



Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

About the Book of the Month: 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 education programs of [A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute](#), ADL's international anti-bias education and diversity training provider. 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.

The Journey

Francesca Sanna (Author & Illustrator)

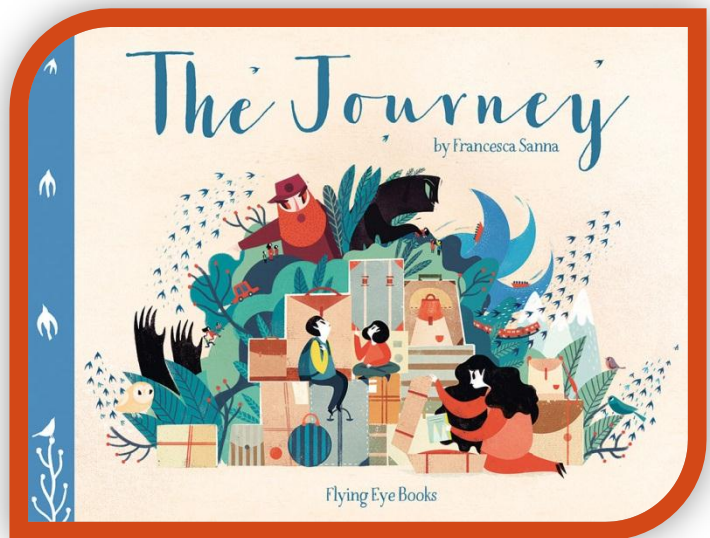
What is it like to have to leave everything behind and travel many miles to somewhere unfamiliar and strange? A mother and her two children set out on such a journey; one filled with fear of the unknown but also great hope. This book is told from the perspective of a young child and explores the unimaginable decisions made as a family leave their home and everything they know to escape the turmoil and tragedy brought by war.

ISBN: 978-1909263994

Publisher: Flying Eye Books

Year Published: 2017

Age Range: 6–10



Book Themes

Refugees, Family, Feelings, Safety and Protection

Key Words

Discuss and define these words with children prior to reading the book. Do not focus on students' retention of all the words; instead make sure they understand the words enough to follow the story and remind children of their meanings as they come up in the book. You can also post the words and point

out to students when they appear in the story. See also ADL's [Definitions Related to Bias, Injustice and Bullying for Elementary Age Children](#).

- adventure
- boarded
- border
- capsize
- chaos
- enormous
- escape
- ferry
- guard
- journey
- migrating
- war
- worried

Discussion Questions

Before reading the book aloud, ask pre-reading questions:

- What is the title of the book?
- Who and what do you see on the cover of the book?
- What do you think the book might be about?

As you read the book aloud, ask a few discussion questions periodically throughout the reading to check comprehension and keep the students engaged:

- What happened to the narrator's father? (page 6)
- What do you think they are packing up in their suitcases? (page 15)
- How does the family in the story cross the sea? (page 33)

After reading the book aloud, ask some or all of the following discussion questions:

- What happens in the story?
- Why did the family have to leave their home?
- Have you ever known anyone that had to leave their home because of war or other "bad things" happening?
- How does the family feel about each other? How do you know?
- Why do you think the mother showed the children pictures of the place they will be going to?
- What did they experience on their journey?
- How did they feel before and during their journey? How do you know?
- What were all the different modes of transportation the family used in their journey?
- What do you think the narrator means by this: "The further we go, the more we leave behind."
- What was the guard's response to the family climbing over the wall? How do you think they felt when they he told them they couldn't cross the border?
- Who were the different people who helped the family? Who tried to stop the family?
- When they are on the boat, why do all the people tell stories about where they are heading to?

- How do you think the family feels when they see land for the first time since on the boat?
- What do you think the author is saying when the birds are described as “they don’t have to cross any borders?” What do the birds symbolize?
- How does the illustrator use color to express the different situations and feelings?
- What do you think happens next in the story?
- What do you think was the message of the book?

Extension Activities

Below are activities that you can do with students in order to extend the learning from the book.

1. Imagine and draw/write the next few pages of the book

Remind students about how the book ended by re-reading pages 37-40. Ask students: *What happens at the end of the book?* Remind students that at the end of the book, the family was at the end of their journey on a train and watching the birds migrating with them. The narrator expresses hope about their new home. Ask students: *What do you think might happen next in the story? What do you think happens with the family? Where do they live and how do they feel? What kind of life do they make for themselves in their new home?* Have students imagine what might happen if the book continued for a few more pages. Instruct them to take their ideas and write and/or draw the next scene or two as they imagine it, using the style of the illustrator as much as possible. When completed, students can share their pages of the book with the rest of the class by posting them on the wall and doing a gallery walk. You can also invite parents/family members in for a whole class reading of the book and include the students’ additional pages.

2. Learn about people who are refugees

Read aloud the Author’s Note on page 42. Explain that the book is about a family who are refugees. Define refugee as “someone who flees persecution, conflict or war.” Explain that persecution is when people are continually treated in a cruel and harmful way, often due to their race, religion or political opinions. Explain that there is a very serious and large refugee crisis happening today. There are currently sixty million people who have been forced to leave their homes. There are refugees fleeing Syria, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Nigeria, and dozens of other countries. To help students learn more about the refugee experience and refugee crisis, see these additional resources: [Desperate Journey](#) (Junior Scholastic), [The Refugee Crisis](#) (Newsela) and [The Contemporary Refugee Problem](#) (Fact Monster). After learning more, you can engage students in different projects such as: (1) have them do research on one country’s refugee situation and then write an essay or create a Power Point, (2) do a gallery walk of [photos](#) about the refugee crisis and have them create captions and share their thoughts and feelings (Note: Because some of the photos could be upsetting, view them in advance and choose photos that are age appropriate for your students), or (3) read additional books about refugees such as [Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan](#), [Making It Home: Real-Life Stories from Children Forced to Flee](#) and [Half Spoon of Rice](#).

3. Feelings

Have students explore the different feelings that are expressed throughout the book. As you read aloud, ask questions about the feelings (there are some in the questions section), highlighting the emotions and eliciting how students might feel in those situations. After reading the book, have students brainstorm a list of feelings that are expressed in the book, including: worry, hope, fear, sadness, love, protection and others. Go to those pages and look at the images, asking if the picture

matches the feeling. You can also create a page of emojis (or print them from an online site) and give each student a set of emojis and have them reflect on which emoji best matches the feeling expressed in the book, as you read it. You can also have students select one feeling to focus on and either write a poem about that feeling or draw a picture of the page and write “_____ was feeling _____ because _____. I can tell because _____.”

ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on immigration, refugees and identity.

Curriculum Resources

“Refugee Crisis in Europe: How Should the World Respond,” *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/refugee-crisis-in-europe.

“We Were Strangers Too: Learning about Refugees through Art,” *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/we-were-strangers-too.

“Who Am I? Identity Poems,” *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/who-am-i-identity-poems.

“Who Are the Children at Our Border?,” *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/who-are-the-children-at-our-border.

Websites

Anti-Bias Education

www.adl.org/what-we-do/promote-respect/anti-bias

Provides training program offerings for pre-K through 12th grade school communities—educators, administrators, youth and families—which focus on the development of an inclusive culture and respectful school climate by addressing issues of bias and bullying.

Creating an Anti-Bias Learning Environment

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/creating-an-anti-bias-learning-environment

Tips for the classroom educator to create an anti-bias learning environment.

Helping Students Make Sense of News Stories about Bias and Injustice

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/helping-students-make-sense-of-news-stories-about-bias-and

Provides suggestions, strategies and resources to help make discussions about national news stories that involve incidents of bias and injustice rich and productive for students.

Welcoming the Stranger: ADL's Commitment to Protecting Refugees

www.adl.org/news/article/welcoming-the-stranger-adls-commitment-to-protecting-refugees

Provides information and resources on the refugee crisis as well as ways to take action.