

Guide to:

Here I Am

Written by Patti Kim and illustrated by Sonia Sánchez

Publisher:

Picture Window Books

Publication Date: 2015

Language:

Wordless picture book

ISBN-10: 1479519316

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Genre: Fiction

Lexile: NPOL

Guided Reading Level: M

Grade Level:

Kindergarten – Grade 5

Featured Country of Origin:

South Korea

Themes:

Moving, isolation, homesickness, belonging, acceptance

Publisher's Synopsis

Newly arrived from their faraway homeland, a boy and his family enter into the lights, noise and traffic of a busy American city. The language is unfamiliar. Food, habits, games and gestures are puzzling. The boy clings tightly to his special keepsake from home and wonders how he will find his way. How will he once again become the happy, confident kid he used to be? Walk in his shoes as he takes the first tentative steps toward discovering joy in his new world.

What We Love

This book uses only illustrations which makes it accessible to all audiences including those who are not yet able to read. When reading out loud, narrate the pictures and connect with the audience in order to bring details within the illustrations to life.

Background

Wordless picture books are a fantastic way to build literacy skills. They help students understand the structure of a story, increase visual literacy and build vocabulary. These books can be used with emergent multilingual students as a scaffold to practice oral storytelling and promote higher order thinking.

Pre-Reading Focus Questions:

- How do you feel when you go to a new place and not know anyone?
- What could help you feel more confident or comfortable?
- Reading a story without words is a different experience. How can we understand what is happening when only looking at illustrations?

After-Reading Discussion Questions:

- How was the boy feeling when he was traveling to his new home? How can we tell his feelings about his new city?
- What gives the boy comfort when he is feeling homesick? Do you have any items that bring you comfort?
- Why was the boy so upset when he dropped the red seed? What changed after he began to follow the girl that picked the seed up?
- How do the illustrations in the story change? Which moment do you think changes how the boy is feeling? Why?
- Do you think the boy and the girl became friends? Which illustrations give you this impression?



Here I Am (continued)

Extension/Higher-Level Thinking

- Does the boy feel comfortable at school? How is he feeling when he gets home from school? What details in the illustrations give the reader this information?
- Do you think it was a good thing that the boy dropped his seed? Why?
- What are some examples from the story that show us the boy is feeling negative? What are some examples from the story that show the reader the boy is feeling positive? List using either words or illustrations and compare the instances.
- What moment do you feel the boy is thinking the words, “Here I am”?

Additional Resources



Hear author Patti Kim tell the story of her name



Learn about the benefits of wordless picture books for emergent multilingual learners

Interdisciplinary

This story can be connected to units on immigration, building classroom community, culturally responsive instruction, and acceptance and belonging.

About the Book Author (from the author)

Patti Kim was born in Busan, South Korea. She immigrated to the United States with her family in 1974 when she was four years old. Her overall experiences as a young Korean-American immigrant have influenced her work. Patti's novels invoke themes of poverty, losing a parent, culture and fitting in, adjusting to a stepparent, empathy, and the search for identity. She uses honesty and humor to tell these complex stories.

About the Book Illustrator (from the publisher)

Sonia Sánchez paints with both traditional and digital brushes using layers of texture in her work to evoke emotion and movement. Her debut picture book, *Here I Am*, received two starred reviews and was nominated for the Eisner Award in the category of Best Painter interior art. She lives with her husband, son and a sleepyhead cat in a blue house near the Mediterranean Sea.

About the Consultant Nicole Kwmuntis

Nicole Kwmuntis co-authored and provided guidance for this guide. She is currently a reading specialist for students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade at Malden Public Schools in Massachusetts. During her tenure in Malden, she has advocated for the literacy development of multilingual learners and supported extended learning experiences for multilingual learners beyond the school day.

About The Immigrant Learning Center

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (The ILC) of Malden, MA, is a not-for-profit organization that gives immigrants a voice in three ways. The English Language Program provides free, year-round ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes to help immigrant and refugee adults in Greater Boston become successful workers, parents and community members. The Public Education Institute informs Americans about immigrants and immigration in the United States, and the Institute for Immigration Research, a joint venture with George Mason University, produces valid, reliable and objective multidisciplinary research on immigrants and immigration to the United States. For more information, visit the website <http://www.ilctr.org>. The ILC can also be found on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.

