



Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Department

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.

A Map into the World

Kao Kalia Yang (Author), Seo Kim (Illustrator)

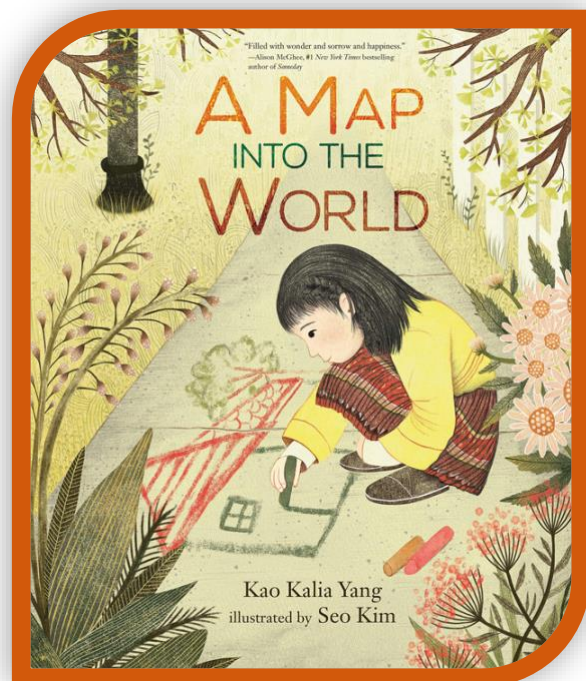
Paj Ntaub, a young Hmong girl, moves into a new home with her family. As the seasons change, so too does her world as she encounters both birth and death. As this curious girl explores life inside her house and beyond, she collects bits of the natural world. But who are her treasures for?

ISBN: 9781541538368

Publisher: Carolrhoda Books

Year Published: 2019

Age Range: 5–9



Book Themes

People, Identity and Culture, Hmong People, Family, Friendship, Nature, Neighbors

Key Words

Discuss and define these words with children 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 to students when they appear in the story. For definitions that are differentiated for young children, see ADL's [Education Glossary Terms](#).

- alone
- brisk
- cuter
- directions
- driveway
- empty
- garden
- glittered

- Hmong
- splatter
- teardrop
- map
- swayed
- whisper

Additionally, these words from the book are pronounced as follows:

- Hmong: Mohng
- Paj Ntaub: Ba Ndao
- Tais Tais: Tie Tie

Discussion Questions

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

- What is the title of the book?
- Who 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 reading to check for comprehension and keep the students engaged. Below are sample questions that correlate to specific page numbers.

- Who does Paj Ntaub see across the street? (page 5)
- Why does Paj Ntaub try to lift her brother to the window? (page 15)
- What do you think Paj Ntaub's idea is? (page 23)

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

- What is the book about?
- What does Paj Ntaub notice about her neighbors, Bob and Ruth?
- Who are your neighbors? What do you know about them, and how did you learn what you know about them?
- How does Paj Ntaub feel when Ruth dies?
- How does she feel about her baby brothers?
- When spring comes, what does Paj Ntaub do for Bob? Why do you think she does that?
- Why does Paj Ntaub start her picture with a teardrop?
- What is in Paj Ntaub's map into the world? Why does she think Bob needs it?
- How do you think Paj Ntaub feels about Bob? How do you know?
- How does the book end? What do you think will happen next?
- Why do you think the book called *A Map into the World*?

Extension Activities

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

1. My Map into the World

Discuss with students the book's title and why the book is called *A Map into the World*. Remind them that Paj Ntaub uses colored chalk to draw a picture of the map into the world for Bob. Ask students: *What did Paj Ntaub include in her map of the world? Why do you think she included those things? What would you include in your map of the world?*

Watch [this short video](#) in which the author, Kao Kalia Yang, talks about the book and why she created a map into the world for Bob. Create a brainstormed list of their ideas. Explain that their maps into the world can include spaces, places, people and things that are important to them—from the materials found in nature and things found indoors. Provide students with construction paper and drawing materials such as colored pencils, markers or paint. Have students create their own “map into the world” and then have them share their maps with the class. You could also use a butcher paper roll of paper and give each student a section to draw their map of the world. After creating their own map in their section, have students draw a connection between their map and the person next to them, as a way of connecting their maps and their worlds. If time allows, invite each student to share their world aloud and introduce the person next to them, who will then share their world.

2. Neighbors and Caring

Remind students that in the beginning of the book, Paj Ntaub meets her neighbors, Bob and Ruth. Her mother introduces her to them and throughout the book, Paj Ntaub takes great interest in them. When winter comes, she watches them through her window. When Ruth dies, Paj Ntaub feels badly about it and wonders about Bob.

Ask students: *What is a neighbor?* Explain that a **neighbor** is a person who lives next to or near another person. Remind students that in school, we sometimes refer to someone's “neighbor” to describe a person sitting next to another person. Students may also be familiar with the word “neighborhood” referring to an area in a community, town or city, sometimes named after an important landmark in the area. Ask: *Who are your neighbors?* Explain that their neighbors can be people who live next door, in the same building or who live close by.

Have students draw a building or neighborhood map and identify their neighbors and where they live on the map. Their neighbors can include those who live there and those who work in stores or businesses in their neighborhood. Have students write an essay called, My Neighbor _____. In the essay, they will highlight one of their neighbors and include information about how they met this neighbor, how often they see them, what they know about them and what more they'd like to know.

Note: Where appropriate, you can also encourage some students to identify the school's neighbors and neighborhood (what businesses, parks, etc. are around the school) instead of a home neighborhood.

3. Learn about People Who are Hmong

Paj Ntaub and her family are Hmong (pronounced “Mohng”). Ask students: *Does anyone know what it means to be Hmong?* Explain that Hmong people are an Asian ethnic group that live in the mountainous regions of southern China. Beginning in the 18th century (the 1700's), the Hmong people began migrating (moving from one place to another) to parts of Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar. Starting in 1975, many Hmong families came to the U.S. as refugees of war. In addition to the U.S., other countries with significant numbers of Hmong people include France, Australia, French Guiana, Canada and Argentina. Engage students in a research

project where they learn more about Hmong people, culture and history. They can use some of these resources: [Hmong People](#), [Hmong Americans](#), [Hmong Timeline](#) or do their own research online or in the library. They can present their research in the form of a research essay, drawing, map or timeline.

ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and other educational resources on people and identity, Asian people and friendship.

Curriculum Resources

Diverse Books Matter, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/diverse-books-matter.

Dolls Are Us, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/dolls-are-us.

Who Am I? Identity Poems, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/who-am-i-identity-poems.

Websites

6 Ways to Be an Ally

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/6-ways-to-be-an-ally-en-espanol

Some simple things a student can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying. (Also in Spanish.)

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Resources

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

A collection of resources to teach help you teach and celebrate the Asian Pacific American heritage in school, communities and at home.

Children's Books

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

[People, Identity and Culture](#)

[People, Identity and Culture: Asian/Asian-American/South Asian/South-Asian American/Pacific Islander](#)