



## CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND IMMIGRATION

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### Picture Books

**All the Way to America: The Story of a Big Italian Family and a Little Shovel.** Dan Yaccarino. (K – 2) The story of four generations of an Italian American family. It begins with an immigrant who came through Ellis Island with big dreams, a small shovel, and his parents' advice: "Work hard, but remember to enjoy life, and never forget your family."

**Benjamin and the Word / Benjamín y La Palabra.** Daniel Olivas. (Bilingual) (K – 2) Benjamin beat his friend James while playing handball, and James retaliated by calling Benjamin "the word." A compelling look at name-calling and intolerance. Because "the word" is not stated, this book could be used to discuss many hurtful words. Topics of immigration and race are raised in the book.

**Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty.** Linda Glaser. (1 – 4) In 1883, Emma Lazarus, deeply moved by an influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe, wrote a sonnet that was to give voice to the Statue of Liberty.

**Candy Shop.** Jan Wahl. (K – 3) Daniel, an African-American boy dressed as a cowboy and his aunt go to his favorite place, the Candy Shop. When they get there, they find a crowd gathered and the Taiwanese owner, Miz Chu, in tears. Someone has written hateful words on the sidewalk in front of her shop. Daniel thinks a cowboy would help, so he takes a bucket and brush and scrubs away those "dumb words."

**The Color of Home.** Mary Hoffman. (K – 2) Hassan, a recent immigrant from Somalia, is homesick on his first day of school in America. Though the teacher is nice and the children are friendly, adjusting to a new culture, especially a different language, is a struggle until Hassan discovers a way to communicate.

**Grandfather Counts.** Andrea Cheng. (Pre-K – 2) When Helen's Chinese grandfather comes to live with her family in the United States, the language barrier seems insurmountable until they each find pleasure in introducing the other to words in his or her native tongue. A moving intergenerational story.

**Grandfather's Journey.** Allen Say. (K – 2) Personal yet expressing universally held emotions, a tale of one man's love for two countries and his constant desire to be in both places. 1994 Caldecott Medal winner.

**Jalapeño Bagels.** Natasha Wing. (Pre-K – 2) While trying to decide what to take for his school's International Day, Pablo helps his Mexican mother and Jewish father at their bakery and discovers a food that represents both his parents' backgrounds.

**The Journey.** Francesca Sanna. (K – 2) A collage of personal stories of refugees and the incredible strength of the people within them. Beautifully illustrated. Explores the unimaginable decisions made as a family leaves their home to escape the turmoil and tragedy brought by war.

**Halmoni's Day.** Edna Coe Bercaw. (Pre-K – 2) Jennifer is worried about her Korean grandmother's visit to school because Halmoni does not speak English and wears traditional Korean dress. The visit goes perfectly, and Jennifer learns more about her grandmother's life story as well.

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**Home at Last.** Susan Middleton Elya. (1 – 3) The family has recently arrived in the U.S. from Mexico. Ana adjusts quickly, but Mama has a harder time.

**How My Parents Learned to Eat.** Ina R. Friedman and Allen Say. (K – 2) Narrated by a young girl, who describes how her father, an American sailor courts a young Japanese woman, her mother, and each try, in secret, to learn the other's way of eating.

**I Love Saturdays y Domingos.** Alma Flor Ada. (K – 2) An affectionate portrait of a bilingual girl's weekend visits to her two sets of grandparents. She does different things in each place, goes on different outings and hears different stories reflecting her grandparents' heritages.

**I'm New Here.** Anne Sibley O'Brien. (K – 2) Through self-determination and with encouragement, three new students from Guatemala, Korea, and Somalia learn to feel confident and comfortable in their new school without losing a sense of their home country, language, and identity.

**In the Small, Small Night.** Jane Kurtz. (K – 2) Kofi can't sleep in his new home in the United States, so his older sister Abena soothes his fears about life in a different country by telling him two folktales from their native Ghana about the nature of wisdom and perseverance.

**I Pledge Allegiance.** Pat Mora. (1 – 2) Libby and her great aunt Lobo who wants to become a U.S. citizen practice the Pledge together—asking questions and sharing stories and memories—until they both stand tall and proud, with their hands over their hearts.

**The Journey.** Francesca Sanna. (K – 2) A collage of personal stories of refugees and the incredible strength of the people within them. This beautifully illustrated book explores the unimaginable decisions made as a family leaves their home and everything they know to escape the turmoil and tragedy brought by war.

**The Keeping Quilt.** Patricia Polacco. (K – 3) Traces the history of a quilt made from bits of Polacco's ancestors' clothing. Over the course of a century, the coverlet serves as a Sabbath tablecloth, a wedding canopy and a blanket for newborn babies, connecting generations from one to the next.

**Landed.** Milly Lee. (3 – 5) Based on a true story from the author's father-in-law. Tells the story of 12-year-old Lee Sun Chor and his emigration from China to America around 1882. It also tells the true story of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act that detained new immigrants at Angel Island.

**Love to Mamá: A Tribute to Mothers.** Pat Mora (1 – 5) Thirteen poets write with joy, humor and love about the powerful bond between mothers, grandmothers and children. The writers include men and women who represent a wide spectrum of Latino/a voices.

**La Mariposa.** Francisco Jimenez. (1 – 3) Francisco, the son of migrant workers, has difficulty adjusting to a new school because he doesn't speak or understand English and, to make matters worse, the class bully seems to have it in for him.

**The Memory Coat.** Elvira Woodruff. (K – 2) Follows the story of a young Russian Jewish boy who immigrates to the United States through Ellis Island during the late 19th or early 20th century.

**Miss Bridie Chose a Shovel.** Leslie Connor. (1 – 3) The journey begins for a young immigrant named Miss Bridie. It is a journey of hope and uncertainty, a journey that will take her to a new land, a new home, and—if she has chosen wisely—a good life.

**My Abuelita.** Tony Johnston. (K – 2) Abuelita's hair is the color of salt. She booms out words as wild as blossoms blooming. Sprinkled with Spanish and infused with love. A celebration of family, imagination, and the power of story.

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**My Name Is Bilal.** Asma Mobin-Uddin & Barbara Kiwak. (2 – 5) A brother and sister are the only Muslim students at their new school. When the sister is teased for wearing a headscarf, Bilal finds the courage to stand up to the bullies.

**My Name Is Sangoel.** Karen Lynn Williams. (1 – 3) Sangoel, a refugee, leaves behind his homeland of Sudan, where his father died in the war. He has little to call his own other than his name that no one can pronounce. He finally comes up with an ingenious solution.

**My Name Is Yoon.** Helen Recorvits. (K – 2) Disliking her name as written in English, Korean-born Yoon, or "shining wisdom," refers to herself as "cat," "bird," and "cupcake," as a way to feel more comfortable in her new school and new country. In the end, she comes to accept both her English name and her new American self, recognizing that however it is written, she is still Yoon.

**The Name Jar.** Yangsook Choi. (K – 2) The new kid in school needs a new name! Or does she? Having just moved from Korea, Unhei is anxious that American kids will like her.

**One Green Apple.** Eve Bunting. (K – 3) Follows a newly immigrated young Arab girl on a field trip with her classmates on the second day of school. When she puts a green apple into the cider press instead of a ripe red her classmates protest. But then they see the cider from all their apples mixed together is delicious.

**A Piece of Home.** Jeri Watts. (K – 2) Hee Jun faces challenges when he must move with his family from Korea to West Virginia, becoming suddenly a "different" kid instead of just one of the crowd.

**Somos Como Las Nubes / We Are Like the Clouds.** Jorge Argueta. (1 – 3) Why are young people leaving their country to walk to the United States to seek a new, safe home? Over 100,000 such children have left Central America. The poetry helps us to understand why and what it is like.

**The St. Patrick's Day Shillelagh.** Janet Nolan. (K – 2) Follows the story of an immigrant Irish family, who passes their story down to the next generation, along with a shillelagh (walking stick) made from a tree in Ireland.

**Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey** (Arabic and English Edition). Margriet Ruurs. (1 – 4) Inspired by the stunning stone artwork of a Syrian artist. Rama and her family are forced to flee their once-peaceful village to escape the ravages of civil war to walk to freedom in Europe.

**Teacup.** Rebecca Young. 2016. (K – 3) A boy must leave his home and find another. Bringing with him a teacup full of earth from the place where he grew up, he sets off to sea. Some days the journey is peaceful and some days it is rough. Though it is ultimately hopeful.

**Their Great Gift: Courage, Sacrifice, and Hope in a New Land.** John Coy. (K – 3) Explores the experiences of immigrants to the United States from many different parts of the world in the twenty-first century, focusing on the lives of children through photographs and brief text.

**We Came To America.** Faith Ringgold. (K – 3) From the Native Americans who first called this land their home, to the millions of people who have flocked to its shores, each person embodied a unique gift. Together they have forever shaped the country we all call home.

**When Jessie Came Across the Sea.** Amy Hest. (1 – 3) A thirteen-year-old Jewish orphan reluctantly leaves her grandmother and immigrates to New York City at the turn of the century, where she works for three years sewing lace and earning money to bring Grandmother to the United States.

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## Chapter Books

**Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain.** Russell Freedman. (5 – 9) Following the passage of legislation requiring the screening of immigrants, Angel Island, "the other Ellis Island," processed around one million people from Japan, China, and Korea.

**Becoming Naomi Leon.** Pam Muñoz Ryan. (4 – 6) Naomi and Owen have lived happily with their great-grandmother in her trailer for seven years. Gram has arranged Owen's surgeries for his physical disabilities and helped Naomi begin to speak again. When their mother reappears to claim only Naomi, Gram runs away with the children to Mexico to find their father and heritage.

**The Circuit / Cajas De Carton.** Francisco Jimenez. (5 and up) Independent but intertwined stories follow the family through their circuit, from picking cotton and strawberries to topping carrots. With faith, hope, and back-breaking work, the family endures. Autobiographical. Available in English and Spanish.

**Double Crossing.** Eve Tal. (5 – 8) Raizel's odyssey with her father across Russia and Europe and on to America is full of adventure, adversity, and hardship. Offers the unique perspective of immigrants who were denied admission into America. Continues with *Cursing Columbus* when the rest of the family joins them in America.

**The Dragon's Child: A Story of Angel Island.** Laurence Yep. (4 – 6) A portrait of a father and son and their unforgettable journey from China to the land of the Golden Mountain. Based on actual conversations between two-time Newbery Honor author Laurence Yep and his father.

**Drita: My Homegirl.** Jenny Lombard. (3 – 5) Drita is a Muslim Albanian refugee from Kosovo and Maxie is an African American girl, one of the in-crowd that wants nothing to do with the newcomer. Maxie's teacher charges her with interviewing Drita about her story and the girls find common ground

**Esperanza Rising.** Pam Muñoz Ryan. (4 – 6) Esperanza thought she'd always live with her family on their ranch in Mexico and have fancy dresses and a beautiful home. But a sudden tragedy forces her and Mama to flee to California during the Great Depression, and to settle in a camp for Mexican farm workers. Esperanza must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances--Mama's life and her own depend on it.

**Felita.** Nicholasa Mohr. (4 – 6) Felita's parents promise she will love their new neighborhood. Only her grandmother understands how much she will miss her old block. Her new neighbors taunt and tease her and her family because they are from Puerto Rico.

**Home of the Brave.** Katherine Applegate. (4 – 8) Kek, an African refugee, is confronted by many strange things at the Minneapolis home of his aunt and cousin, as well as in his fifth-grade classroom, and longs for his missing mother, but finds comfort in the company of a cow and her owner. Written in fast, spare free verse.

**How Tia Lola Came to Visit Stay.** Julia Alvarez. (4 – 6) Ten-year-old Miguel is at first embarrassed by his colorful aunt, Tia Lola, from the Dominican Republic. Then he finds the fun in her music, exotic cooking, and vivid story-telling -- half believing that she has magical powers. Continues with *How Tia Lola Learned to Teach* and *How Tia Lola Saved the Summer*.

**Inside Out and Back Again.** Thanhha Lai. (4 – 7) Hà has only known life in Saigon, but now the Vietnam War has reached her home. Hà and her family are forced to flee. She ends up in Alabama. The story of one girl's year of change, dreams, grief, and healing as she journeys from one country to another, one life to the next. Short free-verse poems.

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**It Ain't So Awful, Falafel.** Firoozeh Dumas. (4– 7) Zomorod (Cindy) Yousefzadeh is the new kid on the block – trying to fit in again. It's the late 1970s, and fitting in becomes more difficult as Iranian hostage crisis unfolds. Even mood rings can't distract Cindy from the anti-Iran sentiments that creep way too close to home. Poignant yet lighthearted.

**Letters from Rifka.** Karen Hesse. (4 – 6) Rifka knows nothing about America when she flees from Russia with her family in 1919. Strong-hearted and determined, Rifka must endure a great deal: humiliating examinations by doctors and soldiers, deadly typhus, separation from all she has ever known and loved. And even if she does make it to America, she's not sure America will have her.

**La Línea.** Ann Jaramillo. (5 – 8) 15-year-old Miguel dreams of crossing the California-Mexico border to join his parents. Finally, he and his sister try. Highlights the perils they face.

**Listen, Slowly.** Thanhha Lai. (3 – 7) Mai a 12-year-old California girl, has to travel back to Vietnam with her grandmother because her parents want her to understand their culture, but she'd rather go to the beach. To survive her trip, Mai must find a balance between her two completely different worlds.

**Maggie's Door.** Patricia Reilly Giff. (4 – 6) In the mid-1800s, Nory and her neighbor and friend, Sean, set out separately on a dangerous journey from famine-plagued Ireland, hoping to reach a better life in America.

**The Not So Spangled Life of Sunita Sen.** Mitali Perkins. (5 – 8) Thirteen-year-old Sunita finds herself resenting her Indian heritage when her grandparents come for a visit from India to California. She's embarrassed by the differences she feels between herself and her friends, but she's in for some surprises as she gets to know her grandparents -- and herself!

**Return to Sender.** Julia Alvarez. (4 – 7) After Tyler's father is injured in a tractor accident, his family hires migrant Mexican workers to help save their Vermont farm. Can Tyler and Mari find a way to be friends despite their differences? Full of hope, but no easy answers.

**Shanghai Messenger.** Andrea Cheng. (3 – 6) 11-year-old Xiao Mei heads off to Shanghai, China, to visit their extended family. Xiao Mei is both excited and apprehensive. She will meet many new relatives, but will they accept her, a girl from America who is only half Chinese? A story in verse of a biracial Chinese American girl's journey to self-discovery and love of family

**Star in the Forest.** Laura Resau. (3 – 6) Zitlally's family is undocumented, and her father has just been arrested for speeding and deported back to Mexico. Meanwhile, Zitlally and a new friend find a dog in the forest near their trailer park. Will her Dad make it back home? Will the dog be OK?

**The Thing About Luck.** Cynthia Kadohata. (5 – 8) A 12-year old Japanese-American girl is forced to live with her old-fashioned, demanding grandparents for a long, hot summer of wheat harvesting in the Midwest. Generations and cultures clash, it's funny and touching in equal measure. National Book Award winner.

**Wild Girl.** Patricia Reilly Giff. (4 – 7) Lidie lives in Brazil, where she rides, a wild girl dreaming of going to live with her father, Pai, and older brother, Rafael, in New York City. In New York, she finds that moving to another country is a big challenge. And Pai and Rafael still think of her as the little girl they left behind. But she's determined to befriend, and ride, the spirited filly her father has just bought.

**The Year of the Dog.** Grace Lin. (3 – 5) Pacy and her two sisters are the only Taiwanese-American children at school until Melody arrives. Follow them through the Year of the Dog as they celebrate with family, try to integrate different cultures and navigate school projects and friends. Continues with **The Year of the Rat**, and **Dumpling Days**.