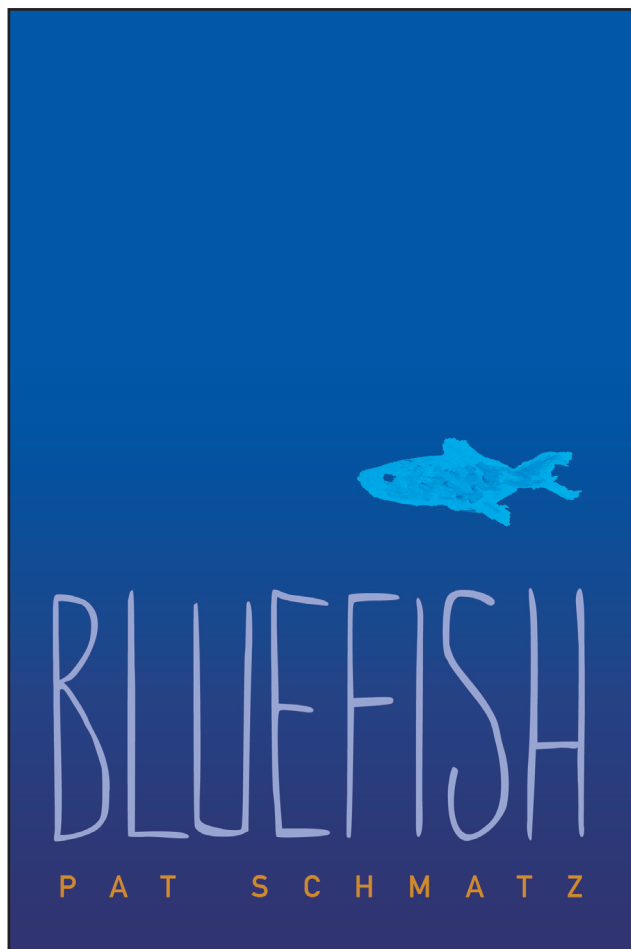


A MIDWEST CONNECTIONS PICK

Thirteen-year-old Travis has a secret: he can't read. But a shrewd teacher and a sassy girl are about to change everything in this witty and deeply moving novel.



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Travis is missing his old home in the country, and he's missing his old hound, Rosco. Now there's just the cramped place he shares with his well-meaning but alcoholic grandpa, a new school, and the dreaded routine of passing when he's called on to read out loud. But that's before Travis meets Mr. McQueen, who doesn't take "pass" for an answer — a rare teacher whose savvy persistence has Travis slowly unlocking a book on the natural world. And it's before Travis is noticed by Velveeta, a girl whose wry banter and colorful scarves belie some hard secrets of her own. With sympathy, humor, and disarming honesty, Pat Schmatz brings to life a cast of utterly believable characters — and captures the moments of trust and connection that make all the difference.

Pat Schmatz is the author of three previous novels for teens. She lives in rural Wisconsin.



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