

# *Fred Stays with Me!*

Written by Nancy Coffelt

Illustrated by Tricia Tusa

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Little Brown and Company



About the Author...Nancy Coffelt <http://blog.nancycoffelt.com/>

Nancy Coffelt's first 1<sup>st</sup> passion is drawing pictures and I still continue to draw with oil pastels on black paper. Animals are her main subject matter, whether she is illustrating children's books, creating designs for products or working on fine art.

Goodnight Sigmund – Harcourt 1992

Dogs In Space – Harcourt 1993

Tom's Fish – 1994

The Dog Who Cried Woof – Harcourt 1995

The Great Space Doghouse – Flying Rhino 2000

What's Cookin'? – Chronicle Books – 2003

Pug in a Truck – Houghton Mifflin 2006

Fred Stays With Me – Little Brown & Co. 2007

Big, Bigger, Biggest – Henry Holt 2009

Listen – a Young Adult novel – WestSide Books 2009

Boston Globe/Horn Book Honor

Kirkus Starred Review

Horn Book Starred Review

School Library Journal Starred Review

School Library Journal Best of 2007

Kirkus Best of 2007

Miami Herald Best of 2007

ALA Notable Book

2008 Moonbeams Award Silver Medal

2008 Mom's Choice Award

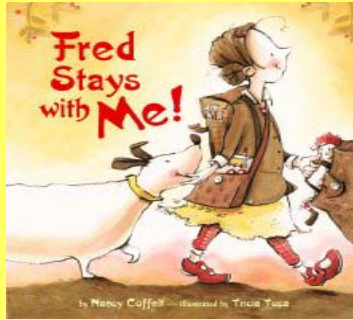
Donna Norvell Oklahoma Book Award

# *Fred Stays with Me!*

Written by Nancy Coffelt

Jackee Brigman Bell. Rosa Parks-Edison Elementary. [jackbell@indianapolis.edisonlearning.com](mailto:jackbell@indianapolis.edisonlearning.com)

Illustrated by Tricia Tusa



**Annotation:**

Nancy Coffelt is the author and illustrator of the several picture books for Harcourt: *The Dog Who Cried Woof*; *Good Night, Sigmund*; *Tom's Fish*; and *Dogs in Space*. She began writing and painting children's books when she started a family of her own. She lives in Portland, Oregon.

Tricia Tusa has written and illustrated several acclaimed picture books, including *Mrs. Spitzer's Garden*; *Maebelle's Suitcase*; *Camilla's New Hairdo*; *Bunnies in My Head*, which features drawings by young patients at the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. She lives in New Mexico.

The little girl in this story sometimes lives with her mom and sometimes lives with her dad. Her dog, Fred travels back and forth with the little girl. Fred plays with the little girl, but also makes a mess at her mom's and dad's house. The mom and dad become frustrated and wonder what they will do with Fred. The little girl reminds her mom and dad that Fred is her dog and stays with her. Her mom and dad both make the effort to better the situation with Fred when he is at their house. The little girl in the story has to live with her mom and dad in separate houses with different schedules, but at least her dog, Fred, is able stay with her no matter where she lives.

**Genre:**

Family

**Point of View:**

First Person

**Theme:**

The theme of this fiction story is divorce. The little girl in this story has to make adjustments to live with her part time mom and part time dad. While she goes to the same school and has the same friends, she has different beds and situations from one house to the other. Fred makes the little girl happy and she lets her parents know that she wants Fred with her, at both of their houses.

**Conflict:**

Fred, the dog, is making a mess at the mom's house and the dad's house. The parents both are overwhelmed with the dog and want to get rid if it.

## **Conflict Resolution:**

The little girl explains that Fred is her dog and he makes her happy. She wants the dog to stay with her, whether it is at the mom's or dad's house. The parents attempt to help Fred with some of the bad habits he has developed as a young puppy.

## **Characters:**

Little girl-loves her best friend, Fred and is trying to stay in control of her situation while coping with her separated parents

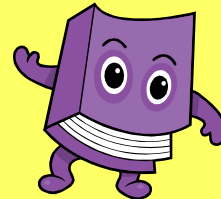
Fred-dog-silly and mischievous

Mom & Dad-frustrated with Fred's mischievous behavior

**Setting:** This story takes place in the mom's house and the dad's house. This story takes place present day over a period of time. This is a modern day story that applies to many children in today's society.

**Interest Level:** Kindergarten-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

**Reading Level:** Lexile level 430



## **Booktalk:**

*Fred Stays with Me* is written in such simplistic language, it's hard to believe there are several important themes within this short picture book. One important topic this book deals with is divorce. Divorce has become a center theme in the lives of many children and many times they are unable to articulate their thoughts and feelings. This is a wonderful springboard for conversations for divorce, separation, nontraditional families, dogs and loyalty.



## **Discussion questions – adapted for Picture Book**

### **Pre-reading Question:**

- ❖ Do you have a dog? Do you consider it a member of your family?

### **Post-reading Question:**

- ❖ Would you ever have an animal as a best friend? Why would an animal make a good friend?

### **During reading Questions:**

- ❖ Why do you think the little girl sometimes lives with her mom and sometimes lives with her dad? (p. 2)
- ❖ Who travels with the little girl when she goes back and forth? (p. 3)

- ❖ What does Fred do while he is at mom’s house? (p. 9-11)
- ❖ What does the dad mean by, “What am I going to do with Fred?” (p. 20)
- ❖ The little girl considers Fred her friend. What do they do together? (p. 21)
- ❖ Mom and dad are mad and there is trouble, why? (p. 23-24)
- ❖ What does the little girl do when mom and dad both say, “Fred can’t stay with me!”?

## Vocabulary

- **Sometimes**-(p. 1) not all of the time, only part of the time
- **Searching**-( p. 16) to look for something
- **Bunk bed**- (p. 5) one bed stacked on another bed
- **Regular**- (p. 6) ordinary
- **“Excuse Me”**- (p. 26) something you say if you are interrupting someone
- **Trouble**- (p. 23) problem
- **Neighbor**- (p. 23) someone who lives near you

## Indiana Academic Standards:

<http://ideanet.doe.state.in.us/standards/welcome.html>

**Language Arts:** K.1.1; K.1.2; K.1.22; K.2.1; K.2.2; K.2.3; K.2.5; K.3.3; K.3.5/**Science:** K.2.2; K.6.1/**Social Studies:** K.2.4; K.2.5

**Language Arts:** 1.1.15; 1.1.16; 1.1.17; 1.2.1; 1.2.2; 1.2.5; 1.2.6; 1.2.7; 1.3.1; 1.3.2; 1.3.3; 1.3.4; 1.3.5/**Science:** 1.1.1; 1.1.2; 1.1.3; 1.4.2; 1.4.3; 1.6.2/ **Social Studies:** 1.2.2; 1.2.4; 1.2.5

**Language Arts:** 2.1.2; 2.1.6; 2.1.7; 2.2.1; 2.2.2; 2.2.3; 2.2.4; 2.2.5; 2.2.6; 2.2.9; 2.2.10; 2.3.7; 2.7.1; 2.7.2; 2.7.8/**Science:** 2.1.2; 2.1.3; 2.1.4; 2.1.5; 2.1.6; 2.2.5; 2.3.4; 2.4.4/ **Social Studies:** 2.2.4; 2.2.7

**Language Arts:** 3.1.3; 3.1.4; 3.1.5; 3.1.6; 3.2.1; 3.2.9; 3.2.2; 3.2.3; 3.2.4; 3.2.5; 3.2.6; 3.2.8; 3.3.1; 3.3.2; 3.3.3; 3.3.4; 3.3.8/**Science:** 3.1.4; 3.1.5; 3.2.3; 3.2.4; 3.2.6; 3.2.5; 3.6.4; 3.6.5/ **Social Studies:** 3.2.5; 3.2.6

## Anticipation Guide

Before		<i>Fred Stays with Me!</i>	After	
Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree

		All kids have dogs.		
		Some children come from divorced families.		
		Every dog lives in two homes.		
		When two parents live separately the child makes all of the decisions.		
		A dog will make you feel happy if you are sad.		

## Art Medium



Tusa's illustrations are purposefully minimal and simple. The drawings are muted colors which highlight the limited dialogue. The entire book is told in golden brown, saffron, and peach watercolors. The simple illustrations/drawings are minimal to carry the limited palette throughout the story. I think Nancy Coffelt uses this medium to allow the reader to infer and comprehend the simple pictures and depth of text themselves.



### If you liked *Fred Stays with Me*, you should try.....

Wyeth, Sharon D. *Always My Dad*. This is a good book for any child who does not live in a traditional living situation. This book would be a great read for a child that misses their father.

Parr, Todd. *The Family Book*. This is book all about the diversity of families which, reinforce the message that there are all kinds of families, including families which are transracial, adoptive, stepfamilies, two-dad, and single parent.

Alvarez, Julia. *How Tia Lola Came to Visit/Stay*. How Tia Lola Came to Stay is a delightful story about a 10-year old boy going through major changes in his life and how he learns to deal with these changes.

Baker, Ed. *The Story of Kitten Cuckoo*. When a cat, Kitten Cuckoo, befriends an elephant they discover that the world doesn't want them to be friends. Suddenly when the elephant is taken from the cat, this tells the story of how nothing can - or should - keep best friends apart.

Fehrenbacher, E.A. *Mr. Lyle and Dodger Girl: A Story of Love and Loyalty*. This is a wonderful book for showing how animals impact our lives, bring comfort, and heal us in ways that only they can.

Masurel, Claire. *Two Homes*. This book addresses that a child may have a place and home with each parent. The story would help a young child adjust to divorce in the family.

Levins, Sandra. *Was It the Chocolate Pudding?: A Story For Little Kids About Divorce*. Chocolate Pudding's punchline is the boy's huge relief upon discovering it was NOT his pudding antics that led his mom to leave the family.

Rosethenal, Lisa. *A Dog's Best Friend: An Activity Book for Kids and Their Dogs*. This guidebook helps children establish friendships with their dogs and develop responsibility by caring for them.

## Across the Curriculum Connections

**Social Science:** The theme of this story is about coping with a difficult situation. Students could research how animals can be a friend in a time of need or transition.

### THEME: Dogs

IN: K.2.2; K.6.1/ 1.1.1; 1.1.2; 1.1.3; 1.4.2; 1.4.3; 1.6.2/  
2.1.2; 2.1.3; 2.1.4; 2.1.5; 2.1.6; 2.2.5; 2.3.4; 2.4.4/  
3.1.4; 3.1.5; 3.2.3; 3.2.4; 3.2.6; 3.2.5; 3.6.4; 3.6.5

### Web Resources:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade Webquest-Dogs

[http://www.swsd.k12.pa.us/~peggy\\_bell/webquest.htm](http://www.swsd.k12.pa.us/~peggy_bell/webquest.htm)

Be a Good Friend (Dogs)

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=472>

Best Friends Network (Dogs)

<http://network.bestfriends.org/international/news/26837.html>



### THEME: Divorce

IN: K.2.4; K.2.5; 1.2.2; 1.2.4; 1.2.5; 2.2.4; 2.2.7; 3.2.5; 3.2.6

### Web Resources:

Activities for Helping Children Dealing with Divorce-

[http://www.classbrain.com/artread/publish/article\\_22.shtml](http://www.classbrain.com/artread/publish/article_22.shtml)

Helping Children Understand Divorce-

<http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=GH6600>



### THEME: Family

IN: K.2.4; K.2.5; 1.2.2; 1.2.4; 1.2.5; 2.2.4; 2.2.7; 3.2.5; 3.2.6

### Web Resources:

Mrs. McDowell Family Resources

<http://www.mrsmcdowell.com/Units%20and%20Themes/families.htm>

A to Z Teacher Stuff

Jackee Brigman Bell. Rosa Parks-Edison Elementary. [jackbell@indianapolis.edisonlearning.org](mailto:jackbell@indianapolis.edisonlearning.org)



<http://atozteacherstuff.com/Themes/Family/>

Family Lesson Plans

[http://www.proteacher.com/cgi-](http://www.proteacher.com/cgi-bin/outside.cgi?id=6334&external=http://www.halcyon.com/marcs/theme.html&original=http://www.proteacher.com/090003.shtml&title=Family%20Unit)

[bin/outside.cgi?id=6334&external=http://www.halcyon.com/marcs/theme.html&original=http://www.proteacher.com/090003.shtml&title=Family%20Unit](http://www.proteacher.com/090003.shtml&title=Family%20Unit)

## Resources:



### Author's Homepage:

Nancy Coffelt - <http://blog.nancycoffelt.com/>



### Publisher's webpage:

Little, Brown and Company- [http://www.hachettebookgroup.com/publishing\\_little-brown-and-company.aspx](http://www.hachettebookgroup.com/publishing_little-brown-and-company.aspx)



### Publisher's webpage for the author or author's books:

Little, Brown and Company /Nancy Coffelt-

[http://www.hachettebookgroup.com/kids\\_authors\\_Nancy-Coffelt-\(1010581\).htm](http://www.hachettebookgroup.com/kids_authors_Nancy-Coffelt-(1010581).htm)

Little, Brown and Company /Fred Stays with Me!

[http://www.hachettebookgroup.com/kids\\_books\\_9780316882699.htm](http://www.hachettebookgroup.com/kids_books_9780316882699.htm)



### Other Web Resources:

Pets- <http://www.petweek.org/educators/lessons.html>

Responsible Pet Care- [http://www.kindnews.org/teacher\\_zone/lesson\\_plans.asp](http://www.kindnews.org/teacher_zone/lesson_plans.asp)

Families and Pets- <http://www.kinderplans.com/content.cfm?pageid=151>

Pet Week Lesson Plans- [http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson311.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson311.shtml)

Family/Pet Lessons- <http://www.ddfl.org/lessons.htm>



## Book Activities

Students will discuss in a small group what a family is and how members of a family should treat each other, including pets. Students will read a story about a cat that was abandoned by its family and decide how that could have been prevented.

1. What's a family? Who can make up a family? Make a list of examples. Can pets be part of our families? How should you treat all members of your family? Why are families important? Why are pets an important part of our families?
2. Ask for examples of how the students treat members of their family, including pets, with kindness and respect. Was there a time when you didn't treat a member of your family nicely? How do you think they felt? Think of a time when you were treated badly - how did you feel?
3. If a pet is treated badly, how do you think it feels? Ask the students to compare their feelings to those of a pet's.

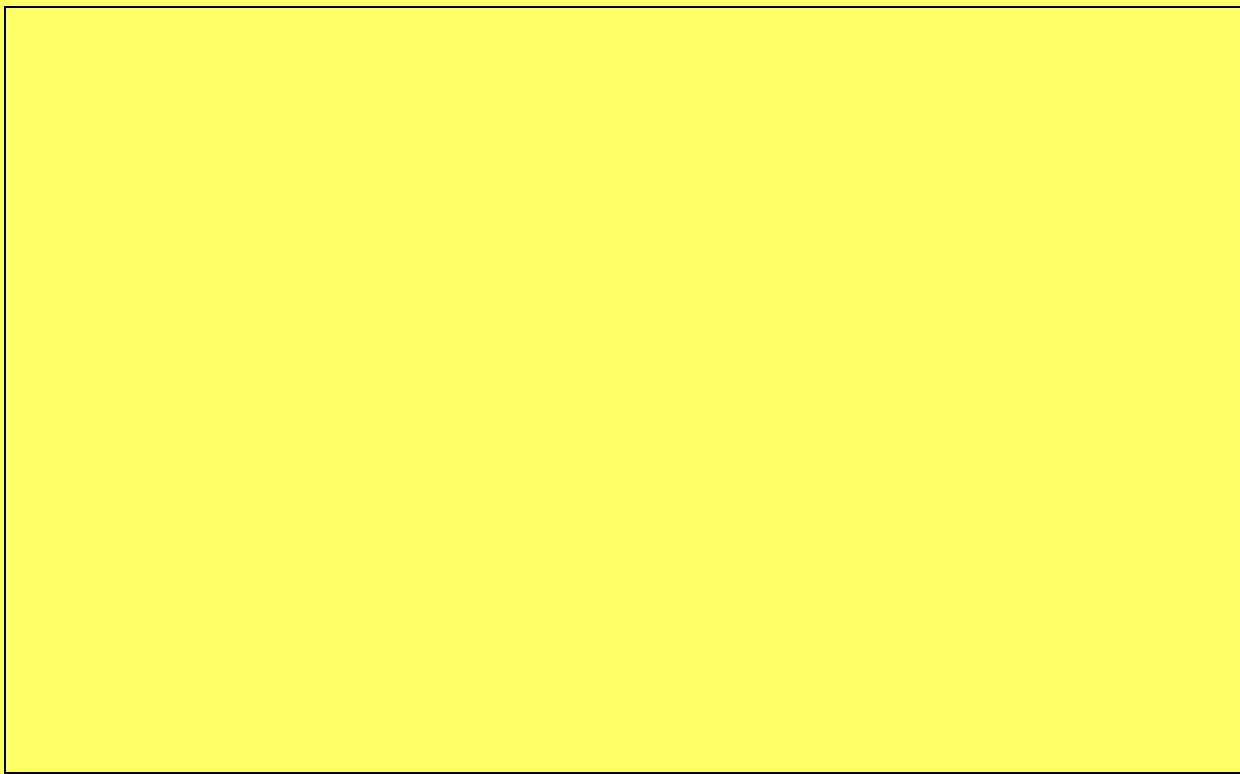
If some of the students don't have pets, ask them to think of someone they know that has a pet. How is the pet an important part of that person's family? How have you enjoyed getting to know that pet?

Make a big book about families and have the students write and draw pictures about their families. Laminate the book and keep it in your classroom for the students to read frequently.

**This is My Family**

THESE ARE THE MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY. THEY ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO ME!

**Draw the members of your family in the box.**



1. Who are the people and animals in your family? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How do you treat the people and animals in your family? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you consider your pet a friend? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Pets Are "Purr-fect" Friends!**

Students will understand what a pet is and what it needs from people. Students will learn what a pet is and they will draw their favorite pets and write about what they need. This discussion will take place in a small group.

1. What is a pet? Make a list of different kinds of pets on the board. After the students give examples of pets, ask them why we call all these animals "pets." How is a pet different than a wild animal?

2. Why do pets need people to take care of them? What do pets need from people? Ask the students that have pets to describe how they care for their pet.
3. Can a pet be your friend? Ask for examples. Can a pet be part of your family?
4. What can happen if we don't take good care of our pets?

Students will draw large pictures of their favorite pets on construction paper and label them. After they're done they will cut them out and paste them on a large piece of poster paper. Work will be done individually.

1. Why did you pick these pets to draw? What are the things that you like about them?
2. Should everyone have a pet? Why not? Even if you don't have a pet, should you still be nice to animals? Name someone you know that has a pet (besides yourself).

Students that have pets at home will bring in pictures of their pets to share with the classroom. For the students that don't have pets, ask them (with their parents' help) to take pictures of a pet that belongs to someone they know and to bring those pictures in.

### **Bibliography:**

Scholastic: <http://bookwizard.scholastic.com/tbw/viewWorkDetail.do?workId=1158999&>

Perma-Bound: [www.perma-bound.com](http://www.perma-bound.com)

Indiana Academic Standards: [www.doe.state.in.us/standards](http://www.doe.state.in.us/standards)

Nancy Coffelt: <http://blog.nancycoffelt.com/>

The DUMB Friends League- <http://www.ddfl.org/lessons.htm>