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# Wish

Emma Patton

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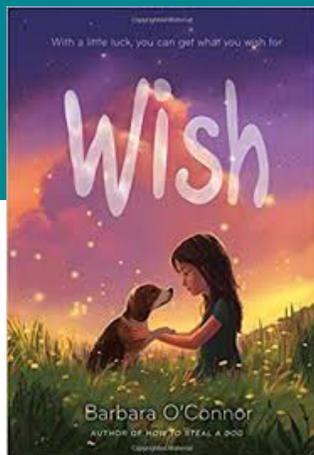
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### Author

Barbara O'Connor

### Illustrator

### Reviewer

Emma Patton

### Rating

Excellent

### Level

Intermediate

### Pages

240

### Year

2016

### Publisher

Farrar Straus Giroux

### ISBN

9780374302733

## Book Review

### Wish

Charlie makes the same wish every day, but she can't say what it is or it won't come true. She has a lot that needs fixing, though. Since her daddy is in jail and her mama isn't doing so well at being a mama, Charlie is sent to live with her aunt and uncle, whom she doesn't even know. At first, she thinks she will hate living their small town. But she soon realizes that it's nice to be able to rely on her aunt Bertha and uncle Gus, even when she makes mistakes. She meets Howard, a boy who shows her unconditional friendship and helps her to manage her anger. Plus, she finds Wishbone, a stray dog that she adopts as her own. Charlie realizes that her family doesn't look like everyone else's, but that doesn't mean she doesn't have one. Pretty soon, where Charlie once yearned to return to her old life and live with her mama, she realizes that this hillbilly town might be the best place for her after all.

Wish is written simply and so is accessible to younger readers, but is also written very skillfully. Author Barbara O'Connor manages to write a book that is perfectly appropriate for intermediate readers without sacrificing any writing quality. O'Connor also writes very complex and nuanced characters. Each is believably flawed but also relatable and likable. Charlie is a troubled child and, just as she would in real life, struggles with emotional and behavioral problems as a result. Though it would be easy to write the book so that Charlie's problems were all miraculously solved through the power of fiction by the end of the story, O'Connor instead loyally sticks to reality and writes an appealing but by no means utopian ending for Charlie. The book ends with her in a safe and hopeful situation, but there is still a lot of personal work for her to do and things for her to figure out. Wish is definitely a work of realistic fiction, but shows the enduring hope that is possible amidst reality.