



# 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.

## Maddi's Fridge

Lois Brandt (Author), Vin Vogel (Illustrator)

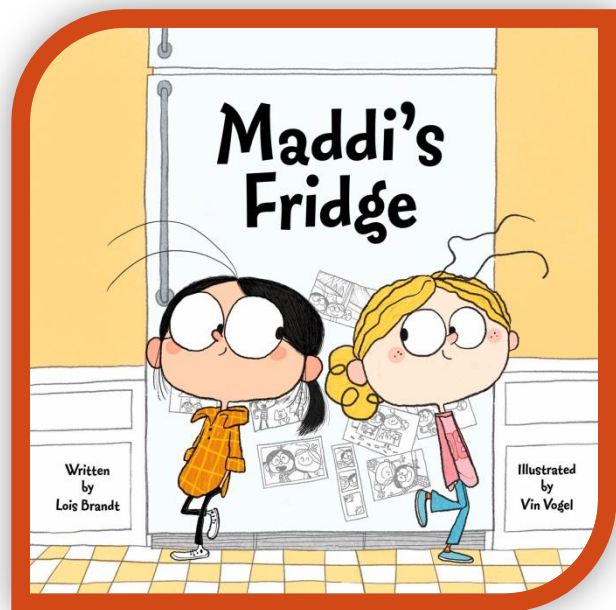
Best friends Sofia and Maddi live in the same neighborhood, go to the same school and play in the same park, but while Sofia's fridge at home is full of nutritious food, the fridge at Maddi's house is empty. Sofia learns that Maddi's family doesn't have enough money to fill their fridge and promises Maddi she'll keep this discovery a secret. But because Sofia wants to help her friend, she's faced with a difficult decision: to keep her promise or tell her parents about Maddi's empty fridge. This story addresses issues of poverty with honesty and sensitivity while instilling important lessons about friendship, empathy, trust and helping others.

ISBN: 978-1936261291

Publisher: Flashlight Press

Year Published: 2014

Age Range: 4–8



## Book Themes

Poverty, Friendship, Empathy, Helping others

## 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](#).

- apartment
- climbing wall
- growled
- hungry
- important
- nutrition
- promise
- shadows
- treat

**[Note to Teacher:** As you read and discuss this book, be mindful about the students in your classroom and the extent to which you have poor, homeless and/or hungry students. Be sensitive to them and their family situations and do not put them in the position of having to share anything about this aspect of their lives. Assess whether the book and discussion will raise unnecessary emotional discomfort for them. Sometimes children feel relieved to discuss something so personal and others may feel awkward and embarrassed about it.]

### Discussion Questions

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

- What is the title of the book?
- Who do you think the two children are 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:

- Who was the fastest runner, Maddi or Sofia? (page 5)
- What happened to the fish in Sofia's backpack? (page 14)
- What did Sofia tell her Mom about Maddi? (page 26)

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

- What is the story about?
- How would you describe the relationship between Maddi and Sofia?
- Why do you think Maddi's refrigerator is almost empty?
- How do you think Maddi felt when Sofia opened her refrigerator?
- Why do you think Maddi asked Sofia promise not to tell anyone?
- What was Sofia thinking about when she was eating her dinner of fish and rice?
- Why did Sofia start bringing food to Maddi for lunch?
- At first, why didn't Sofia tell her Mom what was going on with Maddi?

- Why do you think Sofia finally decided to tell her Mom that there was no food in Maddi's fridge?
- What happened after Sofia told her Mom about Maddi's fridge? What did they do?
- What would you have done if you were Sofia?
- What was the conversation like between Maddi and Sofia after Sofia told her Mom?
- In what ways did Maddi and Sofia help each other?
- Have you ever felt like Maddi in that you wanted to help a friend but didn't know what to do? How so?
- How does Maddi feel in the end?
- What was your favorite part of the book?
- What do you think might happen next in the story?
- What message do you think the author is trying to convey?
- What can we do as individual people or as a community when we see something unfair happening in the world?

### Extension Activities

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

#### 1. Act out a Scene

Select a favorite scene from the book and have the students act it out, either working as a whole class or in small groups, depending on the scene and the amount of people needed. First brainstorm the different parts of the book or scenes that students like (e.g. when Sofia and Maddi are playing in the park and on the climbing wall, when Sofia discovers that Maddi's fridge is almost empty, when Sofia tells Maddi they don't have enough money to buy more food, when Sofia and her Mom bring groceries to Maddi and her Mom). Ask students to think about what might have happened right before and after that scene and act those parts out as well. If possible, write dialogue for what the main characters and others might say or use the actual dialogue from the book. Students can then act it out for the class, other classes and/or invite parents in to watch.

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**NOTE:** For this activity, be mindful as to whether you have students in your class with economic challenges/hardships and adjust the activity so that the scenes don't trigger students or cause emotional turmoil.

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#### 2. Describe and Draw a Character

With students, make a list of the different characters in the book. Have them name all of the characters they can remember and write their names on the board or chart paper (Maddi, Sofia, Sofia's Mom, Luis, Maddi's Mom). Explain to students that they are going to work in pairs or groups of three to create a drawing and description of one character of their choosing. After they have gotten into their pairs or triads, instruct them to choose one of the characters and (1) draw a picture of the person, (2) write 3–6 words around the picture which describe the person (adjectives) that may include their physical characteristics, their personality and their feelings and (3) write at least one quote (what the person said) from the story or something you think they might say. After their

drawings and descriptions are completed, hang all of the pictures around the room and have students do a “gallery walk” to look at their classmates’ work.

### 3. Helping Others—Social Action Project

This book addresses the issue of poverty and hunger by highlighting a poor family in need of food. On the last page of the book (page 32), there are suggestions for what one can do to help people like Maddi and her family: “Let’s Help Friends Who Have Empty Refrigerators.” Brainstorm with students what ideas they have about helping people who don’t have enough food or who are hungry. Young children often focus on individual ways to help (offer food to someone who is hungry) and it is important to help them also think about structural solutions such as supporting food banks, writing letters to legislators and other solutions that move people out of poverty. As a class, come up with a social action project that focuses on hunger or another issue that is relevant in your own community that may be of more interest and concern to the students (e.g. homelessness, bullying, prejudice, etc.). You can use [The Kid's Guide to Service Projects](#) and [The Kid's Guide to Social Action](#) for ideas and additional resources.

## ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and other educational resources on anti-bias teaching strategies and socioeconomic issues.

### Curriculum Resources

“We Can All Be Kid President,” *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/we-can-all-be-kid-president.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/we-can-all-be-kid-president.html).

“Who Am I? Identity Poems,” *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/who-am-i-identity-poems.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/who-am-i-identity-poems.html)

### Websites

10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in.html)

This site provides ideas for bringing social activism into the classroom and outside of the school walls. These are lifelong skills and attitudes that teach students about citizenship and that there is something you can do when faced with injustice. The strategies can be acted upon individually, organized together as a group and young people can join with a larger effort that is taking place locally or nationally.

Anti-Bias Education

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education)

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.

Be An Ally: Six Simple Ways

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education)

Some simple things a student can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying.

### The Question Corner

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/early-childhood/c/the-question-corner.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/early-childhood/c/the-question-corner.html)

A collection of answers to frequently asked questions about anti-bias issues faced by early childhood professionals and family members interested in promoting respect for diversity among young children.

### Children's Books

Below are links to lists of recommended anti-bias and multicultural books for the indicated category.

Being an Ally, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/bullying-books.html?bullying\\_sub=being-an-ally](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/bullying-books.html?bullying_sub=being-an-ally)

Community Activism, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/social-justice-books.html?subsocial=community-activism](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/social-justice-books.html?subsocial=community-activism)

Socioeconomic Bias, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/general-books.html?generalsub=socioeconomic-bias](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/general-books.html?generalsub=socioeconomic-bias)