

	<h1 style="text-align: center;">A Chair for My Mother</h1> <p style="text-align: center;">by Vera B. Williams</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>After an apartment fire destroys all they own, Rosa, her mother and her grandmother move to a new apartment and start over. They save all their coins in a large jar until they finally have enough money to buy a special chair for Mama to rest in after a long day's work at the diner.</p>
<p>Background Building/Vocabulary</p>	<p>This story takes place in an urban setting. Talk about the difference between living in a city and a small town. The illustrations are particularly noteworthy for the use of color and the borders around each page, which often reflect some aspect of the mood or theme of the story. Vera B. Williams was given the Caldecott Honor Award for this book — the most prestigious annual award for an American children's book illustrator.</p>
<p>Pillars of Character Discussion Points</p>	<p>Caring and Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A supportive neighborhood or community helps when people experience hard times. * Saving money is a responsible way to meet needs and wants. * A loving family is more important than material possessions. * Teamwork is important to reach a goal.
<p>Questions for Discussion</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do people in your neighborhood show they care for one another? 2. Have you or your family ever saved money for something special? 3. What jobs did Rosa do? What job did her Mama do? 4. How did this family use this new, special chair? 5. How does each member of this family show they care for each other? 6. If you could buy a piece of furniture to suit your family's needs, what would it look like?

Vera B. Williams – Biography

Vera B. Williams, born in 1927, didn't illustrate her first picture book until she was 48 years old. But her path towards an artistic career began much earlier, when she was growing up in New York City in the 1930s and 40s. At the Bronx House, a local community center, she acted, danced, and painted. When Williams was 9 years old, one of her paintings was included in an exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art.

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Comprehension Questions

What did the family want to buy? Why?

They wanted a soft, comfortable chair because their other chair and sofa were lost in a fire.

Why didn't they just buy a new one?

They did not have enough money.

How were they able to buy a new chair at the end of the story?

They had saved enough money in the large jar.

How did the little girl earn money to save?

She worked at the restaurant with her mother. Her mother's boss would pay her.

Where did the family keep their savings?

In a big glass jar.

What money would the mother add to the savings jar?

She would add the coins she earned from tips at the restaurant.

How did the grandmother increase the savings?

She would shop for the family's food at the market. Anytime she received a bargain price, she would put the savings into the savings jar.

What happened after they filled the savings jar with coins? Or How were they able to buy a chair at the end of the story? They saved enough coins. They rolled the coins and exchanged them at the bank for bills. They took the money downtown to purchase a new chair.

What will the family probably do with the empty jar?

Answers will vary: They will probably start saving again for something else they want to buy.

What does this book teach us about patience?

How do the characters feel about each other?

How can you tell?