

EPISODE **53**

Can a Children's Book Change the World?

Guest: Linda Sue Park

- 2 Meet Linda Sue Park
- 2 In this Episode
- 3 Listening Guide
- 4-5 Quotes & Questions
- 6-7 Show Notes



Meet **Linda Sue Park**

Linda Sue Park is the author of more than 20 books including some RAR favorite novels and picture books. In 1999 she published her first book, *Seesaw Girl*, and since then she has published several others including *A Single Shard*, that won the Newbery in 2002.

She has also written an incredibly beautiful, powerful story about life in Sudan called *A Long Walk to Water*. You can learn more about all of her books and [access her TedxTalk](#) at her website, www.lindasuepark.com.

In This Episode

Sarah and Linda Sue talk about the powerful link between reading and writing, and how the time that Linda Sue spent at the public library shaped the writer she would become.

Linda Sue talks about the importance of diversity in children's literature and gives great ways to open windows and doors for our children through the books we choose.

The Listening Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.

- 3:30 A little about Linda Sue's family and work
- 4:50 The wonder of libraries
- 6:30 Practice in dealing with unfairness
- 10:00 Diversity in children's literature
- 16:30 *A Long Walk to Water*
- 20:00 Emerging themes in writing
- 23:15 The lasting impact of *Long Walk to Water*
- 27:30 Losing yourself in a book
- 29:45 Advice for young writers
- 32:15 Research for writing
- 34:00 What Linda Sue is writing now
- 38:00 Picture book fun
- 43:00 Let the Kids Speak

They need to see characters of color in books so they know the same thing; that people of color are important enough to be in books. - Linda Sue Park

Quotes and Questions

* **A curious mother and a library card ...**

“The public library makes it so that most people...can become readers, especially if there is a caring adult in our life who will teach us about the library.”

Ann Voskamp believes that “a curious mother and a library card can offer a stellar education.” Are there resources like free classes or audiobooks that you could utilize from your library? Do you make space for library visits in your weekly schedule. It’s not also possible in every season of life! Jamie Martin talks about creatively using the library in Episode 11 of the podcast.”

* **Windows, doors and mirrors.**

“How about looking for an equally wonderful book that might have kids who look a little different in it, and not just because you have kids that look like that in your classroom, obviously that’s the mirror thing, we want them to see each other and to feel that they are important enough to be in books, but even if your classroom is all white or mostly white, you know that’s where it becomes windows and doors.”

This image of literature as a mirror—something that reflects your experience—and as a window or door—something that frames another view or takes you somewhere new—is a revelation! It calls to mind Tricia Goyer’s words in Episode 52 about not knowing how the small seeds we are planting with reading aloud will take root and grow in our children. What doors are you opening?

* **A good book can be read again and again.**

“And if it’s a really good book you can read it at age 10 and again at age 30 and again at age 50 and it’s going to say something slightly different to you each time.”

Of course this calls to mind one of Sarah’s favorite C.S. Lewis quotes: “A children's story that can only be enjoyed by children is not a good children's story in the slightest.”

Are you making space in your schedule for re-reading?

* **Starting a Swap Journal.**

“My daughter and her good friend about 4th or 5th grade they started this Swap Journal. They chose one of these regular notebooks and my daughter would write something in it- a story, a poem, or a letter, and then she would give it her friend, Alana, and Alana would write in it, either something new or responding to what Anna had said.”

READ-ALLOUD REVIVAL

Cheat Sheet Episode **53**

These journals sound a lot like the reader response journals that Gail Ledbetter talked about in Episode 47. This might also be a great way to introduce a little writing practice without the pressure of assignments.

Show Notes

Books from today's episode:

- [Seesaw Girl](#)
- [A Single Shard](#)
- [A Long Walk to Water](#)
- [The Yearling](#)
- [Bridge to Terabithia](#)
- [Karen English's books](#)
- [Christopher Paul Curtis's books](#)
- [Sundee Frazier's books](#)
- [Lisa Yee's books](#)
- [Crenshaw](#)
- [All American Boys](#)
- [One Plastic Bag](#)
- [Boxes for Katje](#)
- [Nancy Drew](#)
- [Half Magic](#)
- [All-of-a-Kind Family](#)
- [The Wing and Claw series](#)
- [39 Clues Book 5 - Trust No One](#)
- [Yaks Yak](#)

Other links from today's show:

- [Linda Sue Park's TED Talk](#)
- [Linda Sue Park's site](#)

READ-ALOUD REVIVAL

Cheat Sheet Episode **53**

- [Her novels](#)
- [Her picture books](#)
- [Diverse Picture Books to Celebrate the Everyday](#)
- [The Reading page](#) on her site
- [We Don't Only Need More Diverse Books. We Need More Diverse Books Like The Snowy Day.](#)
- [The Reading Without Walls Challenge](#)
- [We Need Diverse Books](#)
- [Water for South Sudan](#)
- Information about the [Rochester Children's Book Festival](#)
- Linda Sue Park on [Twitter](#)
- The [RAR Booklist](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit ReadAloudRevival.com.