

Tomatoes in My Lunchbox
Discussion Guide
Grades Pre-K – 3rd

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Start by asking students, “Have you ever felt embarrassed of something about yourself?” (Optional: Pair Share)
- Set a purpose for reading, “As we read, think about how the girl’s classmate’s help overcome her fears.”

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- How does the girl feel about her teachers and classmate’s mispronouncing her name? What about the words and pictures makes you say that?
- Why do you think the girl wants to change her name?
- Where does the girl get her name from?
- How are the girl’s classmates treating her by the end of the story?

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- Revisit the purpose for reading, “How did the girl’s classmate’s help overcome her fears? Use examples from the story.”
- On chart paper, draw a large rectangle (resembling a lunchbox). Ask students what is inside of their lunchbox. Invite each student up to draw a food item that is important to their family or culture. Pair students together and tell them to share why their food “tastes like home”, just like the main character said in the story. As a class, discuss why learning about a classmate’s family and culture is important to building strong friendships.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more book illustrated by Magdalena Mora, such as [*The Notebook Keeper: A Story of Kindness from the Border*](#) or [*Still Dreaming/Sequimos Soñando*](#).