

CLASSROOM READING AND ACTIVITY GUIDE



BUILD VOCABULARY

Providing a simple explanation for words that children may not be familiar with can help build their language skills. You can describe the meaning of a word, point to an illustration, or use your tone of voice to convey the word's meaning.

Here are some words to talk about while you read *With Lots of Love*:

- **Missed**: feeling sad or lonely without someone or something
- **Gentle**: very soft and calm
- **Celebration**: an event for a special person or day
- **Decorate**: to make more beautiful or special
- **Sprinkled**: to drop in small pieces
- **Wish**: a hope for something to happen
- **Recognized**: to know or remember someone or something you have seen before
- **Plucked**: to grab with your fingers and pull off

MEMORY BOOKS: WRITING

In *With Lots of Love*, Rocio misses Abuela and her faraway home. Ask children if any of them are missing someone or something they love. Talk about how when you are feeling sad about missing someone, it can help to think of happy memories. Invite children to use writing materials to make a memory book. Encourage them to draw and write freely about special memories of people, places, or things.

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MAKE A PIÑATA: ART

Rocio remembers the piñatas that hung in Abuela's store and wishes Abuela had made one for her to decorate her new room. Give children the opportunity to make a small piñata for themselves or for someone special using a paper cup and tissue paper. Encourage children to decorate their own piñata by choosing colors and making designs as they tape tissue paper strips to the cup. If you like, you can fill the cups with small toys or candy. Cover the top of each cup with a piece of tissue paper and secure with a rubber band. Tie a loop around the cup with ribbon to hang the piñata.

MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER: MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Rocio and her family love singing the song, "Las Mañanitas," a traditional Mexican birthday song. The whole family joins in singing and playing instruments. Collect a playlist of songs children love to sing either with their families or in the classroom. Sing or listen to these songs together. Add instruments or special costumes. Invite children to make homemade maracas, like the ones Rocio's brother plays, by putting beans or beads in an empty container. Shake and dance to the music!



GROCERY STORE: DRAMATIC PLAY

Rocio's Abuela owns a grocery store where she sells various items, like fresh fruits and vegetables, pan dulce, and ice pops. Recreate Abuela's store in the classroom with materials like a cash register, empty food containers, money, grocery bags, and a place to store and display the items. Support children as they plan out the roles of who will work in the grocery store and who gets to be a customer. Encourage children to talk about the items they usually buy in grocery stores and pretend to go shopping to find all the items.



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MORE IDEAS

Keep the playful learning going! Here are a few additional ideas for your classroom:

Who Lives with Me?: Have children draw or paint the people that live in their home. Talk with children about their family members who may not live with them. Give them an opportunity to share about places where their other family members live, whether they visit them, and how they keep in touch.

Send a Postcard: Ask children to think about people they love and miss. Invite them to create a picture on a blank postcard to share with a loved one. Help them to write a message on the back. If possible, mail the postcards or send home to families.

Make Shapes and Patterns: Encourage children to take a closer look at the illustrations of *With Lots of Love*, like the towel stitched with Rocio's name or the blanket on her bed. Notice the shapes, colors, and repeating patterns. Support children to use drawing materials to make their own shapes and patterns.

Create a Banner: Abuela holds a special birthday banner in the picture she sends to Rocio. Create a classroom banner to mark a special occasion. Add words and decorations to personalize the banner.

Explore a World Map: Show children a world map and point out Abuela's home in Central America and Rocio's new home in the United States. Help children to identify where they live on the map and places where faraway family members may live.

KEEP READING

Keep exploring the themes of *With Lots of Love*, by reading more books! Some ideas are:

Dive into more books about missing someone by reading:

- *Juna's Jar* by Jane Bahk and illustrated by Felicia Hoshino
- *I'll Go and Come Back* by Rajani LaRocca and illustrated by Sara Palacios
- *Mama and Mommy and Me in the Middle* by Nina LaCour and illustrated by Kaylani Juanita
- *Nonni's Moon* by Julia Inzerro and illustrated by Lucy Smith

Deepen conversation about moving. Try:

- *A New Kind of Wild* by Zara Gonzalez Hoang
- *Evelyn Del Rey Is Moving Away* by Meg Medina and illustrated by Sonia Sánchez
- *Everything Naomi Loved* by Katie Yamasaki and Ian Lendler
- *The Many Colors of Harpreet Singh* by Supriya Kelkar and illustrated by Alea Marley
- *Coqui in the City* by Nomar Perez

Dig into themes of intergenerational relationships by reading:

- *Grandpa Grumps* by Katrina Moore and illustrated by Xindi Yan
- *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt De La Peña and illustrated by Christian Robinson
- *When Lola Visits* by Michelle Sterling and illustrated by Aaron Asis
- *Saturdays Are for Stella* by Candy Wellins and illustrated by Charlie Eve Ryan

