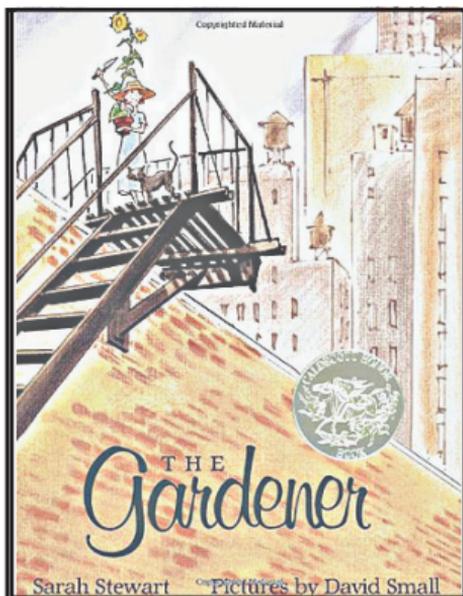




# The Village School's Children's Book of the Month



**The Gardener Reviewed  
by Katrina Walton**

*Katrina Walton is a Kindergarten and first grade science teacher at the Village School.*

What is a more hopeful event than planting a garden or growing something from a seed? This book revolves around a young girl, Lydia Grace, who loves to garden and brings that hope and faith wherever she goes.

The Gardener, by Sarah Stewart, takes place during the depression era, when people had trouble keeping food on the table and sometimes had trouble feeding their own children. Young Lydia Grace leaves her parents to work at her Uncle Jim's bakery in the city.

Lydia works as a bakers assistant and tells her story through a letter format, whether she is writing a letter to her parents, grandparents or even Uncle Jim.

She travels on a train to the city, and she arrives at the train station all alone. This scene is void of color except for Lydia Grace, creating a dreary beginning to Lydia's adventures. David Small is the illustrator of this book and uses pen, ink and color to emphasize the mood of each picture.

She then meets her Uncle Jim, who has a constant frown. Lydia Grace, with all her optimism, is determined to change that.

She settles herself into the bakery, growing plants in every discarded or cracked pot imaginable and learning how to bake. Seeds are sent to her from home and with her magic touch, the bakery blossoms with activity and flowers.

Lydia isn't finished yet. There is a vacant lot, located on the rooftop of the bakery. As she transforms the rooftop, she also transforms the lives of Uncle Jim and everyone else she touches with her gardening magic.

The story leaves you realizing what a positive change a little girl can make, especially one who loves to garden.

This is a beautiful picture book, and is a nice read aloud (over and over again) for ages four through seven. Children ages eight and older will enjoy reading it themselves.

You can find the book at Bruce's Browser in uptown Athol.