



Monthly Featured Book

Presented by ADL's Education Department

About the Monthly Featured Book: This collection of featured books is from Books Matter™: The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice. The books teach about bias and prejudice, promote respect for diversity, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in ADL Education's programs. For educators, adult family members and other caregivers of children, reading the books listed on this site with your children and incorporating them into instruction are excellent ways to talk about these important concepts at home and in the classroom.

Chloe's Lunar New Year

Lily LaMotte (Author) and Michelle Lee (Illustrator)

It's almost Lunar New Year, and Chloe can't wait to celebrate! But first, Chloe and her family must prepare for the new year. They buy new shoes, lay out good-luck oranges in a bowl, decorate the red envelope, and make a crispy turnip cake. Everyone comes together to cook a fantastic feast, saving a plate for A-má, of course. Chloe enjoys the festive celebration and yummy food, but most of all, she loves spending time with her family. The back matter contains educational information about the Lunar New Year celebration in Taiwan.

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Year Published: 2023

Age Range: 4-8



Book Themes

Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Identity, Lunar New Year, People, Identity and Culture, Family, Holidays

Key Words

Discuss and define the words below with students prior to reading the book. Rather than focus on students' retention of all the words, make sure they understand the words enough to follow the story and remind students of the words' meanings as they come up in the book. You can also post the words and point out when they appear in the story. For definitions that are differentiated for young children, see ADL's [Education Glossary Terms](#).

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|--------------|------------------|-----------|
| ■ celebrate | ■ feast | ■ reunion |
| ■ chopsticks | ■ good luck | ■ steam |
| ■ decorate | ■ hot pot | ■ sweep |
| ■ envelope | ■ Lunar New Year | ■ toast |
| ■ favorite | ■ prepare | |

Discussion Questions

Before reading the book aloud, ask some or all of these pre-reading questions:

- Who do you see on the book cover? What details do you notice?
- What do you think is happening?
- Based on the cover and the title, what do you think the book will be about?

As you read the book aloud, ask a few discussion questions periodically throughout reading to check for comprehension and keep the students engaged. Below are some sample questions that correlate to specific page numbers:

- What do Chloe's sneakers have in the toes? (Page 6)
- Where do Mama and Chloe get the spinach and carrots? (Page 14)
- What does Chloe share with Noah? (Page 25)

After reading the book aloud, engage students in a discussion by asking some or all of the following discussion questions:

- What happens in the story?
- What are some of the things Chloe and her family do to prepare for Lunar New Year?
- What do you think it means when the author writes, "But first, it's time to sweep out the old. To make room for good luck in the new year?"
- What does "good luck" mean to you?
- What special foods do Chloe and her family make? What foods look good to you?
- Does your family prepare special foods for holidays or celebrations? What are your favorites?
- What do you think the red envelopes are for?
- Who does Chloe give the last slice of apple pie to? How does that help the family remember A-má (her grandmother)?
- Did you know anything about Lunar New Year before reading the book? If so, what did you already know?
- After reading the book, what do you now know about Lunar New Year? What else do you want to know?
- How did you feel when the book ended?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book?

Extension Activities

Below are activities for students that can extend learning from the book.

1. My Favorite or Most Memorable Scene

Ask students: *What part or scene from the book was your favorite? What scene did you find enjoyable, memorable, impactful or interesting?* With students, brainstorm a list of scenes from the book that students liked, found impactful, important or memorable (e.g., when Chloe and her family get rid of their old shoes, when the family cooks everyone's favorite dishes, when they make dessert, when Noah and Chloe decorate the red envelopes, when Uncle Tony and Auntie Lē come over, when the family eats the reunion dinner, when they toast to good fortune). After compiling a list of scenes, have each student select a scene that they find memorable, impactful or interesting. Then have them turn and talk with someone sitting nearby and share the part they chose and explain why they chose it. Based on their selected scene, have students draw a picture of that scene. For students who are able to write, invite them to also write words or sentences that describe the scene or words the characters are saying. For students not yet writing, you can write the words for them. Create a new book with all of the students' drawings together.

2. Learn about Lunar New Year

Ask students: *What holiday does the family celebrate in the book?* Elicit and explain that the family celebrates Lunar New Year. Show this short video so students can learn more about the holiday: [Lunar New Year for Kids](#). You can also learn more by reading aloud the Author's Note on page 32. Then ask students: *From the book and this video, what did you learn about Lunar New Year?* Share some or all of the following additional information about Lunar New Year:

- Lunar New Year is sometimes called the Spring Festival or Chinese New Year.
- Lunar New Year is celebrated by millions of people worldwide and is an important holiday in countries with large Asian communities.
- Lunar New Year is an opportunity to reunite with family and celebrate traditions dating back over 4,000 years.
- Lunar New year is celebrated in January or February. The date changes every year because it is based on the lunar calendar. The traditional lunar calendar used in Asia is based on the moon's orbit around the earth. Lunar New Year is always celebrated on the second new moon after the winter solstice.
- Celebrations to end the old year and bring in good luck for the new year often include firecrackers, fireworks and red clothes and decorations.
- Young people are given money in colorful red envelopes.
- During Lunar New Year, people often prepare a feast and to visit family members.
- Several days before the festival begins, people give their homes a thorough cleaning to rid themselves of any lingering "bad luck."
- Some people prepare and enjoy special foods on certain days during the celebrations.
- The last event that is held during Lunar New Year is called the Lantern Festival. People often hang glowing lanterns in temples or carry them during an evening parade.

Ask students: *What more do you want to know about Lunar New Year? What questions do you have?* Compile students' questions and invite them to pick one question they want to know the answer to; engage them in researching and finding the answer to that question. Here are some resources that may help with their research: [Britannica](#), [National Geographic](#), [Fact Monster](#) and [Kids World Travel Guide](#). An additional idea is to explore whether there are any cultural centers or museums in their area that celebrate Lunar New Year.

3. People, Identity and Culture

Ask students: *What is culture?* Define the word culture as: the patterns of daily life that can be seen in language, arts, customs, holiday celebrations, food, religion, beliefs/values, communication style, music, clothing and more that a group of people share. Explain further that the parts of culture are often handed down from family, community members or from one generation to the next. They can also come from the place where the person's family and ancestors live or are from. Explain that culture also can include one's region of the country, whether you live in a city, suburban or rural setting, your family traditions including how you celebrate holidays, your religion, etc. Ask students: *What did you learn about Chloe and her family's culture from the book? Were there aspects of daily life you saw in the book that are part of Asian or Chinese culture (e.g., holiday celebrations and traditions, food, family getting together, etc.)?* Remind students that food plays an important part in the book. Ask students: *What are some of the foods that the family cooked for the reunion dinner? What do some of the foods represent (e.g., oranges and good luck, fish represents happiness, peace and health)?* Together, you can read more about the special foods and their meanings prepared for Lunar New Year in Taiwan in the Author's Note on page 32 and a recipe for fortune cake on page 33. Ask: *What foods are special in your family or culture(s)?* Explain that special foods can include those that the family likes to eat, that they make during celebrations, that they prepare and eat during holidays, food that has been passed down from older family members, or food that have special meanings for them. Have students then ask their parents/families for a special family recipe or they can research one in books and online. As a culmination, create a class (or school) book of recipes and have students illustrate their recipes with a drawing or a photograph of them and/or their family, which can include a photo of their family enjoying their special dish or celebrating another aspect of their culture.

ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and other resources on Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) people, identity, culture and holidays.

Curriculum Resources

9 Ideas for Teaching Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month <https://www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/9-ideas-teaching-asian-american-pacific-islander-heritage-month>

Diverse Books Matter <http://www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/diverse-books-matter>

Who Am I? Identity Poems <https://www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/who-am-i-identity-poems>

Websites

9 Classroom Activities for Exploring the Calendar of Observances <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/9-classroom-activities-exploring-calendar-observances>

Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month Resources <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/asian-american-pacific-islander-aapi-heritage-month-resources>

Calendar of Observances <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/calendar-observances>

Considerations for Inclusive Holidays and Observances <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/considerations-inclusive-holidays-and-observances>

Children's Books

Books about AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) People, Identity and Culture <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1626>

Books about People, Identity and Culture <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1586>