

Elisapee

and Her Baby Seagull

By Nancy Mike

Illustrated by
Charlene Chua



EDUCATOR'S
RESOURCE



Elisapee and Her Baby Seagull

About the Book

When Elisapee's father brings home a baby seagull, Elisapee falls in love with the bird right away. She feeds and cares for her new friend, named Nau, and even helps Nau learn how to fly! Nau grows, and grows, and grows some more, until she's big enough to fly all over town and play with the other seagulls. Soon, it seems like Nau is ready to leave home for good, and Elisapee has to learn how to say goodbye.

About the Author

Nancy Mike was raised in Pangnirtuuq (Pangnirtung), Nunavut, and continues to maintain close ties with the community. This is Nancy's first book, and she is passionate about sharing stories of life growing up in Nunavut. Currently, Nancy lives in Iqaluit, Nunavut, and works as a research associate for Family and Community Health with Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre. She is a throat singer, songwriter, and plays the accordion. She has travelled around the world with a band called The Jerry Cans where her biggest passion was to empower other Indigenous people across the globe. Nancy is also an *anaana* (mother) to three beautiful girls and hopes to inspire them to love their culture and language . . . and to embrace intellectual endeavours as Indigenous people themselves.

About the Illustrator

Charlene Chua worked as a web designer, senior graphic designer, web producer, and interactive project manager before she decided to pursue illustration as a career. Her work has appeared in *American Illustration*, *Spectrum*, and SILA's *Illustration West*, as well as several art books. She illustrated the children's picture books *Julie Black Belt: The Kung Fu Chronicles* and *Julie Black Belt: The Belt of Fire*. She lives in Hamilton, Ontario, with her husband and two cats.

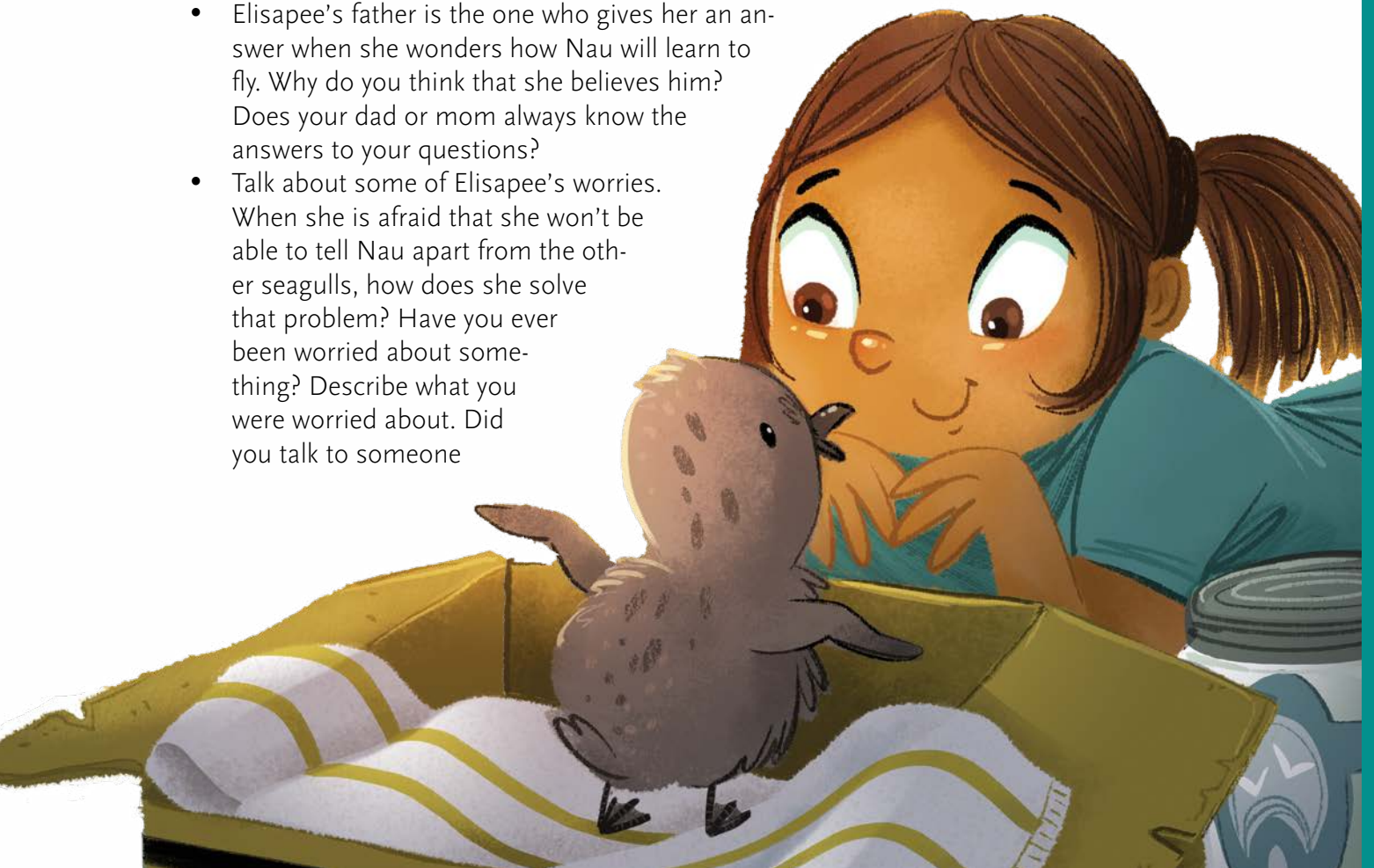
Pre-Reading Discussion Questions

Before reading the book out loud to the class, hold it up, show students the front cover, and ask: What do you think the story is going to be about? Do you think it will be a funny story? If yes, why does the cover make you think that? Does the cover make you curious? What are you curious about?

During and Post-Reading Discussion Questions

The following questions and discussion points can be used during and after reading *Elisapee and Her Baby Seagull*. Provide students with the chance to voice their own opinions, share their experiences, ask questions, or point out anything else they may notice about the book.

- Does anyone have a pet at home? Does the pet belong to you, or to another person in your family? Where did you get the pet? How long have you had it? Is your pet a wild animal, like Nau? What are some of the possible problems with trying to turn a wild animal into a pet?
- Is your pet a part of the family, as Nau was? How can you tell from the story, and from the pictures, that Nau became a member of Elisapee's family? Who are the other members of her family? How is your family like hers? How is your family different from hers?
- Have you read any other books about kids and their pets? Were they anything like this story? If not, how were they different? Were they non-fiction (true stories) or fiction (made-up stories)? Do you like true stories better than made-up stories? Why or why not?
- What kinds of activities did Elisapee and Nau do together? If you have a pet, do you like doing things with them? How is spending time with a pet different from spending time with another person? Do you like being with animals better than you like being with people? Are there things you can tell your pet that you wouldn't tell another person?
- Do you think Elisapee takes good care of Nau? Describe some ways that she takes care of the seagull. Do you do some of these things to care for your pet? Besides learning responsibility, what other things can you learn by caring for a pet?
- Even though Elisapee might live in a place that's different from where you live, there are still things in the story that may be familiar to you. Can you give examples? Does a member of your family have a boat? Do you have a little brother or big sister? Have you seen a seagull? Have you visited the shore?
- Elisapee's father is the one who gives her an answer when she wonders how Nau will learn to fly. Why do you think that she believes him? Does your dad or mom always know the answers to your questions?
- Talk about some of Elisapee's worries. When she is afraid that she won't be able to tell Nau apart from the other seagulls, how does she solve that problem? Have you ever been worried about something? Describe what you were worried about. Did you talk to someone



about it, or did you just want to be quiet? Did you take some action that helped you to stop worrying?

- Another worry of Elisapee's is that Nau won't learn how to fly. How many times does she throw Nau high into the air before the seagull begins to fly? The story says that Nau "landed on the tundra, looking excited and scared at the same time." Have you ever been excited and scared at the same time? Do you think it's important to keep trying when you are doing something that is hard or scary?
- How does Elisapee feel when she realizes that Nau is not coming back? Would you have felt the same way? Have you ever had to say goodbye to a person or animal that you loved? Besides talking to someone you trust, what else can make you feel better when you're sad?
- Elisapee's mother tells her: "Sometimes you have to learn to let things go." Do you think this is true? If yes, is it a good thing to learn? What are some times you might need to let something—or someone—go?

Extension Activities

Have students complete one or more of these activities.

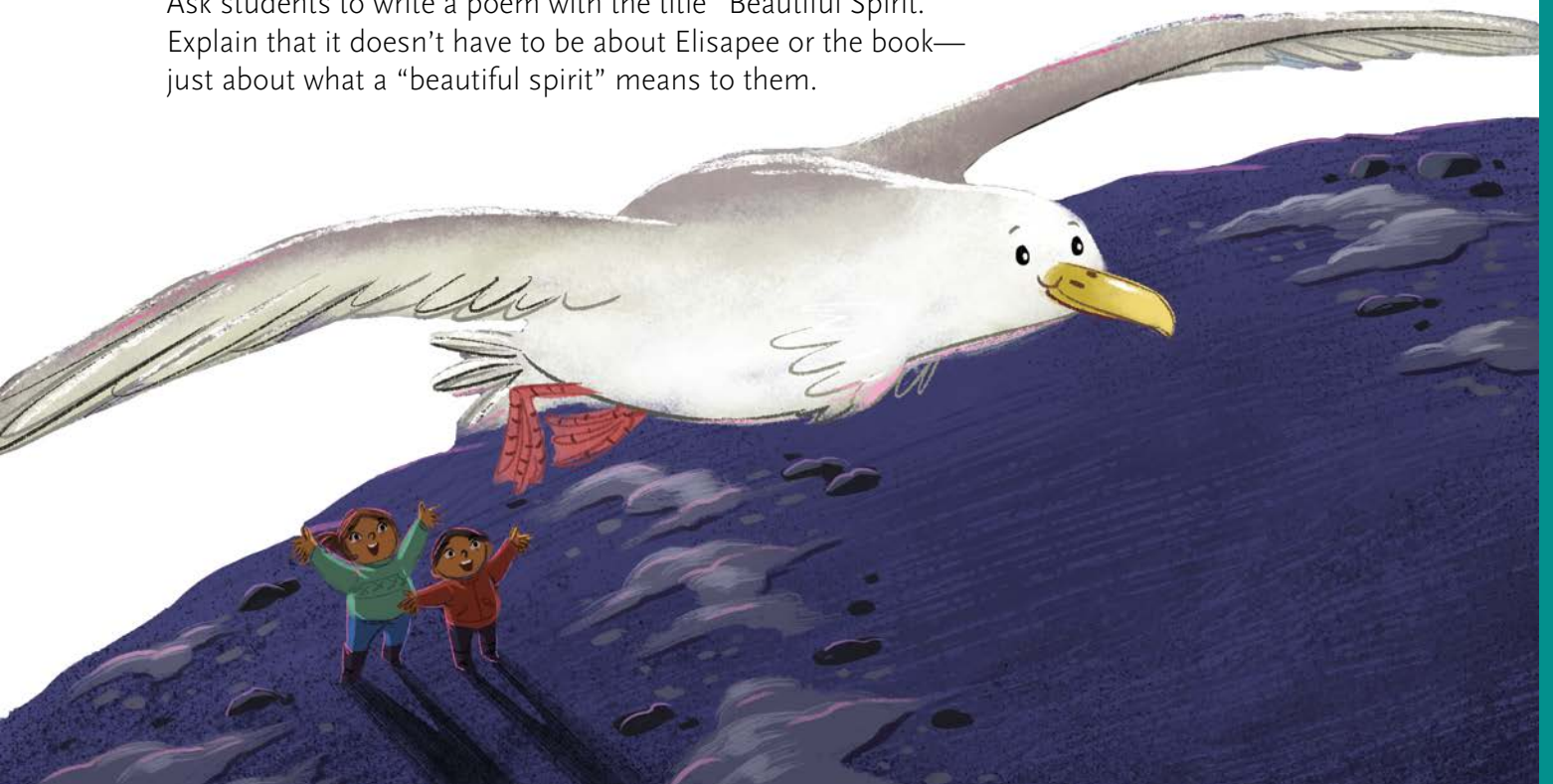
Language Arts

WHAT'S NEXT?

Ask everyone to imagine and then write a story about what happened to Nau after she left Elisapee.

BEAUTIFUL SPIRIT

The last line of the story is "As she watched, she remembered Nau and her beautiful spirit." Ask students to write a poem with the title "Beautiful Spirit." Explain that it doesn't have to be about Elisapee or the book—just about what a "beautiful spirit" means to them.



Art

CLASS “PUPPET SHOW”

Have everyone in the class draw a character or a scene from the story. Attach the drawing to a craft stick. Read the story out loud a second time and have students hold their pictures up whenever the character or scene is mentioned. After rereading, “plant” the “puppets” where they can be seen and admired.

CREATIVE DRAWING

Ask students to choose one of these ideas, and draw it:

- Make a portrait of their pet
- Draw a person or a pet who they have lost
- Imagine and draw the pet they wish they had
- Copy a scene from the book or draw a new scene with the book’s characters

Science

ALL ABOUT NAU

As a class, make a list of everything you learned about seagulls from reading the story. Then do some class research using books and the Internet to find other seagull facts to add to your list and post it on the classroom wall.

