Geneva Reads

Spring 2013 Community Read comprehensive lesson kit for grades K-12

"Inspiring a culture of lifelong reading through dynamic community collaboration."

Geneva Reads is a collaborative effort by the city's public and private schools, Geneva Public Library, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Finger Lakes Health, community agencies and others in Geneva to increase the understanding of the importance of reading in all phases of life. Since 2008, the Geneva Reads coalition has been working to create a culture of literacy in our community.

Each year, Geneva reads organizes community events, programs, discussions, and speakers centered around a particular set of books that share a common theme. This Spring, the Community Read selections focus on education, work, and the "American dream" - what opportunities does one have as a citizen of the United States? How does our society regulate who is allowed to identify as an American? As students interact with the variety of activities included in this lesson kit that involve the history, politics, literature, and art targeting immigration in our country throughout the past several decades, they will learn more about the accommodations that the United States makes for immigrants and the sense of belonging that one feels once they hold legal residency.

GENEVA READS

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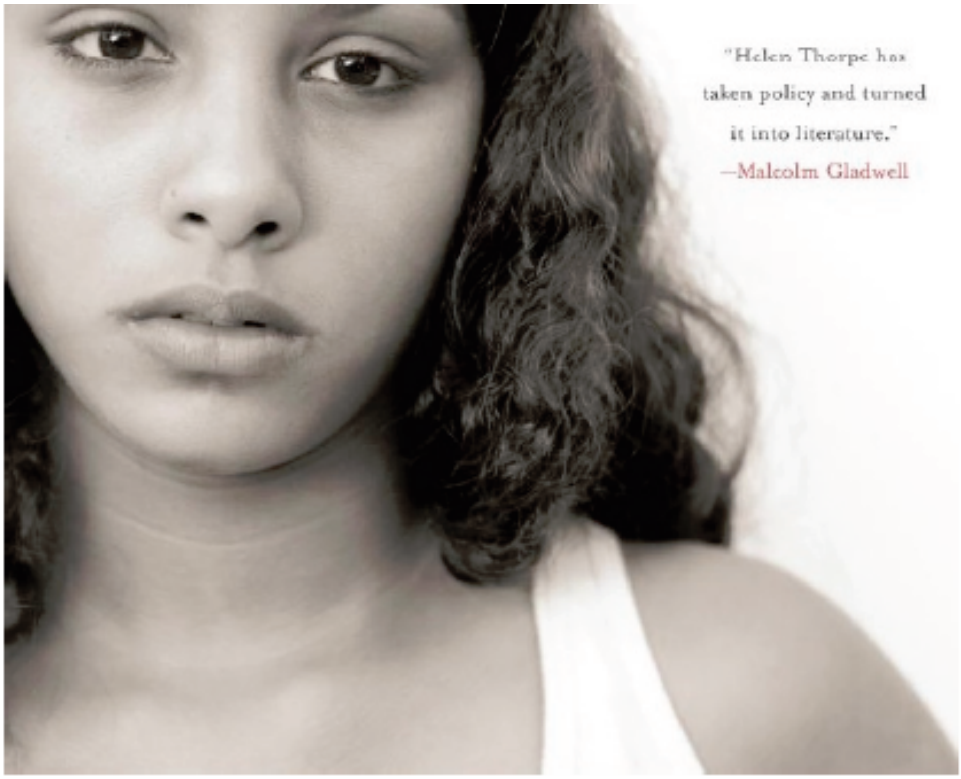
"United We Dream": Geneva 2013

"We envision a future where Genevans of all ages enjoy an enhanced quality of life though literacy and the love of reading."



Just Like Us

Just Like Us tells the story of four high school students whose parents entered this country illegally from Mexico. We meet the girls on the eve of their senior prom in Denver, Colorado. All four of the girls have grown up in the United States, and all four want to live the American dream, but only two have documents. As the girls attempt to make it into college, they discover that only the legal pair sees a clear path forward. Their friendships start to divide along lines of immigration status.

Through the lives of four fascinating young women, Thorpe creates not only a moving examination of a complicated American issue, but a well-told, inspirational story as well. -*Kirkus Reviews*

Just Like Us is a coming-of-age story about girlhood and friendship, as well as the resilience required to transcend poverty. It is also a book about identity—what it means to steal an identity, what it means to have a public identity, what it means to inherit an identity from parents. The girls, their families, and the critics who object to their presence allow the reader to watch one of the most complicated social issues of our times unfurl in a major American city. And the perspective of the author gives the reader insight into both the most powerful and the most vulnerable members of American society as they grapple with the same dilemma: Who gets to live in America? And what happens when we don't agree?

About the author:

Helen Thorpe

Helen Thorpe, wife of Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper, is a freelance writer who has written for *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *New York Magazine*, *The New York Observer*, and *Texas Monthly*, among other publications. Thorpe reads from and discusses *Just Like Us: The True Story of Four Mexican Girls Coming of Age in America*, a powerful and moving account of four young women from Mexico who have lived most of their lives in the United States and attend the same high school. Two of them have legal documentation and two do not. This brilliant, fast-paced work of narrative journalism is a vivid coming-of-age story about girlhood, friendship, and, most of all, identity. No matter what one's opinions are about immigration, *Just Like Us* offers fascinating insight into one of our most complicated social issues today.

Just Like Us table of contents:

- Character Guide
- Privileges
- Key Terms
- Discussion Guide
- "American Dream" activity
- Dream Board activity

Marisela	Yadira	Elissa	Clara
Marisela was brought across the border without documents at age 7.	Yadira was brought across the border without any documents at age 3.	Elissa was born in the United States and is a citizen, but grew up in Mexico.	Clara was brought across the border without documents at age 7.
Marisela's parents tried and failed to acquire legal status in 1986.	Yadira's mother has no legal status, but her father acquired citizenship in 1986; he later abandoned the family.	Elissa's mother crossed the border without documents into the United States with Elissa when she was only 3.	Clara's father obtained legal status in 1986.
Marisela has 2 siblings that were born in the United States and are legally American citizens.	Yadira has 3 siblings that were born in the United States and are legally American citizens.	Elissa's father has a green card and her mother obtains legal status through his residency.	Clara acquires a green card in high school, and her family qualifies for the temporary family reunification program.

Discussion tool: Privileges

Marisela and Yadira (who lack legal status) ***cannot:***

Qualify for in-state tuition in their home state of Colorado

Obtain a Pell grant or any federal subsidy

Qualify for most private scholarships

Drive legally

Work legally

Open a bank account, take out a credit card, write a check

Fly on an airplane

Take a bus across state lines

Get into venues that require ID, such as movies, clubs, bars

Key terms in *Just Like Us*:

A coyote is person who smuggles Latin Americans across the US border, typically for a high fee.

The DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) is an American legislative proposal that would provide conditional permanent residency to certain undocumented residents of good moral character who graduate from U.S. high schools, arrived in the United States as minors, and lived in the country continuously for at least five years prior to the bill's enactment. If they were to complete two years in the military or two years at a four-year institution of higher learning, they would obtain temporary residency for a six-year period.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a government program that gives cash assistance to needy families with dependent children, and to pregnant women, to help them meet the basic needs of their children. This cash assistance can be used to help families with housing, utilities, and clothing costs.

The Temporary Family Reunification Program reconnects children in out-of-home care with their families by means of a variety of services and supports to the children, their families, and their foster parents or other service providers. It aims to help each child and family achieve and maintain, at any given time, their optimal level of reconnection—from full reentry of the child into the family system to other forms of contact, such as visitation—that affirm their child's membership in his/her family.

JUST LIKE US

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. In the title "Just Like Us", who does the word "us" refer to? What do you think the title means?

2. In what ways are the four girls representative of certain groups (Mexicanas, Latinas, immigrants, etc), and in what ways are they unique?

3. Identify figures largely in this book. Girls who are becoming young women struggle to find their adult identities; undocumented students hide their illegal status from their peers; other characters in the book possess multiple identities. What kind of labels do the people in this book wear, and how does it help or hinder the ability of others to see who they really are?

4. Some people feel it is wrong to call any human being "illegal," arguing that the term "undocumented" is more enlightened. Others feel it is important to call someone who crosses the border without the right documentation an "illegal alien." The author chooses to use all of those terms at various points. What do you think about these terms, and how might they shape people's understanding? Does calling someone "illegal" suggest that they do not belong to our society? Is this harmful? What term would you prefer to use?

5. How would this book be different if it had been written by a different person? What if a native-born United States citizen had written the book? What if a Latina had written the book? How might this book be different if it had been written by Yadira? In other words, how did the author's position in society, or her own points of view, color this story?

6. How do the differing legal statuses of various characters affect others? How are the undocumented girls affected by having siblings who possess legal status? How are the undocumented girls affected by having close friends or peers who possess legal status? Conversely, how are the two girls with papers affected by having family members and close friends who lack legal status? How are children in this book affected by having parents whose status is different than their own? How are parents affected by children whose status is different than their own?

7. The book mentions a Bible passage from Leviticus: "And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Should this Bible passage be interpreted to apply to illegal immigrants living in the United States? Federal laws in the United States make it illegal to harbor or to knowingly employ an illegal immigrant. Are these laws in conflict with the instructions in the Bible? If so, which laws should be obeyed?

8. Which people in the book are doing the right thing, and which of them are doing the wrong thing? Are there well-intentioned people in the book who cross the line and do the wrong thing out of an excess of sympathy, or some other motivation? How would you have acted in the same circumstances?

9. Alma purchases a real person's identity on the black market and uses it to work. She is later accused of committing a felony because of this, and rather than stand trial, she chooses to flee the country. What do you think about her actions? Is Alma a good person or a bad person? Why?

10. Later in the book, Yadira chooses to buy a fake Social Security card on the black market (although she uses a made-up number, rather than a stolen identity). Marisela has already made the same decision, at a much younger age, on the advice of her parents. Is this right or wrong? What do you think of their actions? What would you have done if you were in their shoes?

11. If a child is brought to this country by his or her parents as a toddler, without the right documentation, and grows up here, then which country should that child consider his or her home? The one where they have legal citizenship? Or the one that they know, where their friends and family live? And when the child becomes an adult, does he or she have a moral obligation to return to their country of origin? Is it realistic to expect that this will happen? What would the experience be like?

12. In what ways were the educational institutions mentioned in the book successful in addressing the needs of the young women, and in what ways were they lacking? What public policies presented the most opportunities for the young women, and what presented the most barriers? What support systems were essential to the young women's successes, and what support systems were absent? How did the actions of interested individuals provide opportunities or barriers for the young women?

13. Which choices did people in this book make that you agree with? Which did you disagree with? How did the choices of parents affect their children? Which choices did their children make that you agree with or disagree with?

14. In what ways did this book change or affect your own views?

15. Not many young women without papers make it through college. How did Marisela and Yadira manage to finish high school, find the money to pay for a topnotch university, and graduate with bachelor's degrees?

16. Being born in London, but later immigrating to the United States at a young age, Helen Thorpe admits to feeling a sense of dual identity that the girls in *Just Like Us* also felt. How is her experience similar to that of the girls? How is it different? What does she mean when she says that she and the girls had "something in common...and nothing in common"?

17. While at Theodore Roosevelt High School, Marisela, Yadira, Elissa, and Clara face all the same "growing pains" that any other teenage girl would. How are their problems compounded by Marisela's and Yadira's lack of legal status?

18. Marisela pays state and federal taxes during her employment at a local supermarket, despite the fact that she is not a legal resident or a citizen. Thorpe writes, "even though she (Marisela) would never collect Soical Security payments - she was padding the fund for America's legal retirees." Why do you think Thorpe chooses to mention this fact?

19. Discuss the differences between "Chicanos" and "mexicanos" at Theodore Roosevelt High School. Were you surprised to learn that there are divisions within the Latino community? Where do the girls fit in? What tensions does this division cause?

20. The author does not shy away from the tough issues that her husband, John Hickenlooper, faced during her writing of *Just Like Us*. Why do you think she chose to make mention of his difficulties? Do you think he ever made questionable decisions related to immigration? How about other business owners who employ the students and their family members?

21. The girls bond over their common struggles. However, when Yadira, Clara, and Elissa obtain financial aid, they avoid telling Marisela. Yadira comments, "Now I've got money, and she doesn't, and I'm almost sure I'm going to make it - and that built a wall right there." Do you think that the girls were destined to have these conflicts because of their difference in status? How is the financial aid experience a metaphor for the struggles that immigrants without legal status continue to experience?

22. How does the dance showcase at Theodore Roosevelt High School parallel Yadira and Marisela's relationship? How does it speak to the lives they lead in contrast to the lives they want?

23. How does the shooting of Denver police officer Donnie Young cast an unfavorable spotlight on the immigrant community? How did the events surrounding the investigation of his death affect the girls? The author? Were you surprised to learn about Donnie Young's heritage and fluency in Spanish? How did that affect your understanding of what happened inside Salon Ocampo?

24. Irene Chavez speculates that race caused conflict for the girls in college. Do you believe her assessment that Yadira and Clara were trying to fit in with white students? How does their friendship with Luke exacerbate the problem? Why do they hide certain things from him? Is the conflict really that Yadira and Clara are trying to assimilate while Marisela cannot?

JUST LIKE US

DISCUSSION GUIDE (CONT.)

25. Do you agree with the author when she theorizes that opportunities for immigrants were "curtailed by their lack of documents - their inability to obtain legal status perpetually threatened to stunt their potential"? Do you think Marisela and Yadira rise to these challenges? *Just Like Us* was originally published in 2009. Discuss how the political climate surrounding immigration has changed. If the girls were applying to college in the present day, do you think they would have had a different experience?

26. In the introduction, the author writes, "immigration is...inherently messy. The issue bleeds. And we are all implicated". Do you agree? After reading *Just Like Us*, what steps do you believe still need to be taken?

27. It is obvious that the author comes from a much different background from the girls she writes about. At thr conclusion of the book Thorpe comments that she was looking at Marisela from "across the cultural gulf". Is Thorpe's comment one of disappointment or acceptance? Will that gulf ever close?

28. *Just Like Us* begs the question, what makes us an American? Is the answer any more clear to you after reading the book? What do you think makes someone "American"?

THE "AMERICAN DREAM"

Objectives: Students will analyze, interpret, and conduct research with digitized primary source documents interpret immigrant social life in the United States; they will then present and defend their ideas about what the American Dream has been, through the decades relate what they have uncovered from inquiry and research to their own American Dream.

INTRODUCTION

Define the scope of the project: Before introducing the lesson, or as a class, define the scope of the historical research conducted in this project. Will teams gather material from a specific decade? Discuss the difference between primary and secondary sources and why they are valuable sources of information.

Engage students: Invite students to begin their inquiry by considering the dreams of today and the dreamers of the present. Next, use historical collections to learn about our cultural heritage and find evidence of the dreamers in our collective immigration history. Finally, ask your students to compare their own dreams to the dreams of those who lived before them. Students should understand that history is the continuing story of human experience, the stories of people like themselves. Help students to understand that as they define and pursue their own dreams, they create the future of our nation and the world.

ORGANIZE

Divide your class into learning teams and assign roles and responsibilities. Each team will select (or be assigned) a research role (photographer, lawyer, poet, politician, producer, comedian, musician). Each student will work as part of the team to complete the project. Remind students that while they each have specific tasks, all team members pitch in and help one another. Provide time for students to explore the student page of the project.

Team	Description	Product
Photographer	With your artful eye, you capture the images of the American Dream.	Design a photo essay that shows the American Dream. Show how the Dream has been affected by time, cultural influences, and significant historical events.
Reporter	On the newsbeat, you report and chronicle the events which shape the American Dream.	Write a news article that reports the results of your research on the American Dream. (Article includes: title, who, what, when, where, and how.)
Lawyer	Your passion for controversy and debate guide your vision of the American Dream.	Prepare a legal brief about the status of the American Dream. (Legal brief includes: title, who vs. whom, statement of facts, argument, conclusion, references.)
Politician	With your finger on the pulse of the American people, you trace significant political events that shape the American Dream.	Write and deliver a speech that traces the political events that shape the American Dream. Your speech shows how the "Dream" has been affected by political response to cultural influences and significant historical events.

GENEVA: “UNITED WE DREAM” – DREAM BOARDS

Overview: In this lesson, students will create individual collages representing their long-term personal, educational, and career goals. Every dream board is different and allows for students to place images representing their home, family, friends, career, travel, and education dreams. Pictures may be pasted from magazines, words can be written, and drawings may be added.

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Describe personal goals for the future in a way others can see and understand
- Demonstrate ability to verbally and visually describe personal short-term and long-term dreams

Materials:

- Magazines, newspapers
- Personal photographs
- College brochures
- Large poster board
- Scissors
- Markers, crayons
- Glue sticks

Procedure:

1. WARM UP: Quick Write
Wishes and Goals handout
For 2-5 minutes, have students write about their personal long-term goals and wishes. PROMPT: Tell students to begin ideas with “I want” or “My vision is…” to initiate their brainstorming.

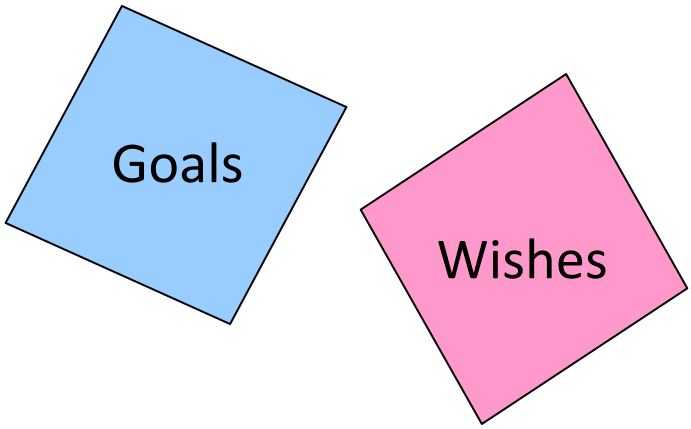
2. Explain the idea of a dream board. Dream boards are tools used to brainstorm goals, remind us of our goals, and help us stay on track when times or tough. They can be both long-term (over 5 years in the future) or short-term.

3. Ask students to review their quick write to get an idea of what kinds of images they will look for or write on their boards to represent their goals - students should make a list of their ideas.

4. Explain to students about the expectations for the assignment. Discuss appropriate and inappropriate imagery in the collages.

5. Students can now search through magazines or draw pictures and words to create their dream board collages,

6. Dream boards should be displayed in a prominent place in the classroom and referred to when relevant topics of identity and goals come up elsewhere in the curriculum.



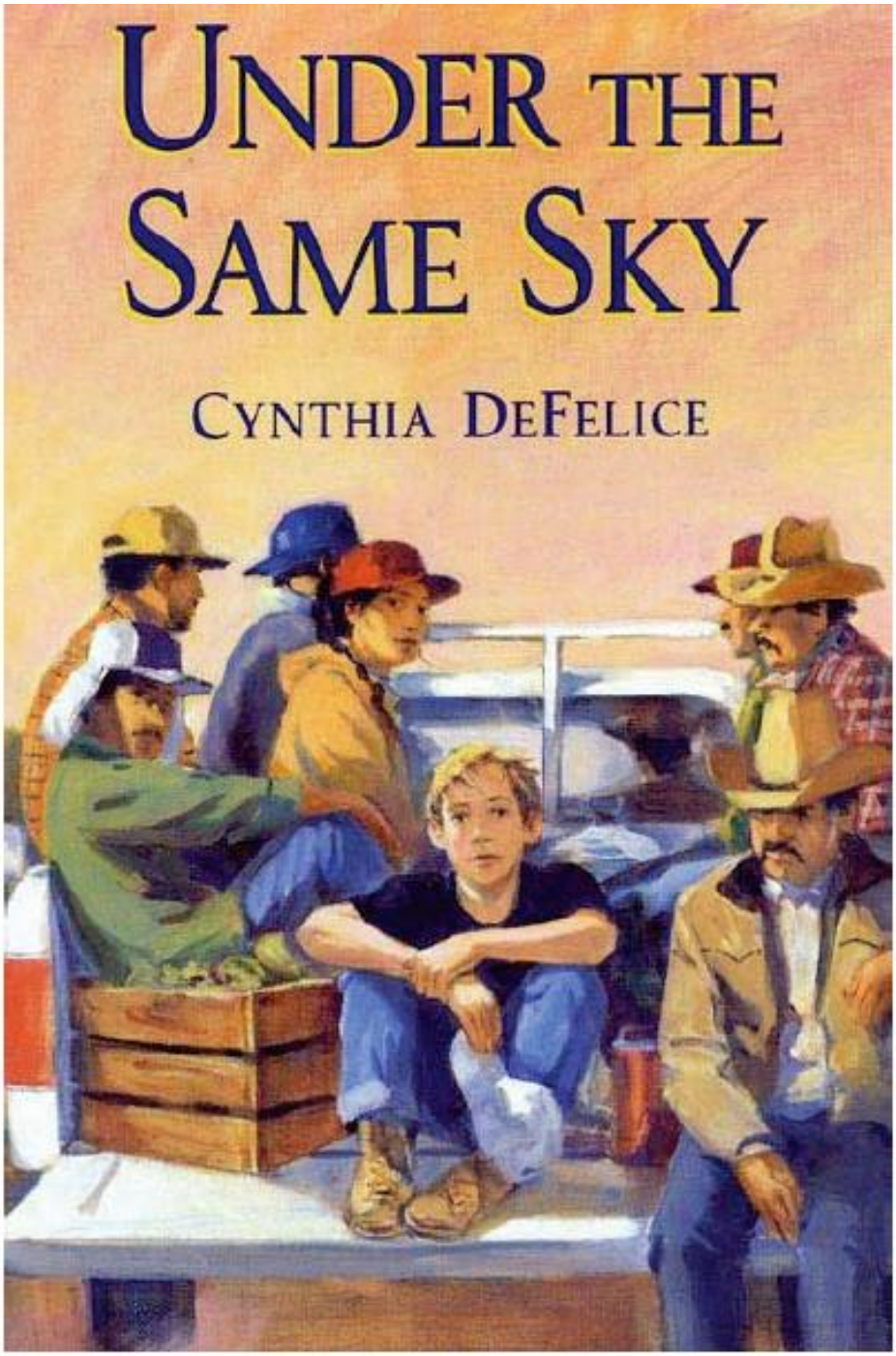
About the author:

Cynthia DeFelice

Cynthia DeFelice is the author of many bestselling titles for young readers; her books have been nominated for an Edgar Allen Poe Award and listed as American Library Association Notable Children's Books and Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year, among numerous other honors. When asked what she loves best about being an author, she can't pick just one answer: "I love the feeling of being caught up in the lives of the characters I am writing about. I enjoy the challenge of trying to write as honestly as I can, and I find enormous satisfaction in hearing from readers that something I wrote touched them, delighted them, made them shiver with fear or shake with laughter, or think about something new." Cynthia and her husband live in Geneva, New York.

Under the Same Sky table of contents:

- Discussion Questions
- Migrant Families
- Photo Investigation
- Photo Analysis Worksheet
- Photo Discussion Questions
- Photo Cards
- Migrant Family Facts



Under the Same Sky

For his fourteenth birthday, Joe Pedersen wants a motorbike that costs nearly a thousand dollars. But his mom says the usual birthday gift is fifty dollars, and his dad wants Joe to earn the rest of the money himself and "find out what a real day's work feels like." Angry that his father doesn't think he's up to the job, Joe joins the Mexican laborers who come to his father's farm each summer. Manuel, the crew boss, is only sixteen, yet highly regarded by the other workers and the Pedersen family. Joe's resentment grows when his father treats Manuel as an equal. Compared with Manuel, Joe knows nothing about planting and hoeing cabbage and picking strawberries. But he toughs out the long, grueling days in the hot sun, determined not only to make money but to gain the respect of his stern, hardworking father. Joe soon learns about the problems and fears the Mexicans live with every day, and, before long, thanks to Manuel, his beautiful cousin Luisa, and the rest of the crew, Joe comes to see the world in a whole different way. In her novel, Cynthia DeFelice explores our dependency on migrant workers and simultaneous reluctance to let these people into our country and into our lives.

UNDER THE SAME SKY

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain how Joe's older sister, LuAnn, changes her opinion of her brother.

2. What things happen in *Under the Same Sky* that change Joe's opinion about his friend Randy?

3. Do you think Luisa and the others make the correct decision in leaving Joe's farm when threatened by the INS?
4. What is the significance of the book's title?

5. Find the meaning in the text or dictionary of the following words: *migra*, *periódico*, *perro*, *muy bueno*.

MIGRANT FAMILIES

Rationale: Approximately 47,000 migrant farmworkers and their family members come to work in New York each year. Many of the children in these families attend New York's schools. Many labor issues and health issues surround their lives. This activity is designed to help students:

- Understand the process of getting food "from the table"
- Appreciate the hard work done by migrant farm workers
- Trace the paths farmworkers take as they travel from state to state as crops ripen
- Learn how moving and working with their parents impact the lives of migrant farmworker children
- Identify cultural traditions, values, and strengths of immigrant farmworkers and the difficulties they face as new members of rural communities

PHOTO INVESTIGATION

Intro: Included are six photographs of migrant farmworkers and their environments.

Allow students to observe and investigate the photos, but do not provide any information about the photos (do not include captions). Ask students to interpret what they see.

Process:

1. Divide students into groups of four or five. Each group should have a discussion director, recorder, and reporter.

2. Explain to students that they should spend a few minutes talking about what they see in the photos.

Guiding Questions:

- Where do you think this picture was taken?
- Where do these people live?
- What kind of work do they do?
- How long do they work?
- What is their family life like?
- What is their home like?
- Do the children not go to school?

3. Pass out the photo analysis sheet to the groups. After they complete this sheet, ask students to write a story about their picture. Students should then read and share their writings with the rest of the class. **Be sure to:**
   - Look for similarities and themes in their pieces
   - Write down anything that comes up frequently
   - Display students' work around the room
   - Record on chart paper

4. Hand out the actual caption to the photos to each group. Discuss the actual descriptions that accompany the photos and compare them with the ones generated by the class. Focus on the stereotypes that may have come up during the discussion. Ask if students were surprised by any of the actual captions.

Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Observation

Study the photograph for two minutes in your group. Form an overall impression of the photo and then examine individual items (faces, things in the background). Divide the photo into four sections, and study each section to see what new details become visible.

Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photo.

PEOPLE	OBJECTS	ACTIVITIES

Analysis

List three things that the photo makes you think about.

_____
_____
_____

Whom do you think this photo is about?

_____
_____
_____

What is the life of this person like?

_____
_____
_____

Photograph Discussion Questions

What do you see?

_____

What do you think it is?

_____

How do you feel about it?

_____

Who are the people in the picture and hat may they be thinking about?

_____

Where are they from?

_____

What is happening in the rest of the picture?

_____

Where do you think this picture was taken?

_____

Where are these people living?

_____

What kind of work do their parents do?

_____

How long do they work?

_____

What is their family life like?

_____

What is their home like?

_____

Do the children go to school?

_____

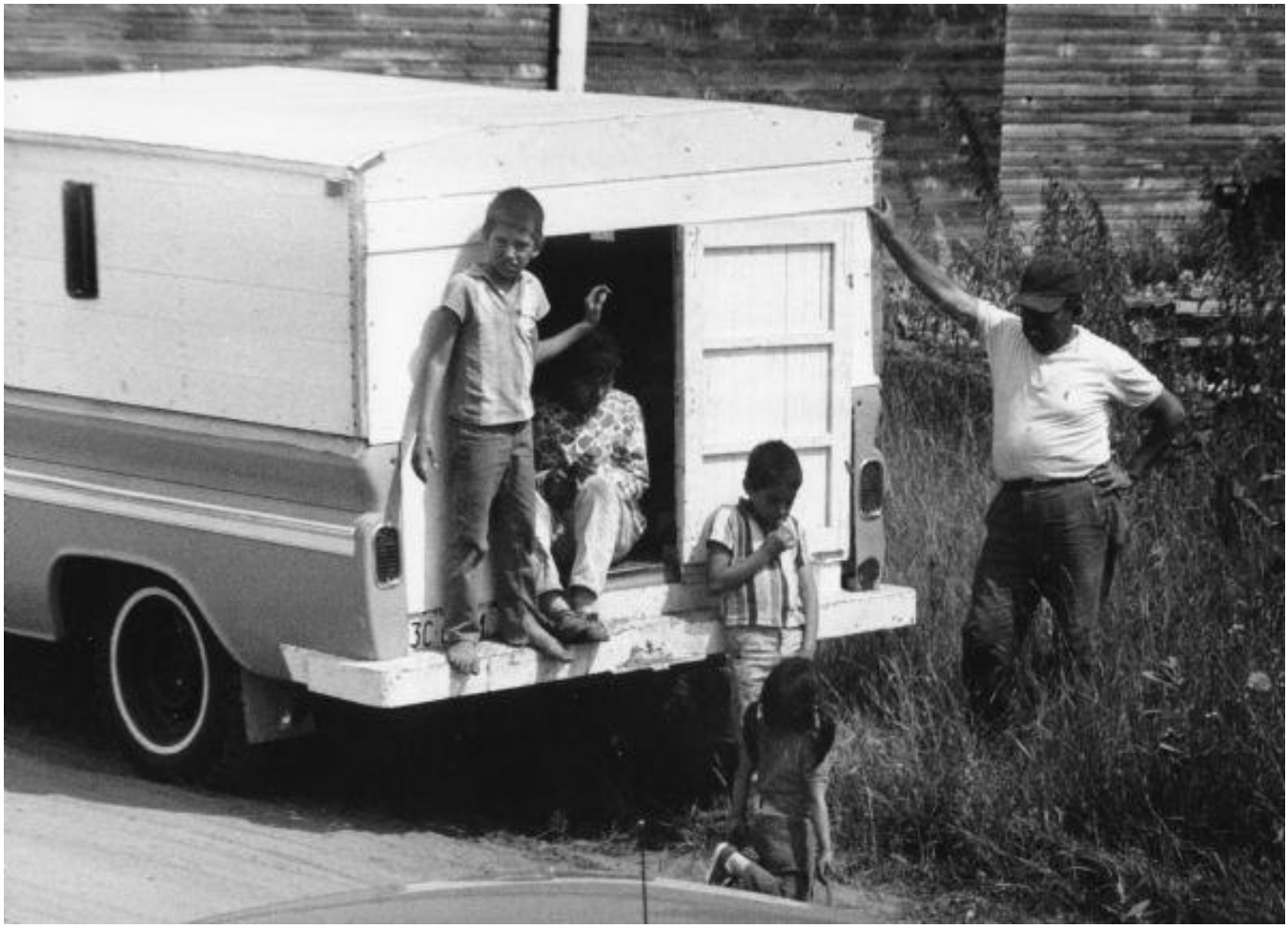
Photo Card 1 -

Children at Waushara Labor Camp

David Giffey (1967). *Struggle for Justice: The Migrant Farm Worker Labor Movement in Wisconsin (1998).* Wisconsin Labor History Society.

Photo Card 2 -

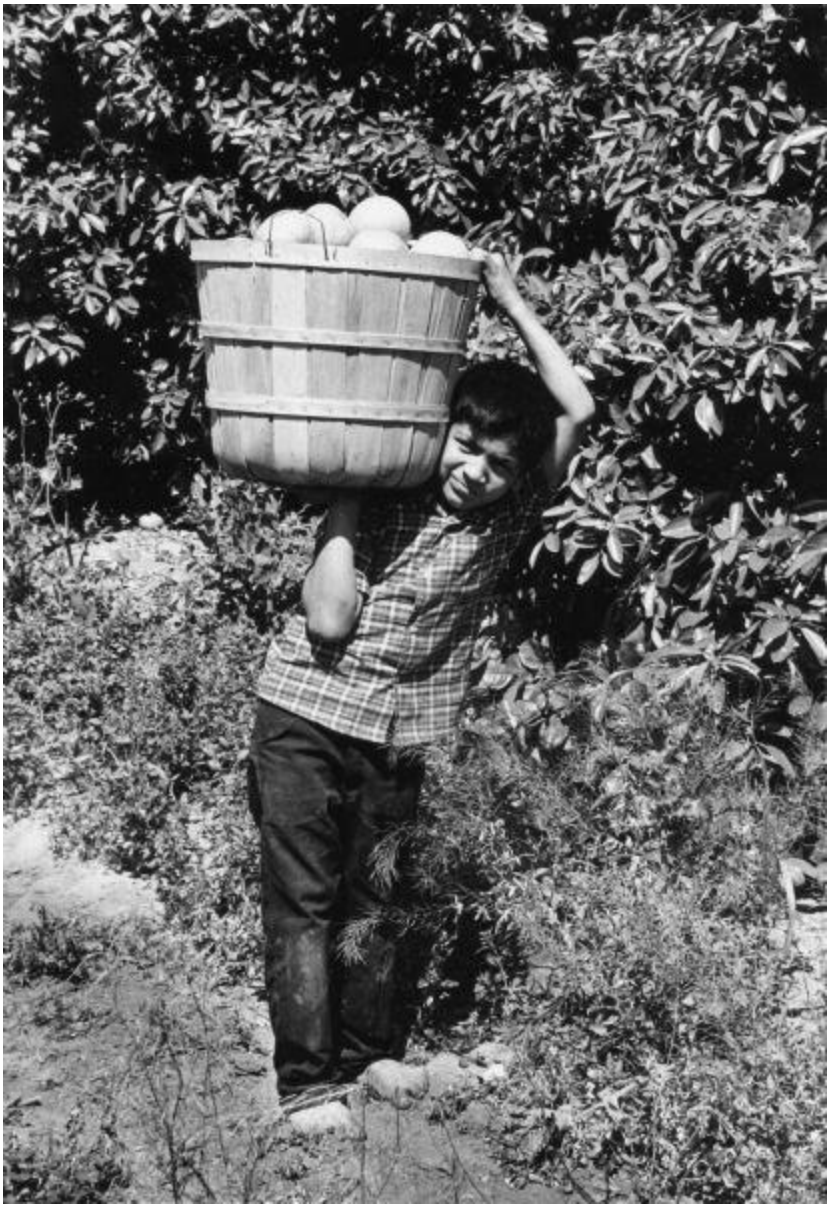
Texas Migrant Family



David Giffey (1967). *Struggle for Justice: The Migrant Farm Worker Labor Movement in Wisconsin (1998).* Wisconsin Labor History Society.

Photo Card 3 -

Child Worker Bearing Grapefruit



David Giffey (1969). *Struggle for Justice: The Migrant Farm Worker Labor Movement in Wisconsin (1998).* Wisconsin Labor History Society.

Photo Card 4 -

Boys Selling "La Voz Mexicana"

David Giffey (1967). *Struggle for Justice: The Migrant Farm Worker Labor Movement in Wisconsin (1998).* Wisconsin Labor History Society.

UNDER THE SAME SKY

Facts on Farmworkers in New York State

Approximately 47,000 migrant workers and their families come to New York State each year. The majority of workers in NY are of Mexican origin.

Migrant workers live in almost every county in NY. They live in western NY along Lake Ontario and Lake Erie harvesting apples, grapes, and other fruits; in central NY planting and harvesting vegetables, and in the Finger Lakes region trimming and harvesting grapes.

Farmworkers are excluded from some of New York State's labor laws:

- disability insurance
- a day of rest
- overtime pay
- collective bargaining

Farmworkers are provided lesser coverage than other workers under some New York State labor laws:

- child labor
- unemployment insurance
- some health/safety protections

Between 1 and 3 million migrant farmworkers leave their homes to plant, cultivate, harvest, and pack fruits, vegetables, and nuts.

81% of all farmworkers are foreign-born. 78% of all farmworkers were born in Mexico. 80% of farmworkers are men. 52% of farmworkers are not authorized to work in the United States.

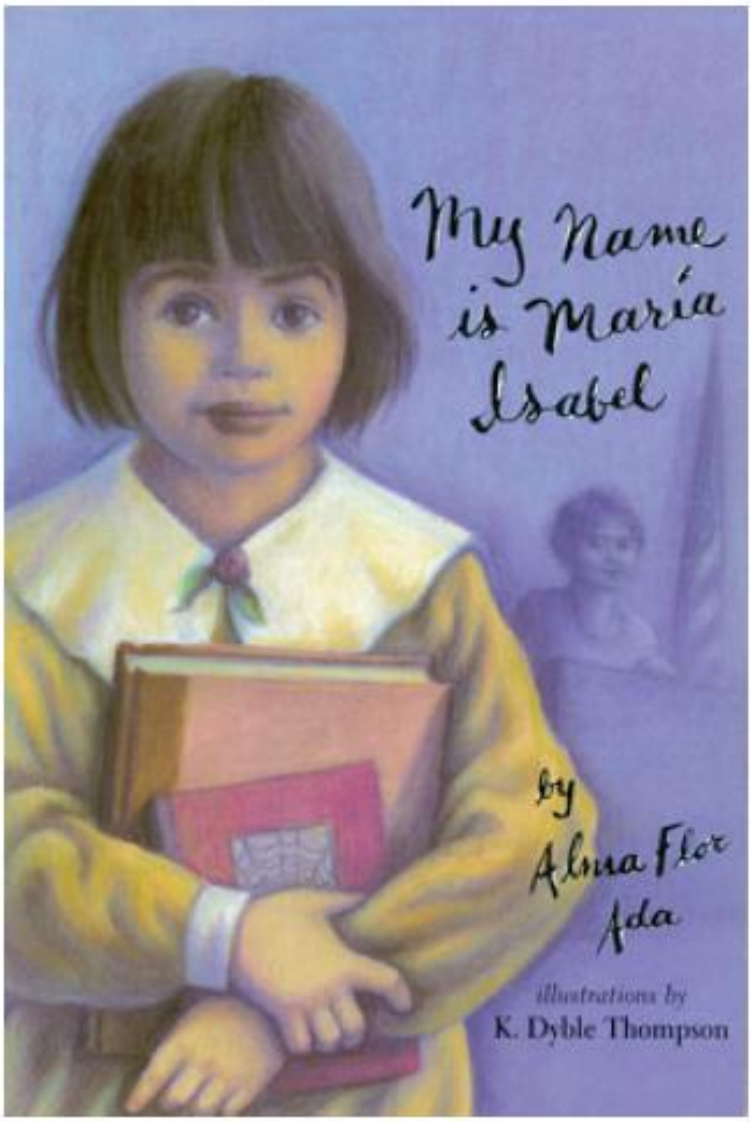
Farmworkers are young: their average age is 31. The physically demanding work is difficult for older workers to perform.

Five out of six farmworkers speak Spanish.

The average hourly rate for farmworkers is $5.94. One-half of all individual farmworkers earn less than $7,500 per year, far below the U.S. poverty level of $17,650 for a family of four.

54% of migrant teenagers drop out of school before graduation. Frequent moves and the need for teens to work and contribute to their family's income make school attendance difficult. At least one-third of migrant children work on farms to help their families.

Sources: NYS Department of Education; NYS Department of Labor; NYS Department of Health



My Name is Maria Isabel

By the time Maria's family moves into their new home, the school year has begun. Her first day does not go well. On the way to the bus stop, Maria trips, skins her knee, and dirties her favorite yellow dress. Then, her teacher changes her name to Mary because there are already two Marias in the class. Maria tries hard to listen and do well, but she simply cannot remember her new name. Whenever the teacher calls on "Mary Lopez," Maria does not answer. Several times a day, the teacher scolds Maria for her inattention. When the teacher assigns an essay entitled "My Greatest Wish," Maria communicates her feelings about her name- Maria Isabel Salazar Lopez. She shares the origin of each name and expresses her greatest desire- to be called "Maria." A classic for elementary age children, *My Name is Maria Isabel* appeals to young readers who identify with Maria's plight as the new student at school trying to adjust to the often unreasonable expectations. Maria's courage to speak out inspires us all to stand up for ourselves.

Editorial Review:

Simply told, this story combines the struggle of a Puerto Rican family's efforts to improve their life with a shared sense of pride in their heritage. The author's carefully drawn characterizations avoid stereotypes, thus increasing their appeal and believability. Abetted by Thompson's straightforward black-and-white drawings, this contemporary tale serves as a good reminder that no two names are really alike. **-Publishers Weekly**

About the author:

Alma Flor Ada

Alma Flor Ada, professor at the University of San Francisco, has devoted her life to advocacy for peace by promoting a pedagogy oriented to personal realization and social justice. A former Radcliffe Scholar at Harvard Univesity and Fulbright Research Scholar, Flor Ada is an internationally known speaker. The author's numerous children's books of poetry, narrative, folklore and non-fiction have received prestigious awards; in 2012, she received the Virginia Hamilton Literary Award in recognition of her body of work for children. Dr. Ada has also established an endowment for the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) to provide scholarships for future teachers.

My Name is Maria Isabel table of contents:

- Discussion Questions
- Book Report
- Prediction Chart
- Extension Activities

MY NAME IS MARIA ISABEL

TIME TO READ!

BEFORE YOU READ, LOOK AT....

The Cover: Have students make predictions about the text based on the title and the front cover illustrations. What is the story about? Who is the little girl on the cover? What's in the background behind her? What does the title mean? What kind of name is Maria Isabel?

Prior Knowledge: Ask if any students know why they were given their name. Were they named after family members? Do any students know what their names mean? You may also want to discuss what it's like to be the new kid at school. How did the students feel on their first day of school?

Purpose for Reading: Students can practice making predictions. Maria Isabel has a difficult problem to solve. As you read, stop several times to predict what you think she will do next. Then predict what the results will be.

Family History: Discuss the importance of names. The little girl in the story is proud of her name because she was named after relatives. Find out if your kids know who they were named after and why, or what their names mean. Are their names important to them?

WHILE YOU READ...

MONITORING COMPREHENSION

Have students complete the attached prediction chart while reading.

MAKE SURE TO THINK ABOUT...

Purpose: Revisit the purpose. "As you read, you made predictions about how Maria Isabel would solve her problems. Were you right?" Compare students' predictions to what actually happened. Have students explain the reasoning behind their predictions.

Extending Thinking: Ask these open-ended questions: "What do you think her father meant when he told Maria that her teacher at school was like her mother at home?" "Why do you think it was easier for Antonio to adjust to his new school that Maria?" "Why did Maria take so long to tell her teacher how she felt?" "What other ways could Maria have found to let her teacher know what she was feeling?"

WRITE ABOUT WHAT YOU READ

Have students complete a short book report about the story.

My Name is Maria Isabel by Alma Flor Ada

Author _____

# of pages _____

Main characters _____

Setting _____

Introduction - how does the story begin?

_____

_____

Describe one of the settings in the story.

_____

_____

List two characters, and briefly describe both.

_____

_____

What is Maria Isabel's biggest problem in the story? How is this problem resolved?

_____

_____

How does the book end? Do you like this ending? Why or why not? _____

_____

What was your favorite part of the story? Why?

_____

_____

Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not? _____

_____

PREDICTION CHART

Problem	My Prediction	What Really Happened

MY NAME IS MARIA ISABEL

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions using complete sentences. You may refer to both the book and your journal notes.

1. What does Maria Isabel's mother say to her when she leaves for school?

_____

_____

_____

2. Who made Maria Isabel's favorite yellow dress?

_____

_____

_____

3. Why does the teacher decide to call Maria, Mary?

_____

_____

_____

4. Who is Maria Isabel named after?

_____

_____

_____

5. In what country does Maria Isabel start school?

_____

_____

_____

6. What is the girl's name who comes and takes Maria Isabel by the hand?

_____

_____

_____

7. What is the one thing Maria Isabel wishes her teacher would stop doing?

_____

_____

_____

MY NAME IS MARIA ISABEL

WRITING EXERCISE: ROUGH DRAFT

Write a complete paragraph based on the topic below. Remember to include a topic sentence, several supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.

Does your family have a piece of furniture, object, or old photos from past generations? Have a family member tell you about it and then write a paragraph about it.

Introduction / Topic Sentence

Supporting Sentences

Concluding Sentence

WRITING EXERCISE:FINAL DRAFT

Thoroughly edit your rough draft, make any necessary changes, then recopy your final version using your best penmanship.

MY NAME IS MARIA ISABEL

Discussion Questions

Think about and discuss the following questions.

1. Why do you think Maria Isabel changed her mind about her new backpack? Have you ever been nervous to start school? Why?

2.Have you ever tripped and fallen in a new set of clothes? How did you feel when it happened?

3. Are you named after a family member? If you are, who is it? Does your name have a special meaning?

4. What do you think Maria Isabel is thinking when she opens her new book and sees the name Mary Lopez written in it? How would you feel? Do you think it was right for the teacher to change Maria Isabel's name?

5. Maria Isabel's family cherishes a photograph of their grandmother. Why do you think that photo is important to them? Does your family have a photo of a relative that is very important to them? Why is it important?

6. Why does grandmother Chabela put money in a cookie jar? Has anybody every given you money? What did you use it for?

7. Why do you think Maria Isabel's grandmother says to her, "This is so you can study someday and not spend your whole life in a kitchen."? What are some reasons her grandmother might have said this?

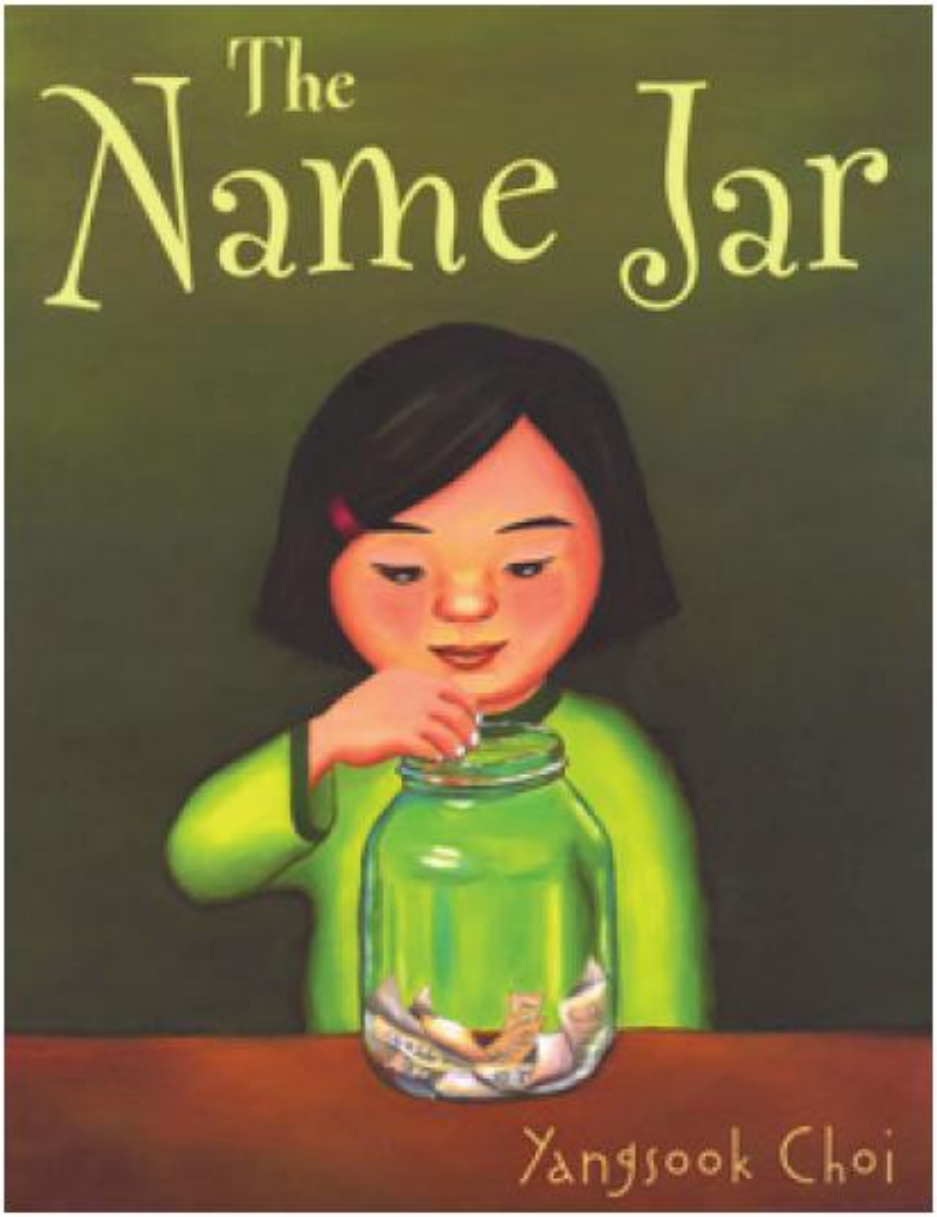
My Name Is María Isabel

RIF EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR EDUCATORS

THINK-TAC-TOE ACTIVITY OPTIONS

- Individual students can choose an activity to complete.
- Student pairs or cooperative groups can work together on a choice of their own.
- Educators can assign an activity for an individual, pairs or groups.

GETTING TERRITORIAL Puerto Rico is a United States *territory*. What does that mean? How is a territory different than a state? Does the US have any other territories? Research to find out. Share your findings through a poster, brochure or PowerPoint. Be sure to include information about and maps of each of the territories. *Social Studies/Geography*	**COOKING WITH MATH** María Isabel cooks when her mother's not home. Using a cookbook or the internet, find a recipe for one of your favorite foods—be sure it has at least 6 ingredients. Convert all the cups in the recipe to *ounces* (hint: 8 ounces = 1 cup). Convert all the *minutes* in the recipe to hours (hint: you'll probably end up with fractions!). *Math*	**EXPRESS YOURSELF** Write an *acrostic* poem about yourself. For each letter of your name, think of a word or phrase that describes you. Decorate your poem with pictures of you or your favorite things. Example: Zany Always nice to people Knows a lot about poetry *Word Smart/Creative Writing*
THE NEW KID (BROCHURE) Pretend a new student is joining our class. Make a brochure to welcome them! Be sure to include all the information they'll need about our school, our classroom, our daily schedule and our students. Also include a list of advice on how a new student can do well in school and make friends. *Word Smart/Informative Writing*	**WHAT'S IN A NAME?** Interview a parent or guardian to find out how you got your name. What does your name mean? Did your parents argue over what to name you? Were you almost named something else? Turn the interview into a story or a comic strip about how you got to be you! *Word Smart/Creative Writing*	**THE TOURIST (BROCHURE)** María Isabel's family is from Puerto Rico. Make a tourism brochure about Puerto Rico. Include facts about the country (location, history, language, culture, etc.) and some of its major cities and attractions. Also include a map showing Puerto Rico's location compared to the United States. *Social Studies/Geography*
DEAR SIR OR MADAM A *namesake* is someone who is named after someone else. María Isabel is a namesake; she was named after many different people. Pretend you're María and write a letter to one of them. Talk about your problem and how you finally got your teacher to call you by your name. Why was that important to you? *Word Smart/Creative Writing*	**MY GREATEST WISH** María Isabel finally tells her teacher how she feels about "Mary" when she writes an essay about her greatest wish. Write an essay about **your** greatest wish. Include a paragraph about ways you could make your wish come true. What do you need to do to make it happen? *Word Smart/Creative Writing*	**LET IT SNOW** María Isabel is excited when it snows. Draw a picture of the water cycle to explain why it snows. Label and explain each step of the cycle. What determines whether water comes down as rain, snow or sleet? Include an explanation somewhere on your picture. *Science/Art Smart*



The Name Jar

The new kid in school needs a new name! Or does she? Being the new kid in school is hard enough, but what about when nobody can pronounce your name? Having just moved from Korea, Unhei is anxious that American kids will like her. So instead of introducing herself on the first day of school, she tells the class that she will choose a name by the following week. Her new classmates are fascinated by this no-name girl and decide to help out by filling a glass jar with names for her to pick from. But while Unhei practices being a Suzy, Laura, or Amanda, one of her classmates comes to her neighborhood and discovers her real name and its special meaning. On the day of her name choosing, the name jar has mysteriously disappeared. Encouraged by her new friends, Unhei chooses her own Korean name and helps everyone pronounce it — "Yoon-Hey."

Editorial Review:

Choi's beautiful writing and art enhances her depth of the characters and adds warmness to this problem of fitting in and being accepted that is faced by so many children today. **-Children's Literature**

About the author:

Yangsook Choi

"I came to America to finally pursue my dream as an artist at the age of 24. My determination was clear; no matter what I did I would use my profession as a channel to somehow connect to children. My heart was hardened by the injustices towards children by the rules made by self centered grown ups. I felt I needed to do something about it when I grew up. But I simply never expected myself to work this directly for children." Choi believes the messages she sends through her writings need to be positive with the power to enhance children's lives; her honors include International Reading Association Children's Book Award, the Parents Choice Silver Honor, and the Oppenheim Toy Portfolio Gold Award.

The Name Jar table of contents:

- Discussion Questions
- Name Activity
- Story Map
- Character Traits

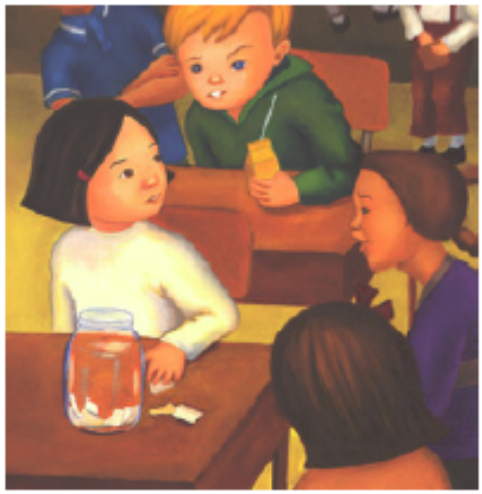
THE NAME JAR

IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION

Throughout The Name Jar, questions about difference and identity underlie Unhei's consideration of taking an American name rather than using her given Korean name at school. Is it good to be different or bad to be different? How do we respond to difference? Is a name just another word, or it is something more? How closely is one's identity connected to one's name? What are the implications of changing one's name?

In terms of difference, today's society strongly emphasizes tolerance in the form acceptance and often even celebration of difference. Despite this, division and alienation as a result of differences continue to arise. If we adopt an attitude of celebrating difference, can we go so far as to say that difference is always good? While it certainly seems beneficial to recognize, value, and appreciate difference in general, it doesn't necessarily seem reasonable to simply accept certain ideological differences which lead to great pain and suffering. What then should be done? For some, it is enough to identify and understand the reasons for the difference or to promote conversation across the difference, while others claim that steps should be taken to minimize the difference. The Name Jar asks many of these questions in the context of Unhei's difference from her peers, particularly in the form of her name, and thus provides an opening for discussion of how it feels to be different and the ways in which we should respond to difference in others.

As for identity, the term is generally used in philosophy to refer to whatever it is that makes an entity recognizable as distinct from others, in this case the set of characteristics that distinguishes one person from another. The Name Jar particularly addresses social identity, the way in which individuals define themselves in relation to others. This issue is seen in the story as Unhei changes the way in which she introduces herself to others depending on prior reactions and on the context of that point in the story: from saying her real name on the bus to claiming that she does not yet have a name when she meets her new class, from telling Mr. Kim her real name to sharing her name choice with her class. What is it about each situation that influences this behavior and what can this tell us about social identity? Themes that might emerge here include ways in which one's identity is shaped by family and culture and the role of peers, family, and society in supporting or denying the development of one's identity.



More specifically, The Name Jar encourages a consideration of assimilation, particularly cultural assimilation, one example of which is often the changing of one's name. What does the choice to change one's name entail and what significance does it have? Arguments in favor of name change for cultural reasons include having an easily pronounceable name, showing acceptance of the new culture, and minimizing difference, while arguments against include maintaining cultural identity, keeping family history and lineage alive, and retaining connections. The Name Jar shows Unhei experiencing many of these conflicting pressures: wanting to fit in with her new classmates and not be teased for her Korean name yet retaining strong ties to this name through her family culture and name stamp. Discussing these issues begins to address the question of what connection peoples' names have with their identity and whether or not this connection is the same for everybody or not.

THE NAME JAR

WHAT DOES YOUR NAME MEAN?

Lesson Description
The intent of this lesson is to inspire students to develop/ enhance their capacity for empathy. By reading *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi, students will begin to understand the importance of being accepting of and learning from cultural difference. Sharing their thoughts in a talking circle will allow students the opportunity to identify situations in their own lives where they have been new to a city or country and have experienced similar feelings of fear and uncertainty as those of Unhei, the main character. This story offers teachers to incorporate issues of social justice, acceptance and inclusion into their classroom discussions. The story builds upon the idea that young students can and do have the agency to spur positive change in their own lives and the lives of others through their social interactions. The lesson culminates with an arts-based activity in which students make their own name stamps using a variety of materials they have brought from home.

DESIRED RESULTS

Fundamental Concepts/Skills:
Immigration
Inclusion/Empathy
Acceptance of Cultural Diversity

Big Ideas/Essential Question:
1. Understand the importance of respect for difference inside and outside the classroom
2. Appreciate the diverse backgrounds and cultural heritages represented in their classroom
3. Explore the history of their own name and learn about the history behind their classmates names
4. Encourage development of student's oral communication skills by sharing meaningful , personal stories
5. Encourage student agency by asking them to think of ways that they can be do a positive thing for someone else (social justice = social action)

Reading: 1. Read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, graphic, and informational texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning

Oral Communication:
1. Listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes
2. Use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes

Visual Arts:
Apply the creative process to produce a variety of two- and three-dimensional art works, using elements, principles, and techniques of visual arts to communicate feelings, ideas, and understandings

Comprehension Strategies:
Identify several reading comprehension strategies and use them before, during, and after reading to understand texts.

Demonstrating Understanding :
Demonstrate an understanding of the information and ideas in oral texts by restating the information, including the main idea and several interesting details.

Making Inferences/Interpreting Texts:
Use stated and implied information and ideas in oral texts to make simple inferences and reasonable predictions, and support the inferences with evidence from the text

Extending Understanding:
Extend understanding of oral texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experience; to other familiar texts, including print and visual texts; and to the world around them

Creating and Representing (Visual Arts):
Create two- and three-dimensional works of art that express feelings and ideas inspired by activities in their community or observations
of nature

Lesson Goals
By the end of this lesson students will be able to:
1. Understand what it means to feel empathy and share this understanding by responding to read aloud prompts and/or by connecting read material to their own personal experiences
2. Infer meaning from a text via the use of textual and pictorial clues
3. Demonstrate active listen skills by listening to a read aloud text
4. Use speaking skills to communicate their thoughts/ experiences to their classmates

Key concepts and/or skills to be learned/applied:
Background Knowledge:
1. Empathy
2. Acceptance
3. Cultural Diversity
4. Immigration
5. Students have been assigned the homework task of asking their parents/caregivers about the history of their name. Students were encouraged to ask questions such as, what does my name mean? What language is it? Was I named after anyone special?

PLANNING INSTRUCTION

Student Groupings Instructional Strategies
1. Whole Class Discussion (Reading/Talking Circle)
2. Individual Work (Art Activity)
3. Read Aloud (teacher lead)
4. Reader Response (group discussion)

Accommodations
Students who speak languages other than English can be encouraged to write their name in their mother tongue in addition to English.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Motivational Hook (10 MINUTES):
Teacher will begin lesson by greeting students in a few different languages. It is most effective to use greetings that reflect the linguistic diversity of the classroom. Ask students if they know greetings in any other languages. Once the students have assembled in the reading circle, the teacher will prompt the students with the following question to activate prior knowledge on the topic of immigration: Do any of you remember a time when you moved to a new city or country? How did you feel? Once students have an opportunity to respond, explain that we will be reading a story about a little girl who moves to a new country.

Discussion Questions Before Reading (10 MINUTES):
1. What is your name? Do you have a nickname? How did you get your name or nickname?
2. Does your name mean anything in another language or did it belong to someone else in your family?

Read Aloud of "The Name Jar" (25 MINUTES):
Teacher will perform a read aloud of the text with the students, pausing intermittently to ask questions or allow for student comments. As the teacher discusses the events of the story and students make predictions of what will happen next, students should be encouraged to think about how Unhei feels as she begins her life in a new school and a new country. Students are also encouraged to reflect upon what Unhei's classmate, Joey, does to make Unhei feel welcome in her new class. Students who have emigrated from another country will be able relate their experiences to those of Unhei. Particular attention to the pictures in the story and "reading" Unhei's reactions and those of her classmates will help students with developing English ability to follow along with the story. After reading, students form a talking circle and are given the opportunity to share their reflections to the text – either by recalling important events from the story or by sharing a personal experience.

Name Artwork (20 MINUTES):
In this arts-based activity, students will be asked to design their own name stamps using a combination of materials provided in class. The materials selected should reflect some aspect of the student's cultural background. For example, one student might want to use plaid material or pattern to reflect their Scottish or Gaelic heritage, chopsticks to represent their Chinese or Korean heritage, etc. If students are not able to complete their name stamps by the end of the period, the teacher may offer students more time during the next class or assign the remainder of the task as homework.

Assessment of Reading Comprehension during/after Read Aloud: Teacher will ask students various prompts during and after the read aloud activity to gauge their general level of understanding. Prompts may be to recall important events from the story, describe their favorite part of the story, describe emotions or other representations in pictures/text, and to relate the text to their own personal experiences.

Example Prompts:
1. How do the other children respond when Unhei introduces herself on the bus? Why do they act this way?
2. How does Unhei feel by the time the bus arrives at school? How can you tell?
3. Have you ever had an experience like Unhei's?
4. Do you think that the children on the bus could have responded to Unhei's name in a different way? What could they have done, and how would that have made a difference?
5. What should we do when we have difficulty pronouncing other peoples' names?
6. How does Unhei explain her wish for an American name to her mother? How does her mother respond? Do you agree with Unhei's mother that being different is a good thing?
7. In what ways are you different from other people?

THE NAME JAR

STORY MAP

Instruction: Have students write a five sentence summary of The Name Jar in the story map by using the information in the "5Ws-and-1How" chart and the "Character Traits" chart.

BEGINNING

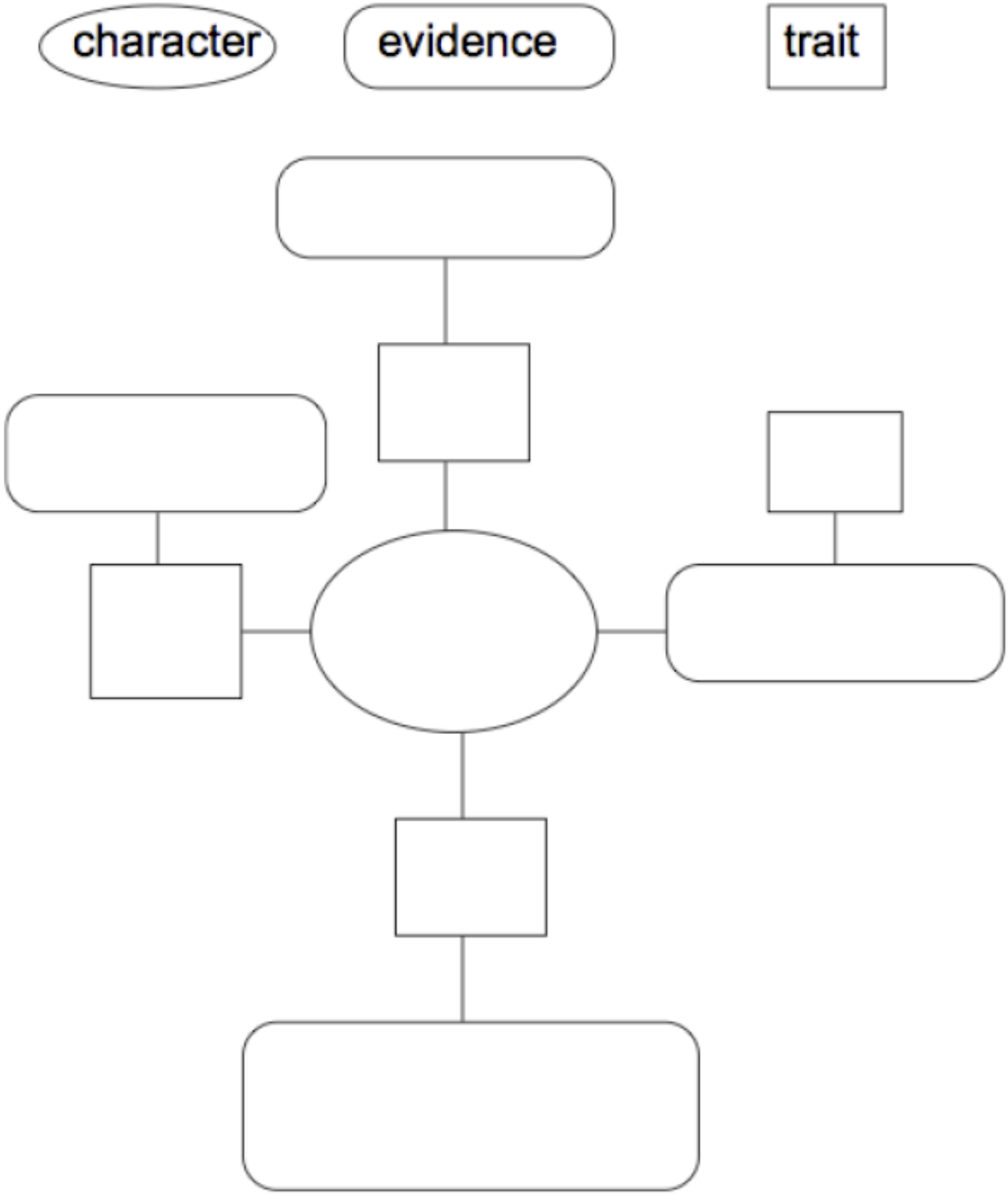
Unhei rode the bus to school on her first day to an American classroom.

MIDDLE

1. Unhei felt her small red stain pouch in her pocket because her name stamp was there.
2.
3.
4.
5.

END

Unhei pressed "Chinku", meaning friend in Korean, on the piece of paper next to her name.



Character Traits

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- DeFelice, Cynthia. *Under the Same Sky*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003. Print.
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- Thorpe, Helen. *Just like Us: The True Story of Four Mexican Girls Coming of Age in America*. New York: Scribner, 2009. Print.

***Just Like Us* activities:**

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http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/american-dream/procedure.html
http://www.bacareerguide.org/home/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=88&Itemid=90
http://www.tatteredcover.com/event/helen-thorpe-just-us

Under the Same Sky activities:

http://media.us.macmillan.com/teachersguides/9780374480653TG.pdf
http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/whi
http://www.ailf.org/teach/lessonplans/lessonplans.shtml
http://us.macmillan.com/author/cynthiadefelice

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http://picturebookmonth.com/2012/11/why-picture-books-are-important-by-alma-flor-ada/
http://www.blackbirdandcompany.com/samples/L1_My%20Name%20is%20Maria%20Isabel_Sample.pdf
http://www.rif.org/documents/us/My-Name-Is-Maria-Isabel-All.pdf

The Name Jar activities:

http://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/wiki/The_Name_Jar
http://www.developingaglobalperspective.ca/wp-content/assets/unitplans/gr2/Immigrants_Tale.pdf
http://apa.si.edu/kacc/Events/Yangsook.htm

2013 Community-Based Research Project

Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Created by: Lauren Foe
lauren.foe@hws.edu

Photo Cards Source:
David Giffey. *Struggle for Justice: The Migrant Farm Worker Labor Movement in Wisconsin (1998).* Wisconsin Labor History Society.

***All activities were created based on the New York State common core standards for education: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/**