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# A Gift from Abuela

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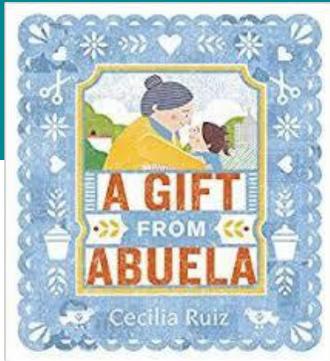
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## Book Review

# A Gift from Abuela



### Author

Cecilia Ruiz

### Illustrator

Cecilia Ruiz

### Reviewer

Alyson Hansen

### Rating

Excellent

### Level

Preschool, Primary

### Pages

29

### Year

2018

### Publisher

Candlewick Press

### ISBN

978076369267

Abuela and Nina are very close and love to spend time together. Their favorite thing to do is sit in the park and eat pan dulce. Abuela wants to show her love for Nina by saving twenty pesos a week until she can buy Nina something special. Unfortunately, things are changing in Mexico, and money is becoming less valuable. Abuela's savings becomes useless as currency changes. As Abuela struggles just to get by, she and Nina grow apart. One day, Nina goes to Abuela's and cleans her home to show her sorrow at being distant lately. While cleaning, she finds the jar that contains Abuela's useless money. Nina and Abuela use the money to create a colorful banner. They end the day doing their favorite thing, eating pan dulce in the park.

A Gift from Abuela is a compelling story because it captures the reality of relationships with family members. The beautiful chalk-like illustrations help the reader to fall into the story and feel Abuela's love for Nina. As things get harder for Abuela, the reader can get a glimpse of some of the real issues happening in Mexico today. Political downfall and inflated currency have caused hardship for many citizens, and that is illustrated in the way Abuela is hunched over and walking in the rain. In the background, closed-down businesses paint a picture of what much of Mexico looks like in the present day. Ruiz does a fabulous job of educating children on real world problems, while also keeping the story simple and sweet. Overall, the book is a great read for children of any culture. The problems faced are universal and the message is the same: Money does not equal love and happiness.