

The Worm Whisperer

By Betty Hicks

Annotation

- Fifth grader Ellis Coffey wants to win the annual Woolly Worm Race, because the prize is \$1000.00 and his father needs just that amount to pay for his back surgery. To win, he must make a worm be the fastest in the race.

Book Talk

- Which magic power would you like to have? How would you use it? Fifth grader, Ellis Coffey thinks he has the power to communicate with woolly worms. He plans to use that ability to win his town's Woolly Worm Race and use the \$1000.00 prize for the back surgery that his father needs.

Book Trailers

- None (yet!)

Author on the Internet

- Website: <http://us.macmillan.com/author/bettyhicks>
- Teaching Books.net - <http://www.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?aid=397&s=n>

Items to use in a library display

- Worm images
- Worm farm kit

Food

- Gummy worms
- (p 67) Frozen blueberries and Cheerios

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics

- What special power would you like to have?
- What animal would you like to be able to communicate with?
- If your family needed money, what could you do to contribute?
- Ellis feels lonely. What do you do to help someone who feels lonely?

First Line of the Book:

- "Ellis liked everything about his obituary, even if it wasn't true."

Non-Fiction Companion Title(s)

- *Yucky Worms: Read and Wonder* by Vivian French and Jessica Ahlberg
- *Wiggly Worms* by Celeste Bishop

What to Read Next

- *Talking to Dragons* by Patricia Wrede
- *Talk, Talk, Squawk! A Human's Guide to Animal Communication* by Nicole Davies

- *All Things Bright and Beautiful* by James Herriot

Other Books by this Author:

- *Animal House and Liz*
- *Baseball Bats*
- *Busted*
- *Double Trouble*
- *Get Real*
- *Goof-Off Goalie*
- *I Smell Like Ham*
- *Out of Order*
- *Scaredy-Cat Catcher*
- *Swimming with Sharks*
- *Track Attack*

Additional Resources

- Music: Page 104 Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah
- Poetry: page 75 All Things Bright and Beautiful
- Cooking activity: Cook a dirt cake with gummy worms
- Lesson ideas: Study worms or animal/human communication