

PICTURE BOOKS TO TEACH ABOUT

Food and Culture

IN CLASSROOMS AND COMMUNITIES

A PLATE OF HOPE

*Mango
Memories*

THE
SPICE BOX



THE *Last Stand*

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EDUCATORS' GUIDE

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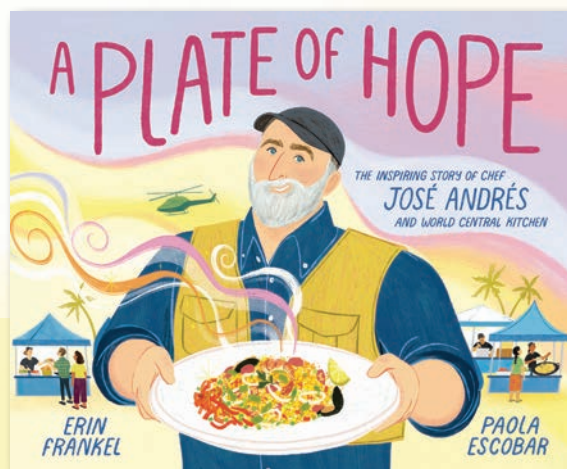
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A PLATE OF HOPE

THE INSPIRING STORY OF CHEF
JOSÉ ANDRÉS

AND WORLD CENTRAL KITCHEN



ABOUT THE BOOK

A moving picture book biography about chef José Andrés, who, along with his World Central Kitchen organization, is sure to inspire kids to help out in their own communities.

José Andrés's love of cooking began as a young boy in Spain as he gathered the wood to make the fire that would cook the paella just right. José loved everything about it: the sizzling olive oil, the mounds of chopped vegetables, the smell of saffron. When he left home, he realized he wanted to tell stories with food. And tell them he did, creating magic with the seeds of ripe tomatoes and pomegranates and cheese. His dreams grew until they were as big as the stars in the sky. He thought, *No one should ever go hungry. I want to help feed the world*—and World Central Kitchen was born.

From the earthquake in Haiti to the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic, José and his team at World Central Kitchen have been on the frontlines, serving more than 200 million meals and counting, and bringing comfort and hope in the darkest times.

With a lyrical text and stunning illustrations, here is a picture book biography about a world-renowned humanitarian and chef that's sure to inspire a new generation of community helpers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Erin Frankel is a children's book author. She loves telling stories of empathy and wonder. Her picture books include *A Plate of Hope*, *Remembering Barkley*, and the *Weird!* series. Erin enjoys visiting schools to talk to students about stories and kindness. She lives with her family in Pittsburgh, where she writes, teaches, and hopes. erinfrankel.com | [@erinfrankell](https://twitter.com/erinfrankell)

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Paola Escobar grew up traveling from town to town in Bogota, Colombia. She is the illustrator of *Digging for Words*, an ALA Notable Book and recipient of both the Americas Award and the International Latino Book Award, as well as *Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian* and Storyteller Pura Belpré, an Indie Pick called "a must-have for all libraries" in a *School Library Journal* starred review. She lives with her husband and her dog, Flora. [@paoesco8r](https://twitter.com/paoesco8r)

PRE-READING

1. Based on the title of the book, what do you think the story is going to be about?
2. What is your favorite dish? What feelings and memories does that dish bring up for you?
3. "Food tastes better when shared with friends." What does this phrase mean, and how do you think it connects to the story?
4. In addition to providing sustenance and keeping us alive, what role does food play in society? Use the illustrations on the book cover to support your answer.

POST-READING

1. "When you have more than you need, build a longer table, not a higher wall." Explain this quote, making connections to chef Andrés and the story you just read.
2. "That will feed a few . . . or many. ALL are welcome." Based on that sentence and the illustrations accompanying it, describe in detail the type of community that chef Andrés grew up in.
3. Why does José's father think that he has the most important job? Support your answer with text evidence.
4. The author describes the paella in great detail. What is the significance of her descriptive sentences? How do they bring the story to life?
5. Every dish represents more than just good food to José. What emotions and aspirations did food evoke in him as a child? How has that helped shape who he is today? Support your answers with text evidence.
6. "Everyone deserved a hot meal. Not just the few . . . but the many." Explain, using examples from the story, how this sentence gives us insight into Chef Andrés's character and aspirations.
7. Why do you think the United States was the place that stuck in José's mind? Why is that fact important in the story?
8. The story of José Andrés is a great life lesson and inspiration to all of us. It teaches us that it only takes one person full of passion and drive to make the world a better place. What are you passionate about? How can you use this passion to make a positive contribution to your community?

ALL ARE WELCOME



Mango Memories

About the Book

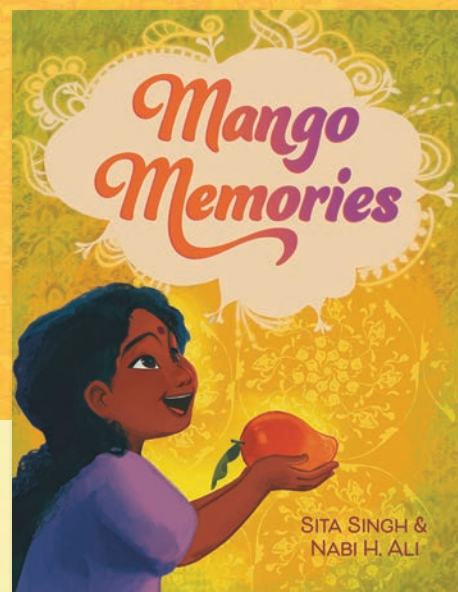
Here is a completely captivating picture book that celebrates family, tradition . . . and mangoes!

Every summer, the branches of a little girl's favorite tree droop heavy with mangoes. And this year, she is finally old enough to help her family harvest them.

Her brother shares a memory about his first time mango picking: his father holding him steady as he reached high above for the fruit. But when the girl climbs the tree, she becomes too dizzy. Then her grandma shares a mango memory: learning, many years ago, to toss a stone that knocked the fruit from the branches. But when the girl throws her stone, she keeps missing.

How can this little hero create her own mango memory if she can't even pick a mango?

Narrated by a determined young Indian child and set in a lush mango grove, here is a picture book that honors generational traditions and beautifully introduces young readers to a culture with which they may not be familiar.

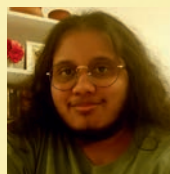


About the Author



Sita Singh writes heart-warming stories with a South Asian backdrop. She is the author of *Birds of a Feather*, illustrated by Stephanie Fizer Coleman, which was a Dolly Parton Imagination Library selection. Another upcoming picture book—*Indigo Hands*—will be published by Anne Schwartz Books in fall 2024. Born and raised in Ahmedabad, India, Sita now lives in South Florida with her family. singhsita.com/about-2 | [@sitawrites](https://twitter.com/sitawrites)

About the Illustrator



Nabi H. Ali is a Tamil American illustrator who enjoys creating diverse works that showcase an array of cultures and people. He is the illustrator of several picture books, including *Laxmi's Mooch*, which received three starred reviews, was featured on the *Today Show*, and was a New York Public Library Staff Pick, a Charlotte Huck Honor Book, and a ALSC Notable Children's Book. His other illustrated picture books include *Beautifully Me* and *We Move the World*. Nabi lives in California. [@nabihaiderali](https://twitter.com/nabihaiderali)

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Pre-Reading

1. The illustrator's role is to awaken our senses and bring the story to life through drawings and colors. Discuss why the illustrator chose these specific colors for the cover of the book.
2. Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound within a group of words. What do you think is the author's purpose for using alliteration in the title *Mango Memories*?
3. How does the geography and climate of the author's country influence her choice of fruit? If you could write a book about a fruit that is connected to your country, which fruit would you pick and why? Explain the role of geography and climate in influencing your choice. What colors would you choose for your book's cover and why?
4. In a group, choose a fruit and create a book cover and title for a book about that fruit. Your title must be in the form of figurative speech, and the colors you choose need to reflect the characteristics of the fruit.

Post-Reading

1. Whose perspective is the story from? Why do you think the author made that choice?
2. The narrator of the story experiences many feelings. What are those feelings and why does she feel each of them? Support your answer with text evidence.
3. Describe the development of the narrator's character from the beginning to the end of the book, making sure to discuss the narrator's feelings and why she's experiencing those feelings.
4. What activity in your culture is comparable to harvesting mangoes? Drawing from the book, write a short story (real or fictional) that describes this activity. Make sure to have at least two characters in your story and to flesh them out with feelings, character traits, and dialogue.
5. Which family member's mango memory is your favorite? Explain why.
6. How does the author use the memories of the family members to flesh out their characters? Create a character sketch of one of the narrator's family members and connect their characteristics to the memory they share.
7. Why do you think the narrator refuses to participate in any more mango-related activities? What changes her mind? Support your answer with text evidence.
8. What lesson or moral does this book teach us? Do you think the narrator learned this lesson?

THE SPICE BOX



ABOUT THE BOOK

A father and son share family stories through a spice box, handed down from generation to generation, in this tender picture book.

Rishi's grandma arrives from India today, and he longs to cook curry alongside his dad using the delicious flavors from his family's spice box. But this spice box is more than just fragrant spices in shades of gold and ruby. This spice box holds memories that were passed down from one generation to the next, as each found their place in this wide world. When Rishi drops the box that holds the family's heart and history, he draws courage and meaning from their treasured past to set things right.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Meera Sriram grew up in India and moved to the U.S. at the turn of the millennium. She is the author of several picture books, including *A Garden in My Hands* and *A Gift for*

Amma, which *School Library Journal* called an "excellent story for young readers to enhance their understanding of color and an aspect of traditional Indian culture" in a starred review. An electrical engineer in her past life, she now enjoys writing for children and advocating for early and multicultural literacy. Meera loves yoga and chai, and lives with her husband and two children in Berkeley, California.

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ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Sandhya Prabhat is an independent animator and illustrator based in the Bay Area, California, who hails from Chennai, India. She holds a bachelor's degree in literature

from Stella Maris College and an MFA degree in animation and digital arts from NYU Tisch School of the Arts Asia and she has illustrated several picture books for independent publishers, including *I Am Brown* and *Today I Am*.

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PRE-READING

1. What is a spice? What are examples of spices?
2. What spices do you have at home? What does that tell you about your family?
3. What do you think the word *paati* means?
4. Make one prediction about what you think will happen to the spice box.

POST-READING

1. What does the spice box symbolize in Rishi's family?
2. What are five adjectives that describe Paati's appearance? What are five adjectives that describe her character? Provide text evidence to support your answer.
3. Why do you think Paati took the box with her from the village to the city?
4. Choose a country and create a spice box for it, using at least five different spices. What can these spices tell us about this country?
5. The illustrator uses patterns, colors, and designs to show us which country this spice box comes from. Using the same concept, draw the spice box you created, using colors, words, and patterns to tell us which country your spice box comes from.



THE *Last Stand*



ABOUT THE BOOK

The author of NIGEL AND THE MOON delivers a tender intergenerational story inspired by his childhood in the rural South.

Here's a farm stand that represents the importance of family, community, and hope. Every stand has a story. This one is mine.

Saturday is for harvesting. And one little boy is excited to work alongside his papa as they collect eggs, plums, peppers, and pumpkins to sell at their stand in the farmers market. Of course, it's more than a farmers market. Papa knows each customer's order, from Ms. Rosa's pumpkins to Mr. Johnny's peppers. And when Papa can't make it to the stand, his community gathers around him, with dishes made of his own produce.

Heartwarming illustrations complement the lyrical text in this poignant picture book that reveals a family's pride in their work and reminds us to harvest love and hope from those around us.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Antwan Eady is the author of the award-winning picture book *Nigel and the Moon*, illustrated by Gracey Zhang. Down the dirt roads of South Carolina's Low Country is where Antwan's understanding of—and appreciation for—family, community, and land unfolded. Now he shares those stories with the world. When he isn't writing, he's visiting schools, libraries, and colleges throughout the country. A graduate of Clemson University, Antwan lives in Savannah, Georgia.
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ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATORS



Jarrett and Jerome Pumphrey are a sibling author-illustrator duo from Houston,

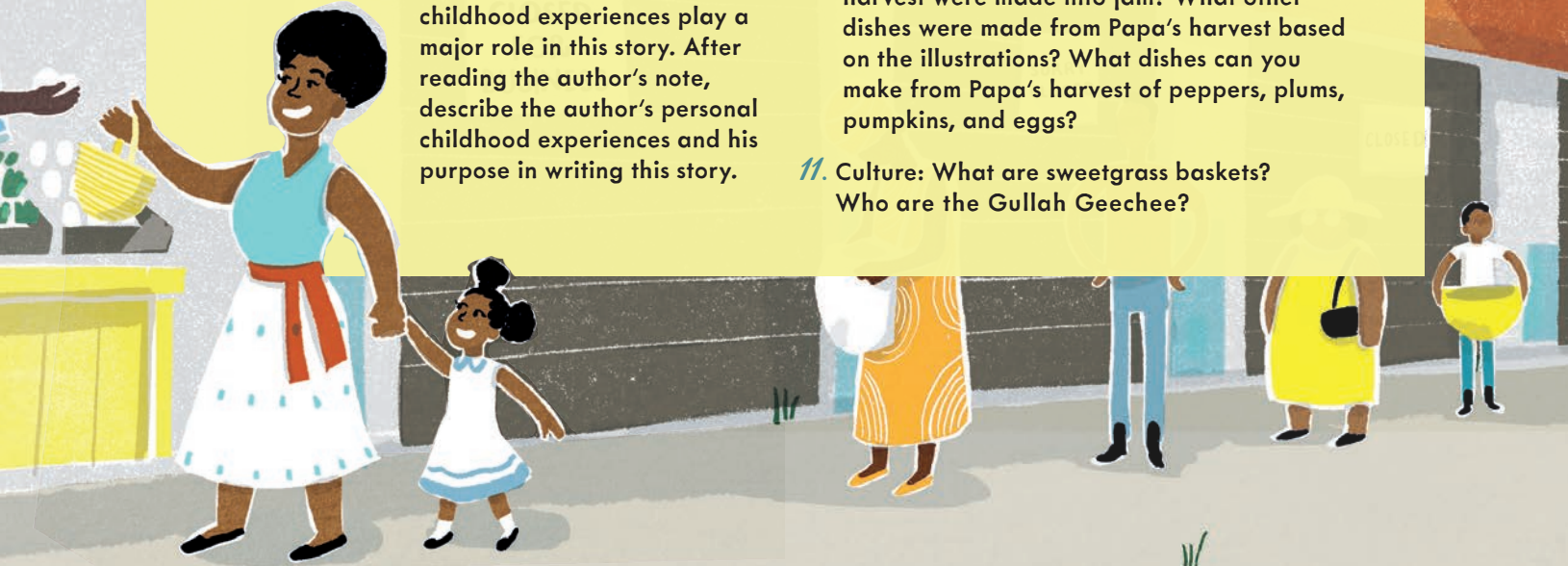
Texas. Together they work on books for kids, including their Caldecott Honor-winning *There Was a Party for Langston* by Jason Reynolds, *It's a Sign!*, *Somewhere in the Bayou*, and their author-illustrator debut, *The Old Truck*, which received seven starred reviews and was named a Best Book of the Year by *Publishers Weekly*, as well as an Ezra Jack Keats New Writer Honor Book. They both reside in Austin, Texas, with their families. thepumphreybrothers.com
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PRE-READING

1. What does the word *stand* mean? Provide at least three examples of different ways the word can be used. Which definition of the word do you think the author intended, and why?
2. What do you think is the setting of this story, based on the cover?
3. What kind of community do you think this story is about? Support your answer with proof from the cover and the author's note.

POST-READING

1. What is the tone of the story? Provide an example of a word, sentence, and picture to support your answer.
2. "Papa has the last stand. It wasn't always this way." What does this sentence tell you about systemic racism in agricultural communities in America?
3. In *The Last Stand*, Antwan Eady explores generational themes. How are these themes portrayed in the book and why are these themes important to explore in stories?
4. What is the significance of colors in this story? How do the illustrators use colors to convey the mood of the story?
5. Create a character sketch of the narrator's grandfather using text evidence to support your depiction of the character.
6. The author's personal childhood experiences play a major role in this story. After reading the author's note, describe the author's personal childhood experiences and his purpose in writing this story.
7. The narrator introduces each character in the story by name and provides details about them. What does that tell us about the narrator's community?
8. "On Saturdays, we'd harvest, Papa and I. But today, we gather instead." What is the author trying to convey with this ending sentence?
9. "If a sign needed holding, Papa held it." What do you think that means?
 - a. Provide two examples of systemic racism in non-farming communities.
 - b. For one of these communities, create a short story describing how systemic racism adversely affected the minorities in this community and how they rallied against this discrimination. Make sure to provide illustrations that bring your story to life.
10. Food: In the text, what fruit from Papa's harvest were made into jam? What other dishes were made from Papa's harvest based on the illustrations? What dishes can you make from Papa's harvest of peppers, plums, pumpkins, and eggs?
11. Culture: What are sweetgrass baskets? Who are the Gullah Geechee?



This guide was written by Noha Tarek. Noha Tarek is a passionate educator with more than ten years of experience in the U.S. and abroad, and she holds a Masters in Elementary Inclusive Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Noha Tarek has taught in both public and private schools, from New York City to Seattle to Egypt. Skilled in curriculum design and teacher training, she finds joy in fostering a love of learning.

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