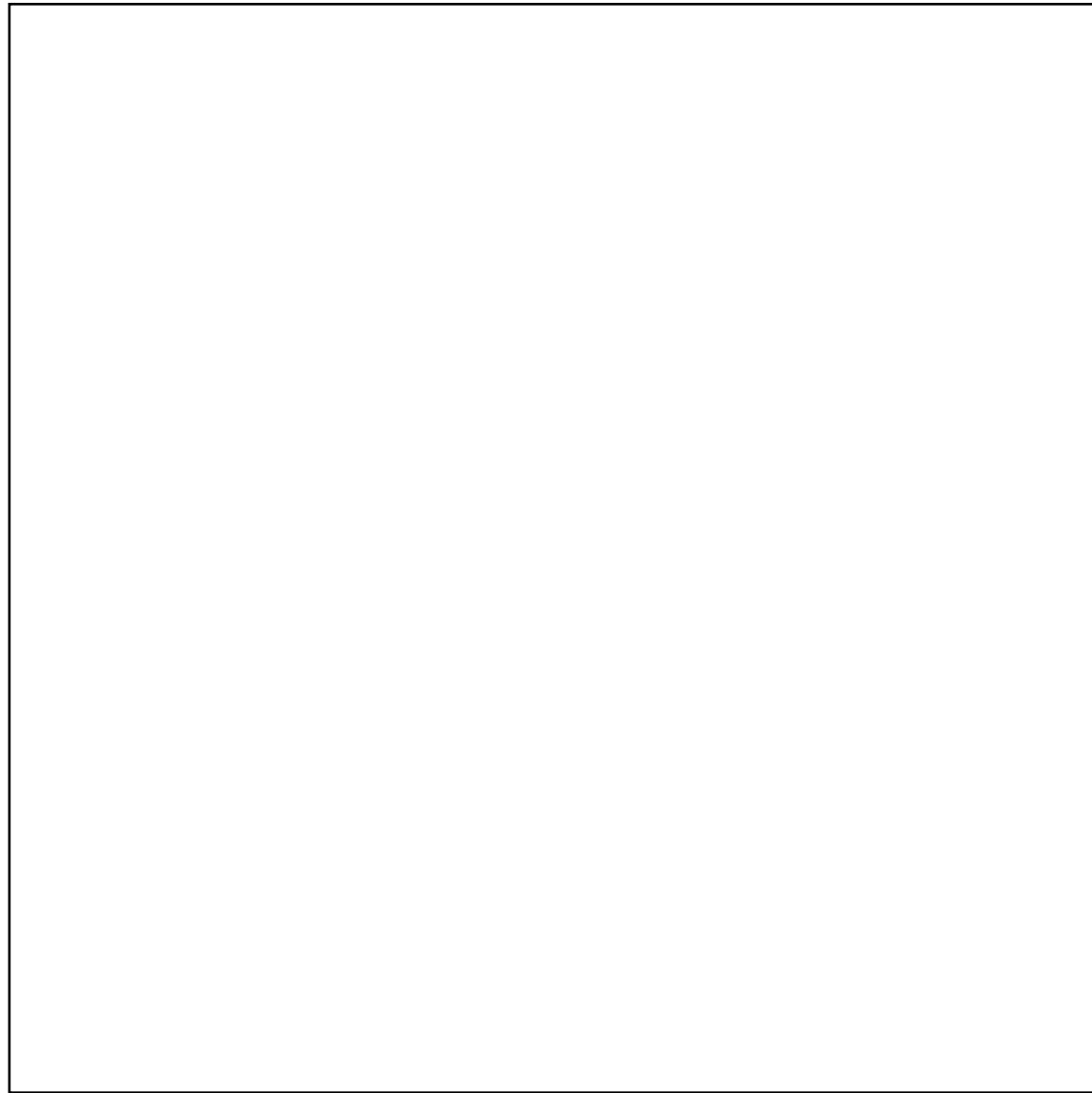
1. Ask the students if reading about Toby and his friends helping each other makes them want to help people too. Explain that each of us has the ability to help someone going through a hard time.

Next, download the *5 Ways for Children to Help Their Neighbors in Need* guide from BlanchetHouse.org/guide-for-children to select an activity for your group. In this guide, you will find instructions for service projects that can be done with a large or small group.

2. Coloring pages and quilt square project can be found on the following pages.

Make a Classroom Quilt

1. Draw and color something that you're thankful for inside the square.
2. Cut out the square.
3. Tape the decorated squares next to others on a wall to display.



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