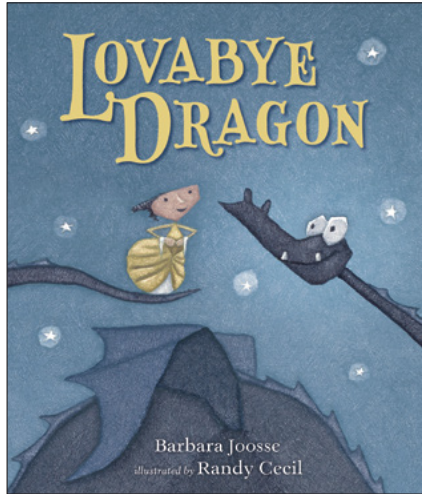
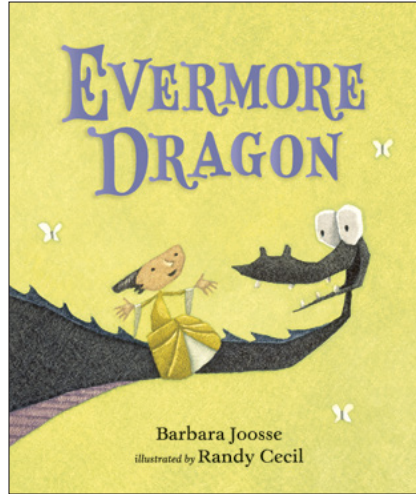


# *The Girl and the Dragon series*

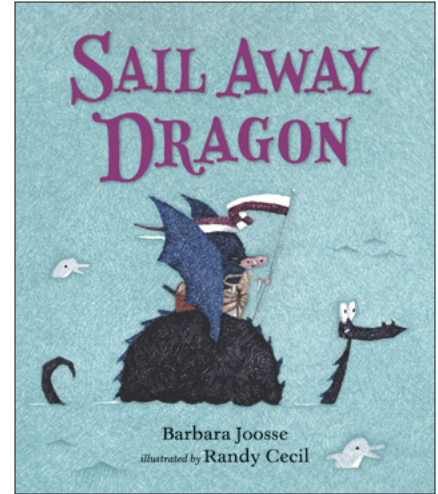
by Barbara Joosse    illustrated by Randy Cecil



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## *Before Reading the Series*

When Barbara Joosse was a girl, she imagined a special friend who would be big and strong and able to fly. Ask your students to name the qualities they would like in a very special friend. Then ask them to name some things they are afraid of or afraid to do. Would that change if they had such a friend beside them? Tell your class you're going to read three stories about two unusual friends.

## *After Reading Lovabye Dragon*

### LANGUAGE

Explain that we can sometimes find rhymes or rhythms within words (like "Lovabye") or when certain words are put together, as in this passage: "but the *trickle* of tears / little tickle of tears / woke him up. / *Gluk!*" This is called *musicality*. Ask the children to find words or phrases that have musicality.



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## CHARACTER STUDY

“On the outside, Girl is little. On the outside, Dragon’s biggle. But they’re *just* the same size / *exactly* the same size / in the middle.” Ask your students what they think this passage means. Then begin to make a list of characteristics for Girl and another list for Dragon, as in the examples below.

### Girl:

*small*  
*cries special silver tears*  
*alone*  
*lives in a castle*  
*loves Dragon*  
*afraid of monsters and giants*  
*sings lovabye songs*

### Dragon:

*big*  
*can hear and follow*  
*silver tears*  
*silly*  
*loud*  
*can fly*  
*can breathe fire*  
*lives in a nest, in a cave,*  
*in a mountain*  
*loves Girl*



## After Reading Evermore Dragon

### LANGUAGE

Ask your class to find words the author “played” with — words she either invented or changed. Then ask: even if they aren’t real words, can you guess what they mean? What does your class think the line “At the wake of derry-day” means? How is that different from the phrase “In the morning”?

## CHARACTER STUDY

Discuss what it feels like to be afraid and alone. Then discuss what it feels like when someone understands this and helps you. Add new characteristics to your lists.

### Girl:

*understands Dragon*  
*has compassion for Dragon*  
*afraid of the dark*  
*afraid of monsters in the night*

### Dragon:

*brave*  
*enthusiastic*  
*loyal to Girl*  
*can light up the sky*  
*can hear Girl’s frightened heartbeat*



## Before Reading Sail Away Dragon

Now that Dragon has demonstrated that he can hear Girl’s heart when she’s worried and afraid — and that he’ll always find her and help her — how does your class feel Girl might change and grow? Discuss how a loyal friendship makes you the best that you can be. Ask your class to name things they might do with a friend like that.



## After Reading Sail Away Dragon

### CHARACTER STUDY

What did Barbara Josse decide the friends would do because of their loyal friendship? (Adventure! Travel!) Ask your class to list the things Girl packed for the trip. What would your class like to pack on an adventure? Ask them to name the troubles Girl and Dragon found along the way. Is Girl changing? Would your class like to add anything to Girl's and Dragon's characteristics?



**Girl:**  
*clever*  
*resourceful*  
*braver*

**Dragon:**  
*can shelter Girl from rain*  
*with his wings*  
*can make his wings into a sail*  
*can float like a boat*

### WRITING

Barbara Josse is creating a series that is sequential. She wants her characters to change as they grow to trust one another. Tell your students that she has left a few clues to help them guess what might happen in the next book. See if they can find some new elements that might appear in the next story:

*the Bad Hats*  
*scrawny orange cat*  
*note in a bottle*  
*shark with no teeth*  
*owl strumming tunes to the man in the moon*



Tell your students that a plot is the series of events that happens within the story. Most plots are based on what the characters are like — what they can do, where they live, what they are like together. Ask your students: what do you think will happen next? This time YOU are the author. Make up the next story. Be sure to use the things you know about Dragon and Girl to decide what will happen. You might use some of the new “clues” in your story . . . or you might make up some of your own. You’re the author — you decide!

## About the Author



Barbara Josse has written 49 books for children, and her work has been translated into 29 languages. She co-wrote the lyrics to many songs by the Happy Racers, a indie-rock band from Nashville. Several of the songs coordinate with her Dragon and Girl books. Additionally, she helped create a musical, *Lovabye Dragon*, based on her Dragon and Girl books. The musical features a 32-foot puppet as Dragon, which is operated by three puppeteers. It won a Jim Henson family grant and will tour across the United States.