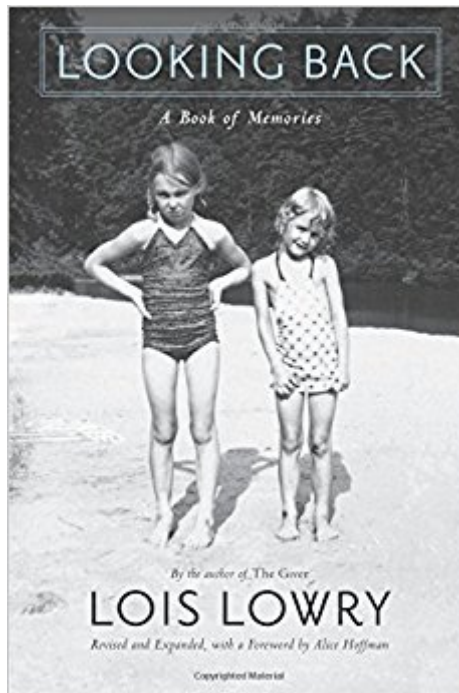




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# Looking Back: A Book Of Memories



## Synopsis

(star) "A compelling and inspirational portrait of the author emerges from these vivid snapshots of life's joyful, sad and surprising moments."--Publishers Weekly, starred review  
In this moving autobiography, Lois Lowry explores her rich history through personal photographs, memories, and recollections of childhood friends. Lowry's writing often transports readers into other worlds. Now, we have the opportunity to travel into the real world that is her life. This edition features a refreshed design, an introduction by bestselling author Alice Hoffman, and material from Lois from the past twenty years, including the making of *The Giver* movie.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Lowry (*The Giver*; *Number the Stars*) deftly dances between humorous and heartbreaking with this ingenious memoir. Unlike most autobiographies, this one forgoes a linear chronology in favor of a more inventive thematic organization. Lowry introduces each section with an excerpt from one of her novels, followed by one or more anecdotes—each inspired by a photograph of herself or her family. "Reaching Across," for example, features a photo of Lowry and her older sister, Helen, and offers insight into their closely knit relationship; the pair are the models for the exuberant younger and practical elder sisters who appear again and again in Lowry's fiction. Three chapters ("Dogs," "More Dogs" plus "And Dogs One More Time") explain why canines repeatedly show up in her books. In addition to recurring themes, Lowry cites examples of a single, powerful image that

becomes a central idea in a novel. In "Bonds," for instance, a quote from *The Giver* introduces an idyllic picture of Lowry's daughter lying on the back of a horse in the Maine summer sun reading a book. Lowry, the daughter of an itinerant army major, then describes her wish to give her children the things she never had, "a house that was always ours, books that were always there to be read again and again, and pets that followed you home and were allowed to stay." Lowry tenderly relates the recent death of her eldest son Grey in "Sadness," alongside photographs of him with his wife and little girl, and demonstrates how families in fiction and in fact keep their loved ones alive by telling their stories. The unorthodox structure allows Lowry to take creative license to great effect: at critical junctures, she pairs pictures of her mother and herself at the same age and imagines what they might have said to each other at that stage of life. In one such vignette, Lowry recalls that she lost Grey within two years of the age at which her mother lost her daughter Helen (Lowry was 58, her mother was 56) and imagines a conversation between them, and how they might have comforted each other. Lowry unfolds her history in a glorious arc, invisibly threading its parts into a unified whole. Her connection of the everyday details of her life to the larger scope of her work adds a new dimension to her novels and may well encourage readers to speak and write honestly about their own experiences. A compelling and inspirational portrait of the author emerges from these vivid snapshots of life's joyful, sad and surprising moments. All ages. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 5 Up-Imagine sitting on a sofa with a friend and listening with fascination while she tells you about the pictures in her photo album. That is the feeling one has when browsing through this book of Lowry's family snapshots and reading her lively commentary on them. Readers will chuckle as they hear the tale of the frozen rat she attempted to revive by heating it in the oven and will smile knowingly at the unhappy look on her face when she was forced to wear lederhosen her mother brought home from Europe. The author's voice comes through strongly as she shares both her happiest and saddest times. Though the organization is somewhat chronological, many photos are loosely grouped by topic-"War," "Adolescence," "Opening a Trunk" and so forth-which allows her to make connections between people and events. She introduces each photo, or group, with a quotation from one of her books, making a connection between an event in her life and its fictional counterpart. In *The Giver* (Houghton, 1993), Lowry writes about the importance of memory, and here, she shows her readers the important role it plays in her own life-how she has used her memories in her work, how they have helped her get through difficult times, and how they enrich and connect us. Much more intimate and personal than many traditional memoirs, this work makes

readers feel that Lowry is an old friend. Barbara Scotto, Michael Driscoll School, Brookline, MA  
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This book is truly touching. The pictures are funny at times, and everything is just very nice. I have read the book twice now, and plan to read it again!

I got the digital copy & there were a lot of typos in that form. My friends had hard copies and didn't have those problems. I read this for my book club and I really enjoyed how Lois Lowry tells short stories about her life.

I really enjoyed this book and the many photographs.

It was amazing to read about her life, the ups and downs. I would recommend this book to anyone. Easy and great read.

Great book by a favorite author.

Beautiful book.

This is a great book that gets in the mind of Lois Lowry. Very humorous and touching stories about what she took from her own life to make into the great books she writes.

Love this book. Very inspiring.

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