

## Interdisciplinary Ideas

### LANGUAGE ARTS

1. The author uses this analogy to describe Ary's thoughts: "Wishes rose in Ary's mind the way goldfish swim to the pond's surface in search of food." Write a few analogies of your own. Begin by comparing the bird in its cage with Ary in her city.
2. Read the book *Fly Away Home* (also illustrated by Himler). As a class, use a Venn diagram to compare the boy in that story with Ary. With the information you have compiled, write a paragraph comparing and contrasting Ary and the boy.

### SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Draw a map of Cambodia and the countries that make up its borders. Include topographical features, such as rivers and bodies of water.\* Research to find out how geography has affected the history and politics of the country. Display your map and findings on a bulletin board.
2. Research what would be for sale in a market in Phnom Penh.

\* Visit [www.heartwoodethics.org](http://www.heartwoodethics.org) and choose Teaching Heartwood, Culture Keys, for more on the history, culture, and geography of this book.

### ART

Sketch your favorite tropical birds using illustrations from bird books or encyclopedias. Then imitate the style used by Ronald Himler and paint over your pencil drawings with watercolors. Use your illustration as a cover for your Science fact sheet

### SCIENCE

Research tropical birds of Asia. With a partner, choose a bird and create a fact sheet. Look for facts about diet, reproduction, and protection. Also include any unusual facts.

## The Caged Birds of Phnom Penh

Frederick Lipp  
2001  
New York: Holiday House

**HOPE**  
Cambodia  
Fiction  
Reading Time: 10 minutes

### CONCEPTS

Hope  
Courage  
Love

### SUMMARY

**Poverty enslaves many people in Cambodia in the aftermath of years of oppression and war. Ary, a resourceful and persistent girl, feels trapped in the inner city of Phnom Penh and dreams of the time when her family can live in the freedom of the beautiful countryside. Ronald Himler paints Ary's hopes with a bright palette and soft brushstrokes.**

### OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to define and discuss hope, courage, and love as they apply to this story. The student will be encouraged to examine personal aspirations and how to realize them.

# After the Story

## The Caged Birds of Phnom Penh

### DISCUSSION

1. What characteristics do you think describe Ary? Discuss difficulties she and her family endure living in the city of Phnom Penh.
2. What do you think of the bird lady? Did it take courage for Ary to go back to this woman to ask for another bird? Why or why not?
3. What did Ary wish for as she freed the bird? How do her wishes show love for her family? Why do you think she wished for herself after she wished for the others? What makes people put others before themselves?
4. How does Grandfather encourage Ary when he reminds her that her name means knowledge? What do you think she might do as she gets older to help make some of her dreams for a better life come true? What can you do to make your dreams come true?

### ACTIVITIES

1. Find Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on the world map.
2. To Ary, a bird is a symbol of hope. With a partner, list other symbols of hope and good fortune.
3. On a Venn diagram, list things you have hoped for, things Ary hoped for, and hopes you share. Meet in small groups to talk about similarities and differences.
4. Invite a guest from or familiar with Southeast Asia to talk to the class about the history and bright future of Cambodia and her neighbors.

### JOURNAL

1. Write about positive character traits you think Ary possesses. Give examples and explanations for the attributes you mention.
2. Look at the next to the last illustration in the book, where Ary lets the bird fly free. Write a paragraph explaining how you think she is feeling at that moment and why she feels that way.

### HOME CONNECTION

Tell the story at home. Talk about hopes you have for yourself and others and ways you might help each other realize those hopes.

### VOCABULARY

**Buddhist**  
**salt-fish**  
**merchant**  
**riels**

**lush**  
**accustomed**  
**descend**  
**plush**