

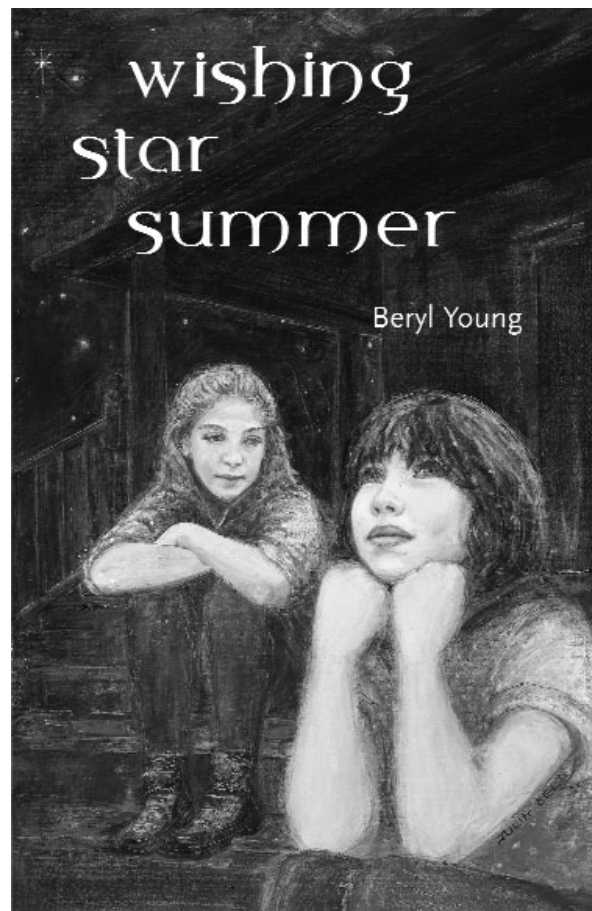
# Wishing Star Summer

by Beryl Young

AGES 8 AND UP • GRADE LEVEL 4 TO 6

## ABOUT THE BOOK

*Wishing Star Summer* is a story based on the experiences of over 400 Canadian families who share their summers with the brave children of Belarus. It is also the heartwarming story of two 11-year-old girls a world apart who spend a summer together. Jillian is a Canadian girl who has everything but a friend. Tanya is a girl from Belarus who has been exposed to Chernobyl radiation and has nothing but an uncertain future. Jillian comes up with an ingenious solution to her friendless, grade six existence and convinces her parents to host Tanya for the summer. But when Tanya arrives, she is not the friend Jillian expected. As the summer progresses, however, Jillian learns an important lesson about friendship and Tanya learns to be hopeful for the future.

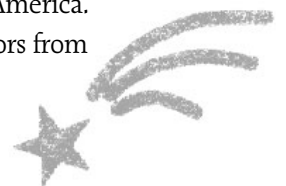


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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vancouver author Beryl Young has published articles, poetry and translations of poetry in Canadian magazines and journals and has appeared on CBC radio and television. She won the Annual People's Poem Award and the People's Poetry Letter in 1995. In 1996 she was named an Emerging BC writer by the Federation of BC Writers. Young is also a member of CWILL and the Vancouver Children's Literature Roundtable and she has produced recordings for children. Young has travelled to India three times to visit her foster son and spends part of each winter volunteering in Central America. Young's youngest son has hosted visitors from Belarus since 1997.



## BEFORE THE BOOK • Words You Need to Know

mediation	radioactive	leukemia	gossamer	orientation	mutilated
nuclear	contaminated	encouraged	radiation	pronunciation	immune system

### • Activities

1. Listen to a recording of “Music Box Dancer” by Frank Mills and draw or write something to express the ideas it generates in your imagination.
2. Bring in a personal item and explain to a partner why it is very important to you. Talk about how you would feel if it were damaged. Now listen to your partner share.
3. Have you had any experiences such as moving into a new town, going to a new school or a new church? Discuss ways to make friends when you are new somewhere.
4. Brainstorm the qualities of a good friend and make a list. Refer to this as you read the story to see which characters are exhibiting these qualities.

## EXPLORING THE BOOK • Chapter Questions and Activities

### CHAPTER ONE

1. How could Jillian have had more success making friends in her new school?
2. Pretend you are another student in class 6B. Write Jillian a note with a suggestion for something she could do to make friends.

### CHAPTER TWO

1. Why is the music box so special to Jillian?
2. Think of two or three things that could go wrong with Jillian’s plan. What would you warn her about?
3. What do you think Tanya’s expectations would be? What would you warn her about?

### CHAPTER THREE

1. Mark Tanya’s route from Minsk to Vancouver on a map of the world.
2. Begin keeping a mini-dictionary of Russian words and their meanings. Add to it as you come across new words.
3. Create a character web for Jillian. With her name in the middle of the web, link words to it that describe the kind of person she is.

### CHAPTER FOUR

1. Why does Mrs. Nelson say on page 41, “Tanya’s not the shy well-mannered girl I’d imagined”?
2. Make a chart comparing Tanya’s home with Jillian’s.
3. Read the whole poem “The Owl and the Pussycat” by Edward Lear. Memorize the first stanza.
4. Learn how to do cat’s cradle or any other string game and show a friend.

### CHAPTER FIVE

1. Describe Jillian’s feelings in this chapter.
2. Why do you think everything seems to be going wrong?



#### CHAPTER SIX

1. What celebrations happen in your community on Canada Day?
2. Explain why Jillian thinks the whole summer has been one big mistake.

#### CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Why do you think Tanya insisted on wearing her old shoes for so long?
2. What do you think about Jillian's reaction to the broken music box fairy?
  - a. What do you think Jillian should do?
  - b. What do you think Tanya should do?
  - c. What do you think Jillian's parents should do?



#### CHAPTER EIGHT

1. What three things does Jillian do to try to make up with Tanya?
2. Have you ever played a practical joke or had one played on you? What happened?
3. Draw a comic strip to show how Tanya and Jillian play a practical joke on David.

#### CHAPTER NINE

1. How does David pay back the girls for their trick with his hair gel?
2. What does Jillian learn about her problems with the girls in 6B?
3. Why is Mariana so much smaller than Tanya even though she is older?

#### CHAPTER TEN

1. Create a timeline to show Chester's recovery from his accident.
2. How do the girls connect caring for Chester with Mariana's illness?
3. What is a "Chernobyl necklace"?

#### CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Look back at your character web from chapter three. Use a different colour to make changes to reflect how Jillian has changed.
2. In chapter eight Gram tells Jillian that people are more important than things. How does Jillian put this into practice?

### **BEYOND THE BOOK • Activities**

1. Use a Venn diagram to compare Jillian and Tanya. Draw two overlapping circles. In one circle write words to describe Jillian, in the other write words to describe Tanya. In the space where the two circles overlap write words that describe both girls.
2. Write a letter from Tanya to Jillian telling what it is like to be back home.
3. Write a letter from Jillian to Tanya telling about going back to school.
4. Make a paper bag presentation about this story. Put six to ten items that relate to the story in a paper bag. As you take each item out and show it to the class, explain its relevance to the story.

## • Curriculum Extensions

- SCIENCE *Nuclear Energy* • Draw and label a diagram to show how a nuclear power plant works. Write a report about the Chernobyl Disaster.
- Health: Leukemia, Radiation Sickness* • Write a report about leukemia: its causes, symptoms and treatment.
- LANGUAGE ARTS *Languages* • Using your list of Russian words, find out what those words would be in some other language.
- CAPP *Friendship* • Write a story about making a new friend.
- Social Responsibility* • With a partner, make a plan for something you could do to help someone less fortunate than yourselves.
- SOCIAL STUDIES *Canada Day Celebrations* • Write an ad for your local newspaper inviting people to participate in Canada Day celebrations.
- Belarus* • On an outline map of Europe and Asia, locate Belarus. Label the major cities, rivers, other bodies of water and the neighbouring countries. Colour your map carefully.
- B. C. Sites of Interest* • Create a brochure of the interesting things to see and do in the area where you live that could be given to a visiting foreign student.
- FINE ARTS *Art* • Paint a picture in the style of Marc Chagall.
- Cyrillic Alphabet* • Make a chart of the Cyrillic alphabet and try to write your name.
- P.E. *Gymnastics* • Create a poster about Olympic gymnasts from Belarus
- Badminton* • Draw and label a diagram of a badminton court and write out the important rules of the game.
- Ice Hockey* • Write a short biography of Wayne Gretzky.



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*Wishing Star Summer* Teacher's Guide (1-55192-533-8) and other learning resources for Raincoast titles are also available at [www.raincoast.com](http://www.raincoast.com). Many of these activities are inspired by the Reading 44 document published by the North Vancouver School District. Raincoast Books grants teachers permission to photocopy this guide for classroom use.

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