**Hidden**

**By:** Helen Frost  
**Publisher:** Farrar Straus & Giroux  
**Copyright:** 2011  
**Genre:** Fiction (Novel in Verse)  
**Setting:** Locked garage and then summer camp in Upper Peninsula, Michigan

**SUMMARY:**  
*Hidden* begins with a robbery and a carjacking with eight year-old Wren hidden under a blanket in the back of her mother’s stolen car. The thief unknowingly drives the car to his home with Wren still hiding in the back. While news reports of the crime include the pleading parents asking for Wren’s safe return, the carjacker doesn’t believe the little girl was in the car. His wife and daughter, Darra, worry the girl could be locked in the garage. After several quiet searched, Darra discovers Wren hiding in the front of a boat. The girls do not see or talk with each other, but they know the girl must escape.  
Eight years later, the two girls are attending summer camp and discover that they are sharing a cabin. Both have unresolved questions and blame from the incident. After a period of avoidance and a near drowning, the girls begin to talk and piece together the puzzle of what really happened years ago.

**AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:**  
Helen Frost was born in Brookings, South Dakota, the fifth of ten children. She attended Syracuse where she took journalism and poetry classes, majoring in elementary education. She received a Masters at IUPUI in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She has lived in South Dakota, Massachusetts, Scotland, Vermont, Alaska, Oregon, and California, and presently lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She is married and has two sons and two grandchildren. She enjoys travel, hiking, beaded gourd-work, kayaking, and raising and releasing monarch butterflies. She has taught writing at all levels, from pre-school through university.


**Author's website:** [www.helenfrost.net](http://www.helenfrost.net)  

**Interview with Helen Frost**, includes a reading of an excerpt from *Hidden*  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txO6DtWe7jI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txO6DtWe7jI)  
**Book Talk Video:** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkTKNXv94Ag](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkTKNXv94Ag)

**Other books written by the author:**  
**Fiction/Poetry**  
*Keesha’s House*, 2003  
*Spinning Through the Universe*, 2004  
*The Braid*, 2006  
*Monarch and Milkweed*, 2008  
*Diamond Willow*, 2008  
*Crossing Stones*, 2009  
*Step Gently Out*, 2012  
**Non-fiction**
AWARDS AND HONORS:
2012 ALA Notable Book
2012 Bank Street Best Children's Books, Starred
Lee Bennett Hopkins Children's Poetry Award Honor Book
2012 – 2013--Vermont: Dorothy Canfield Fisher Children’s Book Award Master List
2012 Texas Lone Star Reading List (middle school)
2012 – 2013--Maryland: Black-Eyed Susan Book Award Nominee (grades 6-9)

SIMILAR BOOKS/BOOKS WITH A SIMILAR THEME:
Girl, Stolen by April Henry
Face on the Milk Carton by Caroline Cooney
Ransom by Lois Duncan
Taken by Edward Bloor
What Happened to Cass McBride? By Gail Giles

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
1. On page 6 Wren remembers a police officer coming to her first grade class to discuss stranger danger safety. What would you or should you do if you found yourself being kidnapped or carjacked?

2. Discuss the girl being locked in the garage from Wren’s point of view. Then discuss the event from Darra’s perspective? What are they feeling? What are their fears? (p. 9-35)

3. “What do you do when all of a sudden your dad is gone and the rest of your life is nothing like it was before?” p. 43
Discuss events in life that change lives forever. What can the survivors do to go on with their lives? What shouldn’t they do?

4. Wren chooses to hide in the Monson’s garage until she can find the right time to escape. Darra believes Wren is in the garage and makes the risky decision to leave food out for her in the garage (pg 29-30). Darra risks her father's anger and abuse for her decision. What would you do in the situation if you were Darra?

5. How has each girl, Darra and Wren, changed since West Monson stole the Wren's car?

6. Darra and Wren finally decide to talk to one another about the events six years ago. What did each girl learn from this discussion? How does it change their attitude about the other person? (pg 120-124)

7. How did the poetry and author’s explanation of the format add to/distract from your enjoyment of the book as the reader? (pg 145)
LITERARY LINKS or ACTIVITIES:

1. Seven Treasures
On page 135, Sam gives Wren a box with seven treasures he made or found. Most people would not consider these items valuable or priceless. But they were to Sam.

- Locate or make a box in which you will place seven treasures. What will you place in the box?
- Write a description of not only the items, but also why each item is valuable, a treasure.
- Bring the treasures and box to class. In small groups, share your treasures and discuss why each was chosen.
- Take a digital photo of your treasures in the box. Upload the image and add a description of one of the items importance to the class blog.
- Comment on at least two classmates treasure posts.

Language Arts Standards
7.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
7.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
7.W.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
7.W.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

2. Helen Frost uses different structures to tell each girl’s story. What do the different formats contribute to the overall story? Which is more effective? Why do you think this?
6.RI.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text
3. How does the author develop the point of view of Darra? How does the author develop the point of view of Wren? 6.RL.6 Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

Social Studies
4. How does the author present information throughout the novel? 6-8.RH.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g. sequentially, comparatively, casually).

Challenging Words
Poignant - on front inside flap
Suffocated p. 10

Battle of the Book Questions available through the link on the Young Hoosier Book Award webpage.