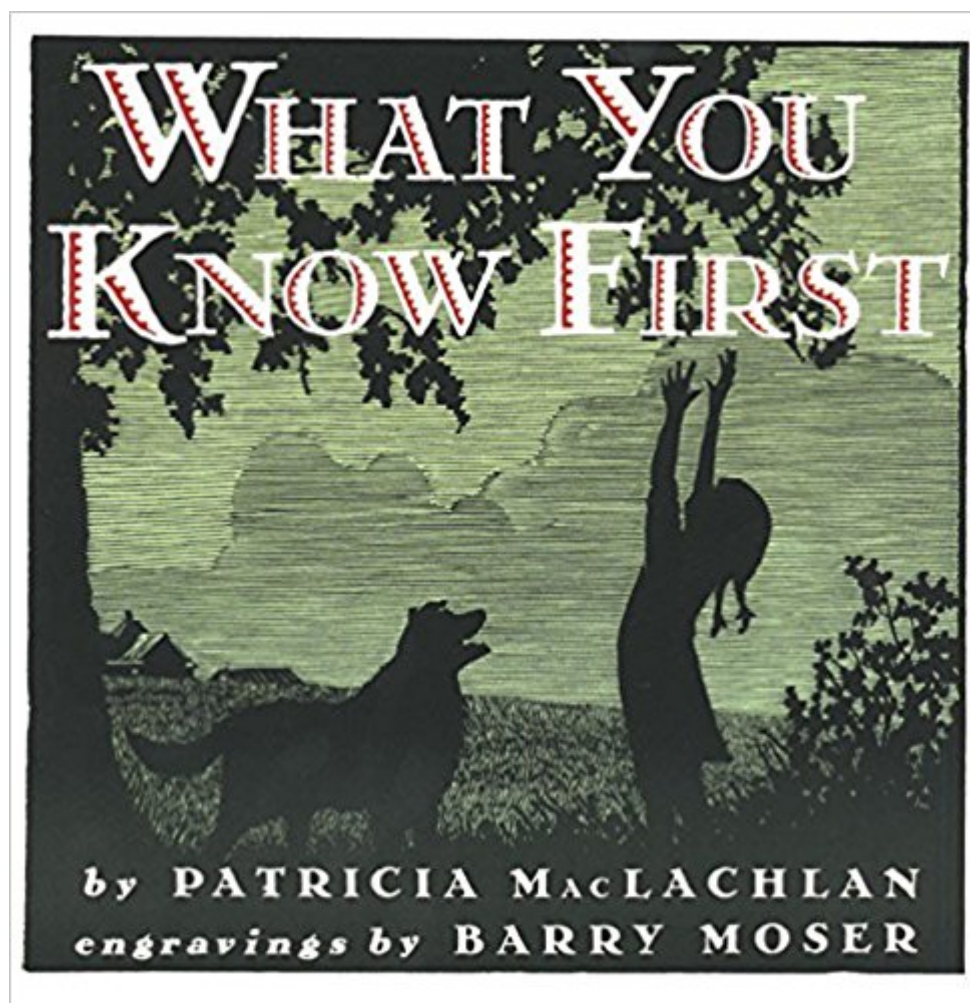


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# What You Know First (Trophy Picture Books (Paperback))



## Synopsis

The stunning picture book collaboration between Newbery Medalâ “winning author Patricia MacLachlan and acclaimed illustrator Barry Moser. A young girl comes to terms with the fact that she and her family are leaving the prairie. As she talks herself into acceptance, her Mama helps her let go, commenting that the baby will need someone to tell him where he came from. So the girl gathers mementosâ ”a bag of earth and a piece of cottonwood tree.â œAs with Sarah, Plain and Tall, the subtext vibrates. So much is told in each perfectly chosen phrase. The story is deep and specific, but the pain and denial of a child leaving a known and loved place is all too universal. Moserâ™s finely-wrought engravings, enhanced by moody tints, record the departure.â •â ”School Library JournalÂ 1995 American Bookseller Association Pick of the Lists

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: NP (What’s this?)

Series: Trophy Picture Books (Paperback)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins; Reprint edition (February 14, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0064434923

ISBN-13: 978-0064434928

Product Dimensions: 9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #64,154 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #44 inÂ Books > Children’s Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Moving #81 inÂ Books > Children’s Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Farm Life #107 inÂ Books > Children’s Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > New Baby

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Newbery Medalist MacLachlan’s minimal, deeply resonant text centers on a girl whose parents have sold their farm on the prairie-clearly not by choice. As she anticipates all that she will miss and devises plots to avoid moving ("Or maybe/ I'll live in a tree./ The tall cottonwood that was small/ when Papa was small..."), the child pieces together the sights, sounds and tactile sensations of the

only life she has ever known. Her parents' attempts to soften the blow don't appease the determined narrator: "Mama says there's an ocean/ In the new place./ And Papa says there are trees./ I don't need trees,/ Only the one./ I don't need an ocean/ I've got an ocean of grass." But there are words that do offer solace: "What you know first stays with you, my Papa says./ But just in case I forget/ I will take a twig of the cottonwood tree/ I will take a little bag of prairie dirt/ I cannot take the sky." Echoing the mournful tone of MacLachlan's poem are Moser's etchings, which place the story in the Depression. Finely detailed, each tinted subtly with a different color, the illustrations project austerity; they may be a bit severe for the average picture-book audience. The especially handsome book design weights every word with significance. Despite its somber tone, the first collaboration between this deservedly acclaimed duo touches the heart. All ages. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kindergarten-Grade 3?A child comes to terms with the fact that she and her family are leaving the prairie. She recalls the people and places she will miss?the blacksmith, the ocean of grass, the drifting snow in winter. As she talks herself into acceptance, her Mama helps her let go, commenting that the baby will need someone to tell him where he came from. So the girl gathers mementos?a bag of earth and a piece of cottonwood tree. There's no happy ending, no real anticipation of the new place?just a sense that the strength of family will carry them through. A novel hides in these few pages. As with *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (HarperCollins, 1985), the subtext vibrates. So much is told in each perfectly chosen phrase. The story is deep and specific, but the pain and denial of a child leaving a known and loved place is all too universal. Moser's finely wrought engravings, enhanced by moody tints, record the departure. The child is caught defiantly off center at first and later in the midst of the packing up. The people and places to be missed are given a solid reality. There is nothing sentimental in either text or illustration. These are strong people dealing with necessity. While this may not be the sort of light, charming book that has immediate group appeal, someone will find it. And for that someone, it will be just right.?Sally Margolis, formerly at Deerfield Public Library, ILCopyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Fun book to read to kids

This book brought me to tears in the middle of a bookstore. I bought copies for each of my children. They are all grown and I believe this will speak to them. It is beautifully done and is now part of my

permanent library.

Great////

I love the simplicity of her writing. The way she develops her characters that makes me care about them. I would recommend her books to anyone.

I bought this for my niece when my father was selling our childhood home. And then I had to buy her another copy since I couldn't bear to part with it. Gorgeous drawings, spare words, and wonderful sentiment.

The book is great, but the seller wasn't truthful. I bought this as a new book, but it wasn't new. It was clearly worn and had someone's name written in the book. I paid for a new book, but ended up receiving a used one.

I was highly recommended this book and I couldn't be more disappointed. I expected a sweet goodbye to a beloved home, reliving fun memories of time spent there, helping the child emotionally deal with leaving that place. Instead, the illustrations are dark, serious, melancholy, ominous - like something bad is going to happen any minute. The people are frowning, the whole mood is very sad and depressing. If that was my home, I'd be running as fast as I could to get anywhere else. The prose is nice, but not for a young child. My 5yr old was frowning and confused through the whole book and afterward said he did not like it and didn't want to read it again. I agree. This book is for an adult who likes artistic esoteric children's books.

In this picture book, illustrated with engravings by Barry Moser, a young girl whose family is moving from their prairie home to another place, realizes that she is leaving, possibly forever, the place she "knew first." She is leaving the sights, the sounds, the smells, the memories of her life as it has been. Even though her father assures her that "what you know first stays with you," the girl is afraid she might forget. And so, just as the author did in real life, the girl in the book takes with her a twig of the cottonwood tree and a bag of the prairie dirt -- so that they will always remind her of her earliest memories. A touching story.

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