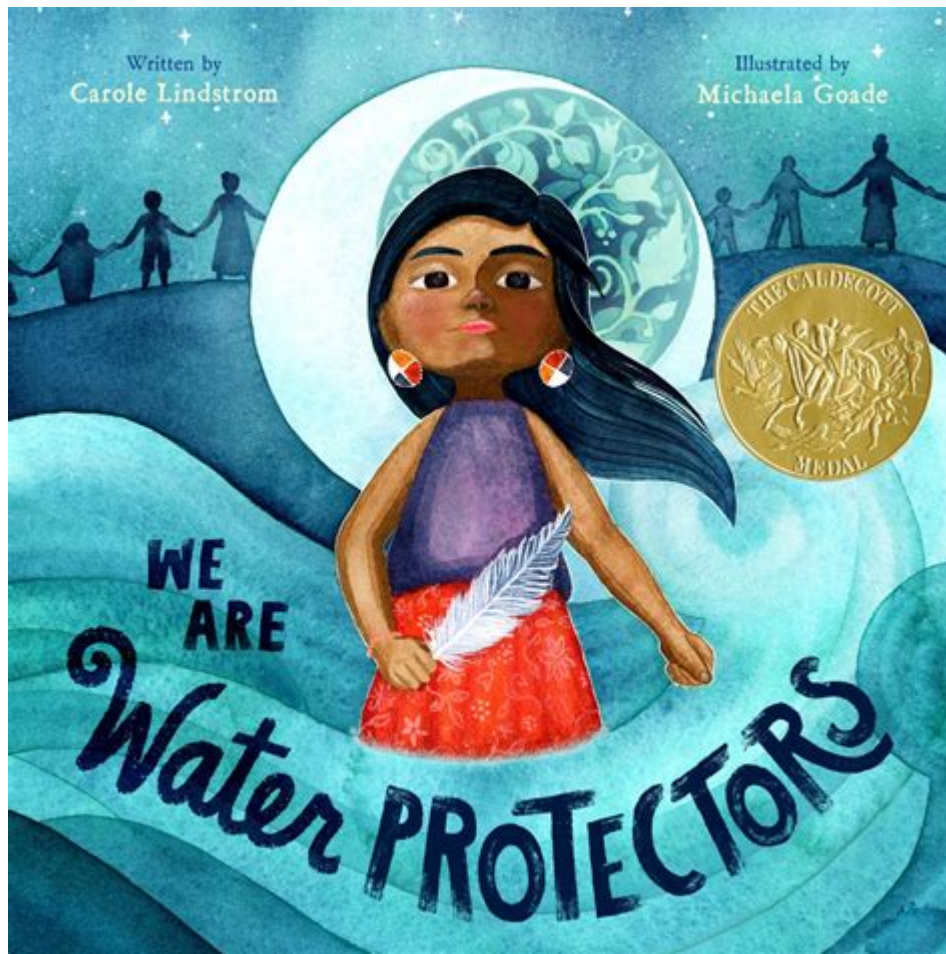


# We Are Water Protectors Book



**We Are Water Protectors** is a beautifully illustrated children's book that serves as both a story and a call to action. Written by Carole Lindstrom and illustrated by Michaela Goade, the book conveys a powerful message about environmental stewardship and the importance of protecting water resources. With its stunning artwork and poignant narrative, it resonates with readers of all ages, instilling a deep respect for nature and a sense of responsibility towards the planet. In this article, we will explore the themes, illustrations, cultural significance, and educational value of this remarkable book.

## Overview of the Book

Published in 2020, "We Are Water Protectors" has quickly gained recognition for its poignant message and artistic merit. The book tells the story of a young Indigenous girl who embarks on a journey to protect the water from pollution and destruction. Inspired by the real-life Water Protectors who stood against the Dakota Access Pipeline, the narrative empowers children to become activists in their communities.

# Themes of Environmentalism

At its core, "We Are Water Protectors" revolves around several key themes:

1. **Connection to Nature:** The book emphasizes the intrinsic relationship between humans and nature. It illustrates how water is not just a resource; it is life itself, vital for survival and well-being.
2. **Cultural Heritage:** The narrative draws from Indigenous traditions and beliefs, showcasing the importance of respecting the land and water. It highlights the role of Indigenous peoples as guardians of the earth.
3. **Activism and Advocacy:** Through the protagonist's journey, the book encourages young readers to take a stand against environmental injustices. It promotes the idea that everyone has a role to play in protecting the planet.
4. **Hope and Resilience:** Despite the challenges faced by the Water Protectors, the story is ultimately one of hope. It conveys the message that collective action can lead to positive change.

## Illustrations and Artistic Style

Michaela Goade's illustrations are a crucial component of "We Are Water Protectors." The artwork is vibrant and evocative, capturing the beauty of the natural world and the emotions of the characters. Some notable aspects of the illustrations include:

- **Use of Color:** Goade employs a rich color palette that reflects the beauty of water and nature. Shades of blue and green dominate the pages, creating a serene yet powerful atmosphere.
- **Symbolism:** The illustrations are filled with symbolism that represents Indigenous culture and the significance of water. Elements such as animals, plants, and natural landscapes are intricately woven into the narrative.
- **Emotional Resonance:** The expressions and actions of the characters convey a deep sense of urgency and determination. Readers can feel the protagonist's passion for protecting water, which adds to the emotional impact of the story.

## Cultural Significance

"We Are Water Protectors" is not just a children's book; it is a cultural artifact that sheds light on the experiences and perspectives of Indigenous peoples. The narrative draws from real-life events, particularly the protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline, which raised awareness about the impact of fossil fuel extraction on sacred lands and water sources.

## Indigenous Representation

The book is a significant contribution to the representation of Indigenous voices in literature. By centering an Indigenous protagonist, it offers readers a glimpse into the values and beliefs of Indigenous cultures, particularly regarding environmental stewardship. This representation is vital for:

- **Fostering Understanding:** Readers who may not be familiar with Indigenous issues and perspectives can gain insight into the importance of water in Indigenous cultures.
- **Empowering Indigenous Youth:** The book serves as an inspiration for Indigenous children, affirming their cultural identity and encouraging them to be proud of their heritage.
- **Promoting Allyship:** For non-Indigenous readers, the book encourages a sense of responsibility and allyship in the fight against environmental degradation and social injustices faced by Indigenous communities.

## **Educational Value**

"We Are Water Protectors" is an excellent resource for educators seeking to teach children about environmentalism, social justice, and cultural awareness. Here are some ways the book can be utilized in an educational setting:

## **Classroom Activities**

Educators can incorporate "We Are Water Protectors" into various lesson plans and activities:

1. **Reading and Discussion:** Read the book aloud to students and facilitate a discussion about its themes. Ask questions such as:
  - What does water mean to you?
  - How can we protect our water sources?
2. **Art Projects:** Encourage students to create their own artworks inspired by the book. They can illustrate their vision of a clean and healthy environment or depict their understanding of water as a vital resource.
3. **Research Projects:** Assign students to research real-life environmental movements and activists, particularly those involving Indigenous peoples. This can help students understand the broader context of the book's message.
4. **Community Engagement:** Challenge students to think of ways they can contribute to their communities' environmental efforts. This might include organizing a clean-up event, creating awareness campaigns, or advocating for local water protection initiatives.

## **Resources for Further Learning**

To complement the lessons from "We Are Water Protectors," educators and parents can provide

additional resources for children to explore:

- Documentaries: Films that cover Indigenous rights and environmental issues can deepen students' understanding of the book's context.
- Books by Indigenous Authors: Expanding the reading list to include more works by Indigenous authors can provide diverse perspectives and narratives.
- Local Conservation Groups: Connecting with local environmental organizations can offer students hands-on opportunities to engage in water protection and conservation efforts.

## Conclusion

"We Are Water Protectors" is more than just a children's book; it is a powerful narrative that encourages young readers to take action in the face of environmental challenges. Through its themes of connection to nature, cultural heritage, and activism, the book inspires a sense of responsibility and hope. Coupled with its stunning illustrations, it serves as an essential tool for educating children about the importance of protecting our planet's most precious resource—water. As we continue to face environmental crises, stories like "We Are Water Protectors" remind us of the vital role that individuals, especially the younger generation, can play in the movement for a sustainable and just future.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the main theme of 'We Are Water Protectors'?**

'We Are Water Protectors' focuses on the importance of protecting water sources and the environment, highlighting the interconnectedness of all living things and the role of activism in safeguarding natural resources.

### **Who is the author of 'We Are Water Protectors'?**

'We Are Water Protectors' is authored by Carole Lindstrom, a member of the Anishinaabe tribe, and illustrated by Michaela Goade, who is of Tlingit descent.

### **How does 'We Are Water Protectors' incorporate Indigenous perspectives?**

The book incorporates Indigenous perspectives by emphasizing the spiritual and cultural significance of water to Indigenous communities and illustrating traditional knowledge and practices in water protection.

### **What age group is 'We Are Water Protectors' intended for?**

'We Are Water Protectors' is primarily aimed at children aged 4 to 8, but its message resonates with readers of all ages, promoting environmental awareness and activism.

## What impact has 'We Are Water Protectors' had since its release?

'We Are Water Protectors' has gained significant acclaim, winning various awards and becoming a vital resource for discussions on environmental justice, sustainability, and Indigenous rights in educational settings.

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