



Book of the Month

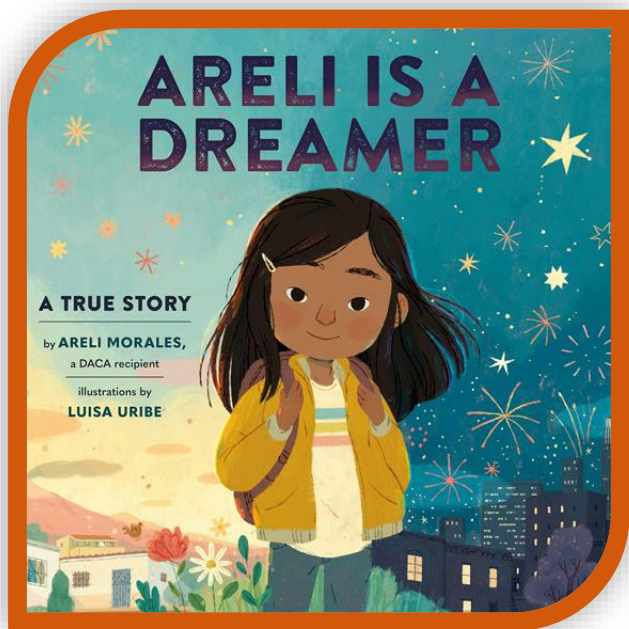
Presented by ADL's Education Department

About the Book of the Month: 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 educators, adult family members and other caregivers of children, reading the books listed on this site with your children and incorporating them into instruction are excellent ways to talk about these important concepts at home and in the classroom.

Areli is a Dreamer

Areli Morales (Author), Luisa Uribe (Illustrator)

When Areli was just a baby, her mama and papa moved from Mexico to New York with her brother, Alex, to make a better life for the family—and when she was in kindergarten, they sent for her, too. Everything in New York was different. Gone were the Saturdays at Abuela's house, filled with cousins and sunshine. Instead, things were busy and fast and noisy. Areli's limited English came out wrong, and schoolmates accused her of being "illegal." But with time, America became her home. And she saw it as a land of opportunity, where millions of immigrants who came before her paved their own paths. She knew she would, too. This is a story that resonates with millions of people who are immigrants--about one girl living in two worlds, a girl whose DACA application was eventually approved and who is now living her American dream. A Spanish-language edition, *Areli Es Una Dreamer*, is also available.



ISBN: 978-1984893994

Publisher: Random House Studio

Year Published: 2021

Age Range: 4–8

Book Themes

People Who Are Immigrants, Anti-Immigrant Bias, DACA/Dreamers, Teasing, Family, Welcoming Others

Key Words

Discuss and define these words with children prior to reading the book. Do not focus on students' retention of all the words; instead make sure they understand the words enough to follow the story and remind children of the words' meanings as they come up in the book. You can also post the words and point out to students when they appear in the story.

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|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| ■ ashamed | ■ country | ■ immigrants | ■ stuffy |
| ■ backward | ■ dawn | ■ law | ■ subway |
| ■ brave | ■ Ellis Island | ■ Maid | ■ suitcase |
| ■ chasing | ■ foreign | ■ mesmerized | ■ teasing |
| ■ citizen | ■ future | ■ proud | ■ tour guide |
| ■ Constitution | ■ illegal | ■ strangers | |

For definitions that are differentiated for young children, see ADL's [Education Glossary Terms](#). Note that the Spanish words used in the book are defined on page 40.

Note to Teacher:

Before discussing this topic, it is important to consider that you may have students in your class whose family members or they themselves are immigrants, undocumented immigrants 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.

Discussion Questions

Before reading the book aloud, ask some or all of these pre-reading questions:

- What can you tell about the book by looking at the cover?
- What is the title of the book and what do you think it means?
- What do you think the book might be about?

As you read the book aloud, ask a few discussion questions periodically throughout reading to check for comprehension and keep the students engaged. Below are some sample questions that correlate to specific page numbers.

- What does Mamá tell Areli? (page 7)
- Who is the man who is going to help Areli get to America? (page 16)
- What happens when Areli goes to school? (page 24)

After reading the book aloud, ask some or all of the following discussion questions:

- What happens in the story?
- What was it like for Areli at Abuela's house in Mexico?

- Why did Areli and her brother Alex live with Abuela, while Mamá and Papá lived in the U.S.?
- What does Abuela say about how Alex can go to the U.S. first, but Areli had to wait? How does Areli feel about this?
- When Alex leaves Mexico and goes to live in New York, what was it like for Areli?
- Does Areli want to go to New York? How do you know?
- When Areli arrives in New York, how does she feel? What's does she like about it and what is difficult?
- What happens when Areli goes to school? Why do you think she makes friends with the other students who speak Spanish like she does?
- What happens when some of the students tease Areli? If you were in Areli's class, what could you do to help?
- When she explains to her mother that some of the kids call her 'illegal,' what does her mother say? What does Alex explain to Areli about being a citizen?
- How is school for Areli after that? How does she adjust to being in New York? How can you tell?
- What happens with Areli goes on a field trip to Ellis Island? How does she feel when she learns about the many immigrants who also came to the U.S.?
- When Ariel thinks to herself "I could do anything here. Someday I will," what does she mean? Have you ever felt that way? Please explain.
- How did you feel when the book ends?
- Why do you think the book is called *Areli is a Dreamer*?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book? What do you think her overall message is?

Extension Activities

Below are activities for students that can extend learning from the book.

1. Write and Illustrate the Next Few Pages of the Book

Remind students how the book ends by re-reading pages 35–39. Ask students: *What happens at the end of the book?* Remind students about Areli seeing the Statue of Liberty and thinking about all the people who came to the U.S. as immigrants, like she did, and the conversation she has with her Abuela about her future. Ask students: *What do you think happens next for Areli? How are things in school for her? What are her dreams for the future?* Have students imagine what might happen if the book continues for a few more pages by brainstorming some ideas. Then, have them apply their ideas to writing and/or drawing the next few scenes and pages, as they imagine the book continuing. When completed, students can share their pages with the rest of the class by posting them on the wall and moving around the room gallery-style to see all the ways in which students imagined the story continuing. You can also invite parents and family members in for a whole class reading of the book and include the students' additional pages.

2. Welcoming Others

Elicit from students how Areli feels when she is new to living in New York City and new to her school. Ask students: *What happens when Areli arrives at her new school? What do other students say and do? How does Areli feel? What could students do differently to help Areli feel welcomed and*

accepted? What would you have done to help Areli feel included? Explain that when someone is new to a school, community, group, or club, it is important to be welcoming to them. You can share that most people have been “new” at some point in their lives. Define **welcoming** as treated in a friendly way when you are new or arrive somewhere, so that you feel included and accepted. Ask students to brainstorm a list of ways we can be welcoming to others and ways that they have felt welcomed by others. Then, divide students into pairs and have them come up with different scenarios of how they can be welcoming to others who are new in a situation. Have the pairs of students then choose one of the scenarios and share that scenario with the rest of the class using one of these strategies: (1) perform a short role play of what happens, (2) write a short script of what both people (new person, welcoming person) say and do or (3) create a short comic strip (4–6 panels) using illustration, narration and images to convey the message about welcoming others. Consider recording those and sharing more widely in the school community.

3. Immigration, Dreamers and DACA

Engage students in a discussion about immigration. First, read the “Author’s Note” in the front of the book (page 3) that provides information about author’s, Areli Morales, immigration story and what the terms Dreamers and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) mean. Ask students: *What does it mean to be an immigrant? What does it mean to be a Dreamer? What experiences inspired Areli Morales to write the book? What did you learn by reading about her story?* Define **immigration** as the process of coming into a non-native or foreign country to live. You can share with students that 40 million people who live in the U.S. were born in another country (from around the world) and that the U.S. has more immigrants than any other country in the world. Read additional stories about immigration aloud and find out what students know and don’t know about immigration. You can also provide information about undocumented immigrants, sharing that people who are “undocumented” are people who are born in another country and who come to the U.S. without the legal papers to do so. In many cases, people have had to flee their home countries because of extreme poverty, danger or wanting to be with their families in the U.S. (like Areli). Some enter the country legally as tourists, students or temporary workers and become undocumented when their papers expire. Many have lived in the U.S. for a long time, have families here and feel like citizens. Explain that about 11 million undocumented immigrants live in the U.S., which has been a stable number for the past several years. “Dreamers” refers to young people like Areli, who are undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children, who have lived and gone to school in the U.S. and identify as American. The term dreamers also means that people who are immigrants have dreams for their future and that’s part of their immigration stories.

ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and educational resources on immigration and immigrants, acting as an ally, and identity.

Curriculum Resources

Huddled Mass or Second Class?: Challenging Anti-Immigrant Bias in the U.S. (Grades 3–5 lesson), www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/huddled-mass-or-second-class-challenging-anti-immigrant.

Identity-Based Bullying, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/identity-based-bullying.

What Should be Done about DACA?, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/what-should-be-done-about-daca.

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

Websites

6 Ways to Be an Ally

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/6-ways-to-be-an-ally-en-espanol

Some simple things a student can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying. (Also in Spanish.)

Challenging Biased Language

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/challenging-biased-language

On a daily basis people hear and sometimes use words and phrases that demean or ridicule. This resource provides some strategies for responding.

Education Resources on Immigration, Immigrants and Anti-Immigrant Bias

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/education-resources-on-immigration-immigrants-and-anti

A collection of education resources for educators, parents and families on immigration, immigrants and anti-immigrant bias.

Myths and Facts about Immigrants and Immigration

www.adl.org/education/resources/fact-sheets/myths-and-facts-about-immigrants-and-immigration

A list of common myths about immigrants and immigration and the facts.

The Question Corner: Early Childhood FAQs

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/question-corner

A collection of answers to frequently asked questions about anti-bias issues faced by early childhood professionals and family members interested in promoting respect for diversity among young children. See "[How Do I Respond to Children's Bias?](#)"

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. See "[What is DACA and Who are the Dreamers?](#)"

Children's Books

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

People, Identity & Culture: Immigrants, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid\[207\]=207](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid[207]=207)