

Hi, my name is Whitney Hogan. I'm an assistant dean at Bowdoin and I work in the Res Life office.

And today I'm going to read you the introduction and the first page from the book, "The Lost Words" by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris. Jackie Morris is a really beautiful illustrator of mostly children's books. And Robert Macfarlane is a really well-known nature writer based in the UK. And the premise of this book is that in the newest edition of the Oxford Junior Dictionary, which is used by classrooms all over the world, 40 words based on nature had been replaced by words like blog, broadband, bullet point and voicemail, and so this book is 40 pages of words that Robert Macfarlane is trying to keep in children's vernacular and kind of root them in the natural world around them. This is one of the most beautiful books in my house, and it is loved by me all the way to my five- and three- and one-year-old boys. So I hope you enjoy it.

I want to show you what the introduction looks like, just so that you have a sense of the beautiful illustrations that are a part of this book and what it looks like on the inside. Okay. Here we go.

Once upon a time words began to vanish from the language of children. They disappeared so quietly at first that almost no one noticed. Fading away like water on stone. The words were those that children use to name the natural world around them--acorn, adder, bluebell, bramble, conker: gone. Fern, heather, kingfisher, otter, raven, willow, wren. All of them gone. The words were becoming lost, no longer vivid in children's voices, no longer alive in their stories. You hold in your hands a spell book for conjuring back those words. To read it, you will need to seek, find and speak. It deals in things that are missing and things that are hidden in absences and appearances.

It is told in gold, the gold of the goldfinches that flip through its pages on charms, and it holds not homes, but spells of many kinds that might just, by the old strong magic of being spoken aloud, unfold dreams and songs, and summon lost words back into the mouth and the minds eye.

And I am going to read to you "Acorn." And that is what the picture looks like for "Acorn."

Acorn.

As flake is to blizzard, as curve is to sphere, as knot is to net, as one is to many, as coin is to money, as bird is to flock, as rock is to mountain, as drop is to fountain, as spring is to river, as glint is to glitter, as near is to far, as wind is to weather, as feather is to flight, as star is to light, as kindness is to good, so acorn is to wood.

And I want to show you just one more of my favorite pictures from this book so that you have a sense of what it looks like during the... on the whole page illustration.

So this is the page that corresponds with the poem, "Otter."

And I encourage you to look it up because it is both beautiful to look at and makes you feel like a kid when you read it. Thank you so much for inviting me to read with you. I'm honored to have been a part of the series and there's more to come by the Reads to Me series. Thank you so much.

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