



Common Core Projects | Pre-Reading Activities

Brothers

Written by Yin and illustrated by Chris Soentpiet.

About the Book

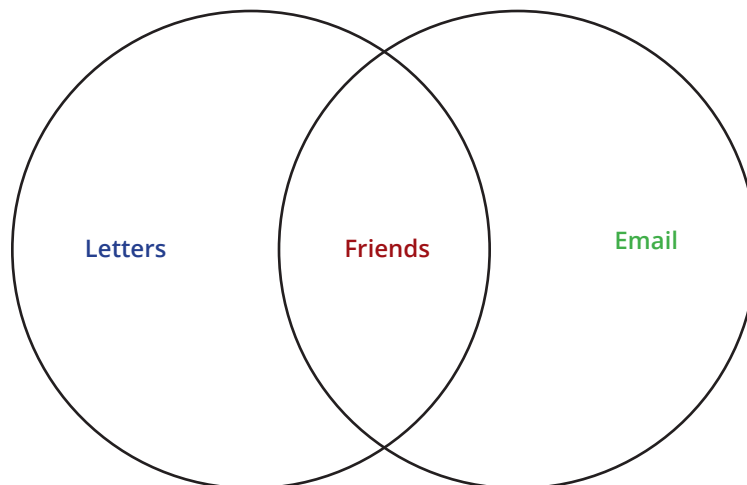
When Ming arrives in San Francisco after the long boat journey from China, his older brothers waste no time warning him: "Chinese should not go outside Chinatown." But Ming risks doing just that, and when he meets Patrick, he knows the young Irish boy has a kind heart, and begins a remarkable friendship that brings their two very different communities together.

Pre-Reading Activity

Help kids understand that this piece is a work of historical fiction. On the board draw two, large intersecting circles (Venn diagram). In one write "1850's" and in the other write "Today." Then have the kids describe how life was different between the two time periods. (Some topics to consider: transportation, technology, education, immigration, etc. Make sure to discuss topics that are very similar to today as well: family, friendship, music).

1850s

Today



Common

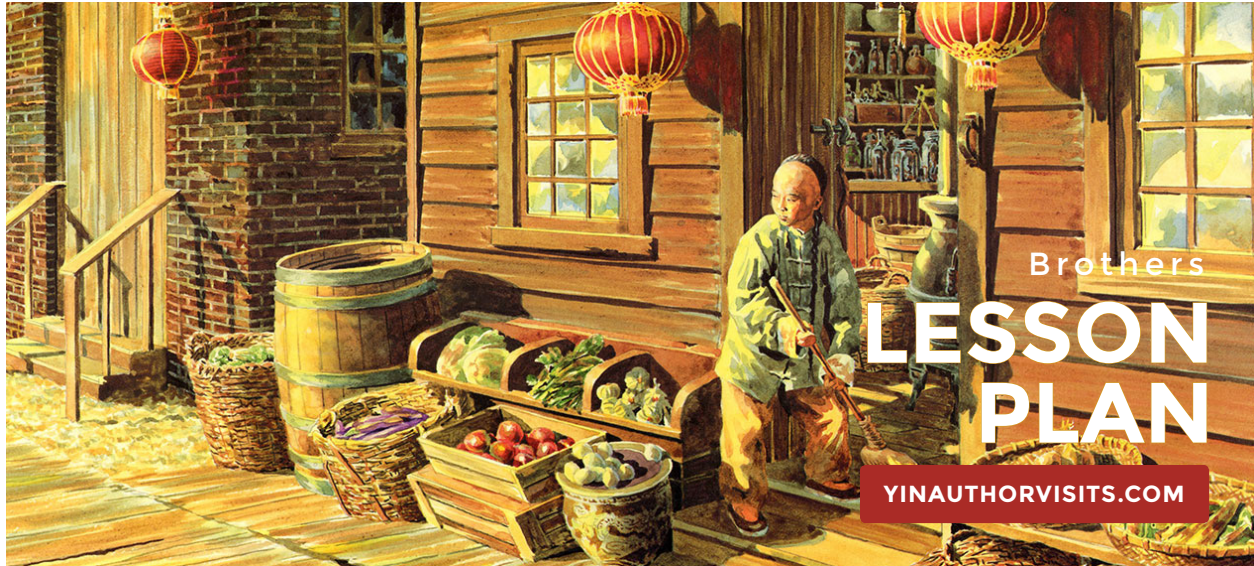


Common Core Projects | Reading Comprehension

Discussion Questions:

Use the questions below to discuss the details of the story or have students answer them in complete sentences.

1. Where has Ming come from and why has it taken a month? Who is he meeting in San Francisco?
2. List his worries and rank them from most important to least. What would you be most worried about?
3. Infer why Ming's legs are wobbly but get better as he gets to Chinatown.
4. Describe Shek and Wong's store. What are Shek's worries?
5. Recall the parts of Ming's first evening with his brother. What does he learn about his role?
6. Why doesn't Ming want to disappoint his brother? How does he try to impress him? Who do you try to impress? Why?
7. Why do you think Shek tells Ming not to leave China town?
8. Paraphrase (or retell in your own words) how Ming leaves Chinatown but goes unnoticed. Where would he like to go someday?
9. What does Ming mean when he says, "My Chinese tongue is not used to the sounds."? Have you ever tried to speak another language?
10. Who does Ming meet outside of Chinatown? How does he get him to follow?



Common Core Projects | Reading Comprehension

Discussion Questions (continued):

11. How do they learn each other's names? How do you say "friend" in Chinese?
12. Do you think kids become friends easier than adults? Why or why not? How did you meet your newest friend?
13. Why can't Ming just go to school with Patrick? Do you think Shek is mad at Ming or not? Why?
14. How does Patrick show that he has a "caring heart"?
15. Summarize what happened when Ming visits Patrick's house the first time. When does he start visiting after that?
16. Identify why Wong, Ming's older brother, needs to keep working on the railroad rather than coming home to San Francisco. What is Patrick's idea to help the store?
17. Explain why they put up the new sign in front of the store. Why would this be important to customers?
18. How does Mr. O'Farrell help the store do more business? What is Mrs. O'Farrell's important advice?
19. What is the modern day equivalent of a general store? What would you want to look at inside Ming and his brother's store?
20. Which illustration is your favorite? Why? How can illustrations help you understand a story?



Common Core Projects | Reading: Finding Evidence

Readers can prove their understanding by being detectives! Look for clues that prove the following statements from the book are true by finding textual evidence or proof by finding specific sentences that SHOW it.

Statement About the Story	Proof from the Story that Makes it True
<i>Example: Ming is looking forward to seeing his brothers after so long.</i>	<i>Example: "I can't wait to see my older brothers. I wonder if they will recognize me."</i>
<i>Shek takes care of his younger brother.</i>	
<i>Ming works hard in the new store to help his brother.</i>	
<i>The new store needs more business (customers).</i>	
<i>Ming makes a new friend in San Francisco.</i>	
<i>Shek does not want Ming to leave Chinatown.</i>	
<i>Patrick has a caring heart.</i>	



Common Core Projects | Vocabulary

Good readers know that many words can be figured out by the context of the sentence they're in. In other words, they look for clues to the meaning of words from the story. See if you can't figure out some of these exciting words in this way. If you're not certain, check a dictionary!

Word in its original sentence	What I think it means	What the dictionary says	A new sentence of my own
"I stagger toward the crowd of people waiting. My knees wobble from the long voyage."			
"At the back of the store, Shek hoists buckets of hot water on a long wooden pole over his shoulder and pours them into a tub."			
"I walk carefully. No one stares. My disguise is working."			



Common Core Projects | Vocabulary - continued

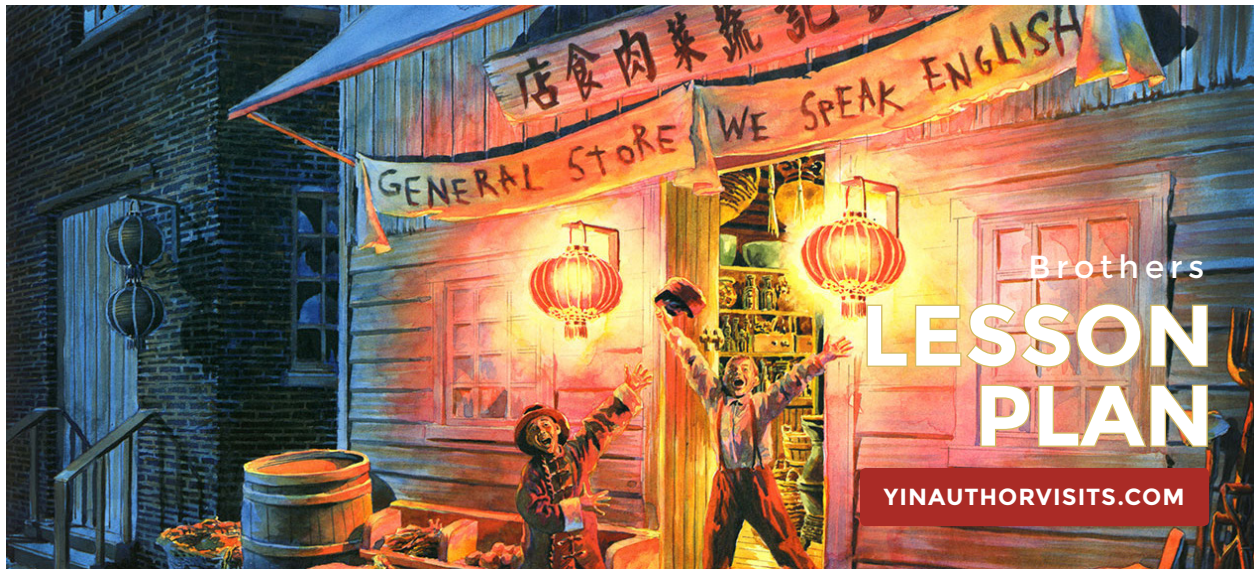
Words in original sentence	What I think it means	What the dictionary says	A new sentence of my own
"We are safer right here in Chinatown," Shek scolds . "Just do as you are told!"			
"My English is not so good, but with Shek's blessing , I go with Patrick to his home."			
"I smile back at her as I quickly dart down the dark gloomy road back to Chinatown."			



Common Core Projects | Writing Part One

Writers always want their story to feel real and true. Lots of times these details come from one of the five senses. Look back in Ming's story and try to find an example of a detail for each one of the senses. Then, get ready to write a story about a new friend (or imaginary friend) that uses at least three of the five senses by filling out the chart the rest of the way.

SENSES	EXAMPLE FROM MING'S STORY	IDEAS FOR MY STORY
See		
Hear		
Smell		
Taste		
Touch		



Common Core Projects | Writing Part Two

Now, get ready to write! Stories have three parts to them. Use the chart below to help you build a first draft of your story.

	EXPOSITION - the beginning of the story where the characters, setting and problems are all introduced to the reader.	CLIMAX - In the middle of the story something important happens to the main character.	RESOLUTION - This is the ending where the reader knows what happened and why.
MING'S STORY: review what happened to Ming in each of these parts of the story.			
YOUR STORY: What will happen in your story in each of these parts?			



This Lesson Guide has been aligned to the Common Core standards for informational text for the 3rd grade. If you teach a different grade, simply visit the [Common Core Website](#) to find a similar standard in the same strand.

Key Ideas and Details

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events

Craft and Structure

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.5

Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7

Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)

Speaking and Listening / Comprehension and Collaboration

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.4.A

Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.