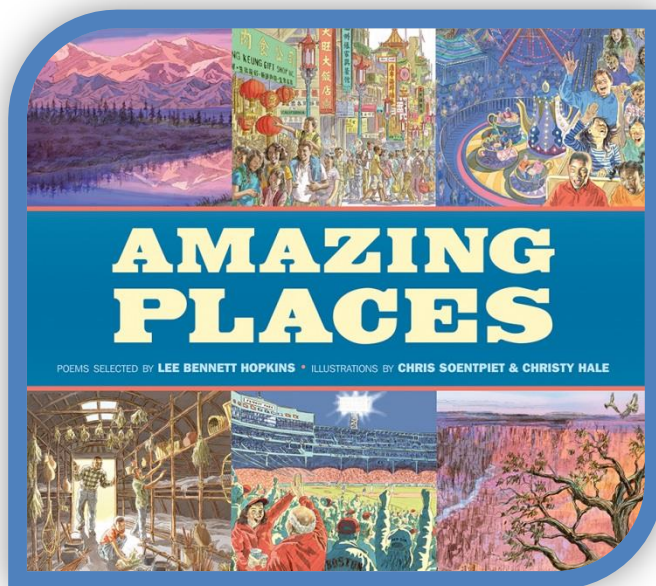




Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

About the Book of the Month Parent/Family Discussion Guide: 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 parents, guardians and family members, reading the books listed on this site with your children and integrating the concepts into your interactions with them is an excellent way to help children grapple with and learn about these important principles.



Amazing Places

Poems Selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins,
Chris Soentpiet (Illustrator), Christy Hale
(Illustrator)

ISBN: 978-1600606533

Publisher: Lee & Low Books

Year Published: 2015

Age Range: 7–10

Book Themes

Diversity, Culture, Sense of place, Poetry

About the Book

This collection of original poems brings together fourteen selections that celebrate through poetic imagery some of the amazingly diverse people and places in our nation. The poems take readers on an exciting multiethnic travelogue around the United States and encourage a positive appreciation of our country's historical, environmental and cultural heritage. The inspiring and insightful poems were created by some of the best-known authors writing for children.

Conversation Starters

Since the book is a collection of poems, you may choose to read a few poems together or read the entire collection. Use these open-ended questions to deepen the conversation. Remember not to judge

children's responses and to thoughtfully engage in a give-and-take that helps them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

Discussion questions for reading individual poems:

- What thoughts and feelings come to mind while listening to/reading the poem?
- What is the message of the poem?
- What place is being described? Do you connect with that place and if so, how?
- What do you like or not like about the poem?
- Does the poem make you think of other places you have seen, visited or experienced?

Discussion questions for reading whole collection:

- What do all of the poems have in common? How are they different?
- What did you learn about people and culture by listening to/reading the poems?
- Which poem stands out for you and why?
- Why do you think the book is called *Amazing Places*? What is an amazing place to you?
- What is the overall message of the collection of poems?

Talking Points

Below are some important considerations to highlight in order to make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

1. National Poetry Month

Talk to your child about National Poetry Month. Explain that it was started by the [Academy of American Poets](#) which is the largest literary celebration of poetry in the world and is observed by publishers, libraries, booksellers and poets. Some teachers focus on poetry in April. Ask your child if they are studying and/or writing poems in school, what they like or don't like about poetry and how poetry is different than other types of creative writing. After reading some of the poems in the *Amazing Places* collection, seek out other poems by reading the books listed in "Other Books You Might Like" (below) or those at [Poems for Kids](#), [Poems for Children by Famous Poets](#) and [16 Classic Poems for Kids](#). You may also consider listening to [audio recordings](#) of poems read aloud, writing your own poems or writing one together.

2. Sense of Place

Remind your child about the theme of the book, which is amazing places. Ask them about some of the amazing places described in the book and what places they are most interested in learning more about and possibly visiting someday. Discuss with them some of the words, images, memories and metaphors reflected in the poems. Talk with them about important places in their lives like a room where they live (e.g., their bedroom), a place they have visited, a place where a special event took place, a relative's home/community or somewhere special to you and your family. Talk with them about what those places mean to them and why. Ask them what feelings, images and memories are evoked about those places. Encourage them to notice the big things as well as the small details of those special places and discuss why those details matter.

3. Identity and Culture

Talk with your child about how the poems in the book reflect information about people and their culture. Explain that **culture** refers to the patterns of daily life that can be seen in language, arts, customs, holiday celebrations, food, religion, beliefs/values, music, clothing and more that a group of people share. Ask what they have learned about culture from some or all of the poems. Talk with them about the words, images and concepts in the book that reflect something about culture (e.g., quinceañera, moccasins, dim sum, state fair, African bazaar). Discuss with them the aspects of culture(s) that are important in your family. Explain that these aspects of culture are often handed down from one generation to the next and they are sometimes connected to the country a person's relatives originally came from. Explain how you would define your family's culture(s) and identify together what foods, holidays, customs, etc. are important to your family. You may want to highlight other people in your life (your child's friends and family friends) who have similar or different cultures from your own. Stress that culture is part of who we are but not all of who we are. It's also important to underscore that cultural differences should not negatively impact our ability to connect with each other across different cultures. Highlight the idea that diversity can be and is a positive strength and that we can make new friends and learn new things from one another.

Other Books You May Like

Lend a Hand: Poems about Giving by John Frank, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/lend-a-hand-poems-about-giving

Tan to Tamarind: Poems about the Color Brown by Malathi Michelle Iyengar, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/tan-to-tamarind-poems-about-the-color-brown

We are Like the Clouds/Somos Como las Nubes by Jorge Argueta, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/we-are-like-the-cloudssomos-como-las-nubes

When Thunder Comes: Poems for Civil Rights Leaders by J. Patrick Lewis, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/when-thunder-comes-poems-for-civil-rights-leaders

ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on diversity, poetry and culture.

Curriculum Resources

Social Justice Poetry, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/social-justice-poetry

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

Websites

10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in-activism

A list of ideas for bringing social activism into the classroom and outside of the school walls. These 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.

Definitions Related to Bias, Injustice and Bullying

www.adl.org/education/resources/glossary-terms/definitions-related-to-bias-injustice-and-bullying

A listing of terms and definitions relating to bias, diversity, bullying and social justice concepts written for elementary-age children.

Parent, Family and Caregiver Resources

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/parent-family-and-caregiver-resources

Strategies, tips, guiding principles and resources to help parents, family members and caregivers impart values and principles to the children in their lives.

Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk

Provides the tools parents and family members need to engage their families in conversations about important news stories and other timely discussions about societal and world events. Includes discussion guides containing a topic summary, questions to start the conversation and dig deeper, ideas for taking action and additional resources. Specifically, see "Why We Need Diverse Books" at www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk/why-we-need-diverse-books.

Children's Books

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

People, Identity & Culture, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid\[201\]=201&tid\[202\]=202&tid\[203\]=203&tid\[204\]=204&tid\[205\]=205&tid\[206\]=206&tid\[207\]=207&tid\[208\]=208&tid\[209\]=209&tid\[210\]=210&tid\[211\]=211&tid\[212\]=212&tid\[213\]=213&tid\[214\]=214&tid\[215\]=215](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid[201]=201&tid[202]=202&tid[203]=203&tid[204]=204&tid[205]=205&tid[206]=206&tid[207]=207&tid[208]=208&tid[209]=209&tid[210]=210&tid[211]=211&tid[212]=212&tid[213]=213&tid[214]=214&tid[215]=215)