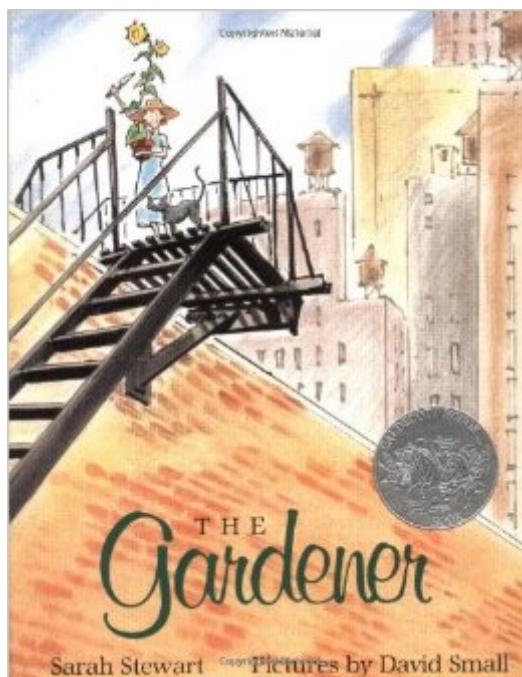


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# The Gardener (Caldecott Honor Award)



## Synopsis

By the author-and-illustrator team of the bestselling *The Library* Lydia Grace Finch brings a suitcase full of seeds to the big gray city, where she goes to stay with her Uncle Jim, a cantankerous baker. There she initiates a gradual transformation, bit by bit brightening the shop and bringing smiles to customers' faces with the flowers she grows. But it is in a secret place that Lydia Grace works on her masterpiece -- an ambitious rooftop garden -- which she hopes will make even Uncle Jim smile. Sarah Stewart introduces readers to an engaging and determined young heroine, whose story is told through letters written home, while David Small's illustrations beautifully evoke the Depression-era setting. *The Gardener* is a 1997 New York Times Book Review Notable Children's Book of the Year and a 1998 Caldecott Honor Book.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 570L (What's this?)

Series: Caldecott Honor Book

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR); 1st edition (August 30, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374325170

ISBN-13: 978-0374325176

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.4 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (111 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #49,523 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #74 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > City Life](#) #84 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature](#)

[& Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s](#) #2150 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life](#)

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

## Customer Reviews

There are good David Small books and there are bad David Small books. Good David Small books are usually (though by no means always) written AND illustrated by David Small himself. Bad or poorly created David Small books are usually written by someone else, using Mr. Small's talents as a kind of afterthought. The exception to this rule (and all rules, as you well know, must have

exceptions) is the pairing of David Small and his wife Sarah Stewart. After creating the fabulous "Money Tree" and the bibliophilic, but somewhat disturbing, "The Library", the two combined their talents yet again to write a gentle story of love, gardening, and family. The year: 1935, and Lydia Grace Finch is being sent from the country to go live with her Uncle Jim in the city. Lydia Grace faces this challenge with resolve and a little sadness. After all, she is leaving her family behind, the effects of the Great Depression having taken their toll. The city is a gray dirty place and Uncle Jim is kind but he never smiles. Soon, it's Spring again and Lydia has found a place to call her own (the building's abandoned roof). Her number one goal is to get Uncle Jim to smile, and she's fairly certain that the answer to this goal is just around the corner. What Stewart and Small have accomplished here is an evocative sense of metropolitan dank and pastoral greenery. The pictures are deeply moving sometimes, and gently humorous others. One picture that particularly took my breath away was the shot of Lydia Grace standing in the train station alone. She is singled out, a blue dress wearing, green hat donning, red-haired little girl. The rest of the scene is all gray slashes of people walking in the distance and filthy light streaming through huge windows overhead. It's a gorgeous picture.

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