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A New Year's Reunion: A Chinese Story

Aylea Stephens

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Book Review

Title: A New Year's Reunion: A Chinese Story

Author: Yu Li-Qiong

Illustrator: Zhu Cheng-Liang

Reviewer: Aylea Stephens

Publisher: Candlewick Press

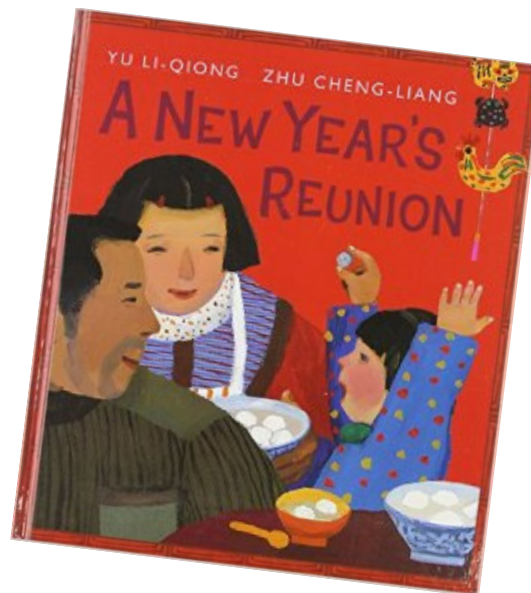
Publication Year: 2011

ISBN: 9780763658816

Number of Pages: 40

Interest Level: Primary

Rating: Outstanding



Review

Papa works very far away building big houses and only comes home for Chinese New Year. Mama and Maomao get up early so that they can spend the day with Papa. Papa gives them gifts, then they go to get a haircut for luck during the new year. The family makes sticky rice balls with a coin in one to give the receiver good luck, and Maomao is lucky enough to get it. They celebrate the new year by visiting people, repairing the house, watching the dragon dance on main street, and playing in the snow. When Papa has to leave again, Maomao gives him her treasured coin so that he will have good luck while he is away.

While Maomao's family is fictional, the author's note in the back discussing how there are over 100 million migrant workers in China that are only able to come home a few days a year at New Year's. Although not all readers will be able to identify with that aspect of Chinese culture, readers of all nationalities will appreciate the depth of emotion and description of the difficult of having someone you care about not around often. Readers who are unfamiliar with the Chinese New Year will also be able to learn some things about the culture and celebration during this important time. This wonderful book illustrates the love of family and how it is strong enough to withstand the challenge of distance.