Title/Author: *Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (Recommendation: 20-30 minutes per day)

Common Core Grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RL.1.1, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.4, RL.1.7; W.1.2,

W.1.8; SL.1.1, SL.1.2, SL.1.3; L.1.1, L.1.2, L.1.4

Lesson Objective:

Students will listen to an illustrated text read aloud and use literacy skills (reading, writing, language, discussion, and listening) to demonstrate their understanding of the big ideas of the text.

Teacher Instructions

**Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. **Please do not read this to the students**. This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

Big Ideas/Key Understandings/Focusing Question

How did the woman and her child find their place in their new country? How did they become dreamers?

Synopsis

In this story, a woman and her child leave Mexico to live in the United States. When they arrive in the U.S., they have very difficult time navigating life in their new country. They do not speak the language, and they do not understand many things. One day they find a library and it changes everything. They begin reading books and learning the English language and so many other new things! Now that they can speak English, they have a voice. They have dreams about what they will become in the new land, and how to make their home there.

1. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes this Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind, and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
2. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: You may want to copy the questions vocabulary words and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s questions and vocabulary work.*

The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks

The majority of questions, activities, and tasks should be based on the writing, pictures and features unique to this text (be text specific). Questions that address text-to-self or text-to-world connections - what we like to call text *inspired* questions or activities - should be held until after the children have really gotten to know the book.

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| **Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks** | **Expected Outcome or Response (for each)** |
| FIRST READING:  Read aloud the entire book with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused. | The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both writing and pictures, and to experience it as a whole. This will give them some context and sense of completion before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully. |
| SECOND READING:  This reading will focus on Yuyi’s experience being a new immigrant to the United States. At the end of this reading, the teacher will lead the students in creating a list of the difficulties she and her son faced in coming to the United States.  *Prior to second reading, spend some time discussing autobiographies with the students. Remind them that an autobiography is when a person writes the story of their own life. You will spend more time during the fourth read reading the author’s note.*  **Read pages 1-2.**  What does the mother mean when she says, “I dreamed of you, then you appeared”?  “Resplendent life, you and I…” Look at the pictures (the character’s skirt, the bright colors of the flowers). What do you think “resplendent” means?  **Read pages 3-4.**  What did the mother pack in her backpack?  Look closely at the illustration on page 3. Why do you think the mother packed gifts instead of food, water, and other things she may need for her trip?  Activity:  Think Pair Share: Have students discuss this question in partners.  Look at the illustration on page 4. Explain that *Adiós Corazón* means “Goodbye Heart.” Why did the author include these words in the illustration?  **Read pages 5-6.**  How did the mother and baby become immigrants?  What is an “immigrant”?  Compare the two illustrations on pages 4 and 6. What do you notice about the new country and her home country?  **Read pages 7-8.**  What does the word “ancestor” mean?  What is the author telling us about the mother’s new home?  How does the illustration help us understand what the author is telling us?  **Read pages 9-10.**  What were some of the mistakes that the mother and her son made?  Why does the author say that the mother made these mistakes?  How do the mom and son feel on this page? How do you know?  **Read pages 11-12.**  “You and I became *caminantes*.” What does “*caminantes”* mean? How does the author help you understand the meaning of “*caminantes*”?  Look at the illustration on page 11. What are the other immigrants doing?  One of the signs says, “Hear our voices.” What does this mean?  Activity: Teacher will lead the class in making a list of all the difficulties the mother and her son had when they came to this country.  Example:  Difficulties in the new land  Had to leave behind all her things and people she loved  Could not understand or speak English  Did not have a car to get from place to place  Did not know how to use maps to find their way around  Misunderstood the rules sometimes | She wanted a child and then she had a baby.  “Resplendent” means shining brilliantly.  She packed gifts from her home.  She knew she would not be able to get these things once she left her home. They were special treasures that reminded her of her home.  The mother is leaving her home, everything and everyone she knows. It is like she is leaving her heart behind in her home country.  They moved away from their old country to a new country. Once they got to the new place, they were unable to go back home, so they became immigrants.  An “immigrant” is someone who moves to a new country where they were not born.  Her old country had mountains and flowers and wildlife, but the new country has tall buildings, lights, and fog in the air.  “Ancestor” is someone who is part of your family and lived many years ago.  The people there do not speak the same language as she does. She does not understand the language. The people of her family from long ago did not speak the new language either.  The words are backwards, showing us that she cannot read or understand them. The words are “What?,” “Say something,”. and “Speak English.”  She could not understand the person on the telephone, they were confused about how to use the map, and she and her son got into public fountain.  She made mistakes because there were many things they did not know, and they did not understand or speak English.  They feel confused and afraid. The author says they were “afraid to speak” and we can see that she has a confused look on her face in the illustration. She may also afraid because there is a police officer, which means she must have done something wrong.  “*Caminantes*” means “walkers” or “wanderers.” The author writes “thousands and thousands of steps we took,” and there are footprints scattered all over the illustration.  They are holding signs.  This person wants his or her opinions and thoughts to be heard by others. Even though they cannot speak the language, it is still important to the people that they have a voice in the new land. |
| THIRD READING:  The third reading will focus on how the character is feeling throughout the book, and how her feelings change over the course of the story. Spend some time before the third reading reviewing how the character felt leaving her old home and coming to a new country.  **Read pages 13-18.**    After reading these pages, discuss the meaning of some of the unfamiliar words with the students. (see vocabulary chart at end of the lesson)  “Suspicious” means uncertain, not as expected. “Improbable” means unbelievable, not likely to be true. Why are these words used at this point in the text?    “Unimaginable” means too incredible to believe. Why is this word used at this point in the text?  Why else does the author describe the library using words like suspicious, improbable, unbelievable, surprising, and unimaginable? How do these words describe the pictures? What do the pictures mean?  How is the mother feeling after she learns to read? How can you tell?  **Read pages 19-20.**  What does the mother mean when she says, “Where we didn’t need to speak, we only needed to trust.”?  What does the illustration show us?  What do you notice about the backpack?  What does this mean?  **Read pages 21-24.**  What happens as a result of the mother and her son spending so much time in the library looking at books?  Why was it so important for her to learn English?  How are they feeling now? How do you know?  **Read pages 25-26.**  What does the mother think about their future?  **Read pages 27-28.**  Teacher should define unknown words (*lucha*, *soñadores,* resilience) for students. (See vocabulary chart at the end of this lesson.)  What does it mean when the mother says, “We are dreamers, *soñadores* of the world”?  Activity:  Teacher will lead students in completing Feelings Anchor Chart. Teacher should have anchor chart made before lesson and will complete it with the students.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Page | Feelings | Evidence | | 7 | Confused | “the sky and the land welcomed us in words unlike those of our ancestors: | | 9 | Afraid | “unable to understand, and afraid to speak” | | 19 | Happy, Nervous, Trusting | “Where we didn’t need to speak, we only needed to trust” They wanted to trust the librarian, but did not know English. | | 27 | Hopeful, like they belong | “We are two languages. We are hope.” The woman is holding her son up and they are both smiling. |   After charting together, have students answer in writing, “How did the mother’s feelings change throughout the story?”  Sentence frame may be used for extra support: At first, she felt \_\_\_\_\_\_\_because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Later, she felt \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. | She has never seen a library before. She could not believe all the books that were in one place and wondered why the place existed.  She is feeling amazed, curious, glad to be reading books. She learns about the world through these books!  The library is such an amazing place to her. She’s never seen anything like it. The pictures also show the reader how after the author learns what a library is, she opens the books and learns about all kinds of new things.  The way she describes the library as unbelievable and the smile on her face in the illustration show us she is feeling happy and excited about reading and learing.  Even though she did not speak English, she still could look at the pictures and words in the book. She did not have to understand English to appreciate books.  The woman is getting a library card.  The backpack is open, and all the gifts are falling out.  Now that she is learning English, she can share her gifts with her new country. She can open up and let her voice be heard.  They learn to read, write and speak English.  When she did not speak English, she did not have a voice in her new home. Now, she can speak English and can make her voice heard.  They are happy they finally have a voice. They feel hopeful. The illustration shows both the mom and the son smiling together. She has been discouraged because she did not speak the language earlier in the book, but now she can read and write!  She feels hopeful that they will become something great, something “we haven’t even yet imagined.”  She had a dream of learning English and feeling like she belonged in her new home, and she accomplished that dream. Now she is confident she can accomplish other dreams. |
| FOURTH AND BEYOND:  The fourth reading will focus on the author’s note at the end of the story, and the students will compare her story with the mother’s story in the book. They will also think about why the author titled the book *Dreamers*.  Teacher will read Author’s Note at the back of the book to the class.  Teacher will lead students through comparing and contrasting the Author’s note and the text by using a Venn Diagram.  Why did Yuyi and her son come to the United States?  What information do you learn in the story that you also hear in the author’s note?  What new information do you learn from the author’s note?  Activity:  Why did the author title the book *Dreamers*?  Think Pair Share: Have students get into groups of 2 and discuss. After they both have time to share, allow a few students to share with class. Teacher can collect the students’ ideas on the board. | She came to the United States because she wanted her son to meet his grandfather who lived in the United States and she was going to get married.  She did not know how to speak English when she came. She found the library and it changed her life.  She did not intentionally immigrate to the United States. The librarians helped her and her son find books they could understand even though they didn’t speak English. |

FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

* How did Yuyi find her voice? How did she and her baby learn to be dreamers in their new country? Students will respond in writing using pictures and words. Remind students to use text evidence in their answer, using capitals and periods, and write multiple complete sentences.
* *See standards on page 1-2 for more information about expectations for student writing.*

Español:

* ¿Cómo encontró su voz? ¿Cómo aprendieron ella y su bebé aprendieron a ser soñadores en el nuevo país?

Vocabulary

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| **These words merit less time and attention**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/  processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students ) | **These words merit more time and attention**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with) |
| Page 2 – *amor* – love  Page 2 – resplendent – shining brilliantly  Page 3 – bundled – roll up, tie together  Page 7 – *migrantes* – immigrants  Page 8 – ancestors – someone who is part of your family, and lived many years ago.  Page 11 – *caminantes* – walkers, wanderers  Page 27 – *lucha* – fight or struggle  Page 27 – *soñadores* – dreamers | Page 6 – immigrants – someone who comes to a new country where they were not born to live  Page 13 – suspicious – uncertain, not as expected  Page 14 – improbable – unbelievable, not likely to be true  Page 18 – unimaginable – too incredible to believe  Page 27 – resilience – the ability to withstand or adjust to challenges  Page 27 – hope – to want something to happen or be true |

Fun Extension Activities for this Book and Other Useful Resources

* Have a picture of a backpack and allow the students to decide what gifts they would bring in their backpack if they were leaving their country and moving to a new one. Students can draw the gifts in their backpack and write about what they would bring and why.
* The illustrations in this story do a wonderful job of adding to the message of the text. Go through the book one time without reading the words, just looking at the pictures. Model thinking aloud as you go through. (For example, I remember here how nervous she was when she left her home with her son and her backpack.) Lead the students in examining how the backpack changed throughout the story. You may also want to note the bright flowers on the pages that have positive connotations and the less vibrant colors on the pages that denote struggles.

Note to Teacher

* Note: Before discussing this topic, it is important to consider that you may have students in your classroom whose family members or they themselves are immigrants, undocumented and/or “Dreamers.” Be prepared and sensitive to those students and be mindful as to how you discuss this in your classroom. Students who may not have shared this previously may disclose it during the lesson and that information should only come from the student themselves.

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

1. **Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.

Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band 420-820L

4-5 band 740-1010L

AD 480L

1. **Qualitative Features**

Implicit/Complex Meaning

Immigration and dreams of a better future

Belonging in a new place

Love of reading/Appreciation of literacy

Sophisticated Graphics

Graphics essential to understanding the text and may provide information not elsewhere.

Poetic language

Imagery/Figurative language

“I dreamed of you, then you appeared. Together we became love. Resplendent life, you and I.”

Extremely complex/unfamiliar vocabulary

Immigration

Some political elements in the illustrations (protests, etc.)

**Meaning/Purpose**

**Structure**

**Language**

**Knowledge Demands**

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

The language and structure of this text will be the most challenging things for the students. It is written more like a poem in some places, and there is quite a bit of figurative language. Spend some time breaking down the figurative language so that it is more accessible to the students.

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

They will learn about the difficulties and realities of immigration and the importance of having dreams and aspirations. They will also gain an appreciation for reading and writing, and the voice it gives people.

1. **Grade level**

What grade does this book best belong in? First Grade