

Sometimes
the biggest
lessons come
from the smallest
moments. ♥

People may forget,
but love remembers. ♥

Checkers with Pop Pop

An Otis Story

SAME
GAMES
BRIGHTER
DAYS
♥

Discussion & Reflection Guide

Real families. Real challenges. Brighter days. ♥

About the Book

Checkers with Pop Pop: An Otis Story follows ten-year-old Otis, who loves school, his friends, and especially his time with Pop Pop. Their checkers games, front porch talks, and silly stories have always been a special part of life.

But when Pop Pop starts forgetting things, Otis notices that not everything feels the same. It can be confusing, frustrating, and sometimes even a little scary. As things change, Otis learns that love doesn't disappear when memories get mixed up. With patience, humor, and a lot of heart, he discovers that kindness, connection, and showing up matter more than ever.

A heartfelt story about family, Alzheimer's, and the power of second chances.

Same games.
Brighter days. ♥



Suggested Age Range

Ages 8–12

Best used with:

- Parents and caregivers
- Teachers
- School counselors
- Grandparents and family members
- Therapists (child and family)
- Classroom discussions
- Libraries
- Book clubs



Key Themes

- Alzheimer's and memory changes
- Family love and connection
- Patience and kindness
- Grief and confusing feelings
- Finding new ways to stay close
- The power of routines and traditions
- Honesty and open communication
- Intergenerational relationships
- Resilience and hope
- You are not alone

Love stays, even when
memories change. ♥



Why This Book Matters

Checkers with Pop Pop helps children understand Alzheimer's in a gentle, age-appropriate way. It shows that memory changes can be confusing and hard, but love, patience, and small moments still matter. The story encourages open conversations, empathy, and finding new ways to stay connected, even when things look different.

This story helps children understand:

- ♥ Memory changes are not the child's fault.
- ♥ It's okay to feel sad, confused, or worried.
- ♥ Love can stay strong, even when memories change.
- ♥ There are still ways to enjoy time together.
- ♥ Kindness, patience, and understanding make a big difference.
- ♥ Families can adapt and make new traditions.

It opens the door for meaningful conversations about Alzheimer's, caregiving, and the many ways love can continue to grow.



Different days.
The same love. ♥



Before Reading

You might ask:

- 1 What do you know about Alzheimer's or memory changes?
- 2 What are some ways families spend time together?
- 3 How do you think it might feel if someone you love started forgetting things?
- 4 What are some things that help people feel safe and loved, even when things are hard?

There are no right or wrong answers. Let children share as much—or as little—as they feel comfortable.



Let's Talk About Otis and Pop Pop

- 1 What do you think Otis loves most about his time with Pop Pop?
- 2 How do you think Otis felt when he noticed Pop Pop was forgetting things?
- 3 What are some ways Otis continued to show love and stay connected?
- 4 What are some new traditions they created?
- 5 How did Otis's family support him?
- 6 What are some ways we can show patience when someone is having a hard day?
- 7 What would you say to a friend who is going through a similar experience?
- 8 What is one thing you learned from Otis's story?



Gentle Connection Questions

- What are some special memories you have with a grandparent or older loved one?
- How can we be kind when someone forgets something?
- What are some ways we can still have fun together, even when things look different?
- How can we help family members who are taking care of someone with Alzheimer's?
- What does "showing up" look like?
- What are some ways love can be shown besides words?



Small moments.
Big love. ♥



Try This: Memory Keeper Activity

Create a "Memory Keeper" page. Invite the child to draw or write about:

- ♥ a favorite memory with a grandparent or loved one
- ♥ a tradition they enjoy
- ♥ something they are grateful for
- ♥ a way they can show love this week



A Note for Adults

This book can be a valuable tool for starting conversations about Alzheimer's, memory changes, caregiving, and the many emotions children may experience. Some children may have personal experiences with these topics, while others may be learning about them for the first time.

- ♥ Let the child lead the conversation.
- ♥ Validate their feelings.
- ♥ Answer questions honestly and at an age-appropriate level.
- ♥ Emphasize love, patience, and connection.
- ♥ Reassure them that they are not alone.
- ♥ Share that it's okay to feel a mix of emotions.

Kindness
creates
brighter days. ♥

Steady Heart Studio

Stories for Brighter Tomorrows ♥

"Love shows up in the everyday moments." ♥