

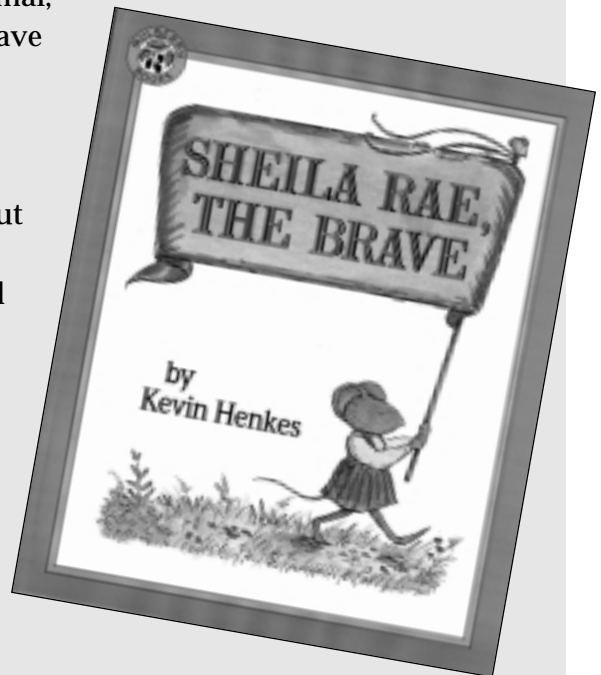
# Sheila Rae, the Brave

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY KEVIN HENKES

As children grow up, they feel more independent. But they also need to feel protected by the adults around them. So they may go back and forth in their behaviors, acting like they own the world one minute, and like helpless infants the next. Sheila Rae shows children that this is very normal, and that it's okay to be brave sometimes and less brave other times.

## ***Start a conversation:***

Ask your child how he or she thinks Louise felt about Sheila Rae in the beginning of the book. What did Louise think of her at the end of the book? What did Sheila Rae and Louise learn from this experience?



# Finding your way

## What this activity is about:

You and your child will make a map of the neighborhood, and then they will use it to get around.

## Developmental Focus:

- Following directions
- Learning new words
- Using more complicated sentences
- Sharing

## What's needed:

- A large piece of paper
- A ruler
- Pens or markers

## How to do it:

- 1:** You and your child should decide how much you want to show on the map: just right near home, or a few blocks away as well.
- 2:** Then, walk the area you plan to map, talking about what buildings, trees, and other landmarks to put on the map. Talk about the relationships between things, saying, for example, "This pine tree is right beside the front door," and "That billboard is on top of the grocery store." Make note of the things your child decides belong on the map.
- 3:** Depending on the age and skills of your child, either you or your child should draw the map, showing the major landmarks you have chosen. Make sure not to have too many landmarks. Your child can color houses, trees, and other items that he or she wants to color.
- 4:** Then go outside together and see how well the map works. You can, for example, stand in front of a building that is marked on the map and ask yourselves "How can we get home?"  
*Note:* It's important not just to follow the map, but to talk about what the map tells you, such as, "We need to walk down Jones Street past the grocery store, then turn left onto Market Street until we pass the Methodist Church, then we'll be home."
- 5:** Some children may want to add more to the map, such as showing how many paces one landmark is from another.

**Other things to do:**

Talk about what it means to be brave. Help your child think of times he or she has been brave.

Play hide and seek. (Adult: Make sure to get caught, and not to find your child too quickly!!)



Rose Fyleman's poem "Mice" is fun to read aloud. Try it, listening for the poem's rhythm.

### MICE

I think are rather nice.  
Their tails are long,  
Their faces small,  
They haven't any  
Chins at all.  
Their ears are pink,  
Their teeth are white,  
They run about  
The house at night.  
They nibble things  
They shouldn't touch  
And no one seems  
To like them much.  
But I think mice are nice.

(by Rose Fyleman, from *Read-Aloud  
Rhymes for the Very Young*, selected by Jack  
Prelutsky, Alfred Knopf, c. 1986.)

### TALKING TIP:

Kevin Henkes, the author and illustrator of *Sheila Rae*, has written and illustrated lots of other lively children's books, including *Lily's Purple Plastic Purse*; *Chrysanthemum*; *Julius, Baby of the World* and *Owen*. Look at several of these books and talk about Henkes' style of drawing. This will open the door for more discussions of illustrators' styles.

### At the Library:

Ask the librarian for other picture books by Kevin Henkes.

### About the Author:

Born in 1960 in Wisconsin, Kevin Henkes knew that he wanted to be an artist from an early age. He was greatly influenced by the picture books he had as a child with drawings by such artists as Crockett Johnson and Garth Williams. He was encouraged in both art and writing by his family and a high school English teacher, and finished a draft of his first published book during his senior year.