

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Everyone is Welcome

Written by *Phuong Truong*

Illustrated by *Christine Wei*

Everyone is Welcome



GUIDE BY

Emily Chan

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Everyone is Welcome



Ages 6–8, Grades 1–3

Discussion Prompts and Activities provided for Grades 1–12

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Summary

A young girl hears that her grandma's friend, Mrs. Lee, was pushed on her way to the Asian market. When she learns that Asian students at her brother's high school are afraid to walk to class, she realizes something very wrong is happening in her community. With her mom and brother's support and the help of friends, she does something kind for Mrs. Lee.

Everyone Is Welcome tells a heartfelt story about an Asian Canadian child who learns about and experiences anti-Asian racism. The book provides powerful insights about culture, identity, and a sense of belonging while also addressing the complex feelings that children have when confronting racism. Written from a child-centred lens, the story skillfully teaches about the value of allyship and intergenerational community support as meaningful strategies for children when they encounter prejudice and injustice in everyday life.



Learning Opportunities

Students will have the opportunity to do the following:

- Connect with the point of view of an Asian Canadian child who learns about and experiences racism.
- Develop cultural competence by sharing about the value of one's identity and culture, such as language, culturally specific environments, and intergenerational relationships.
- Learn about the historical and present-day contexts of anti-Asian racism.
- Ask questions about how racism shows up in everyday life.
- Learn about what we can do when we see, hear, or experience racism.
- Develop awareness about the impacts of racism on children, teens, adults, and the elderly.
- Understand the importance of community support and being in allyship.
- Consider strategies for children when they encounter racism, prejudice, bias, and inequity.



Preparing to Read the Book

Using a Trauma-Informed Approach

- a. Know your students.
- b. Inform your students that parts of the story include examples of anti-Asian racism and uses anti-Asian slurs.
- c. Share a process for students to take a break if or when they need one.
- d. Inform parents that your class will be reading this story and learning about anti-Asian racism, so families can support students at home as needed. Share the book summary with them.
- e. Check in with students along the way.
- f. Avoid compare/contrast questions.
- g. Avoid role-playing.
- h. Do your research.



Vocabulary for the Teacher

- Ching chong (page 3): a racial insult that specifically targets East Asians, derived from mocking Chinese languages. This insult originated in the 1880s in North American children's rhyme books. Important note: The use of the slur in the book is to teach students that the term is offensive. This term is not to be used in regular conversations. Today, many school boards have policies in place to address incidents when such racial insults are used in schools.
- Asian market (page 5): a grocery store that sells mainly Asian products or ingredients in Asian recipes. This page mentions *lychee jellies* (tropical fruit candies) and *creamy milk candies* (made of condensed milk). *Sweet buns* are popular Asian snacks, steamed or baked with custard and red bean fillings; they also have a long history, dating to AD 220!



Background on Anti-Asian Racism for the Teacher

In *Everyone Is Welcome*, the main character's mother describes her own childhood experience with racism, which conveys the fact that [anti-Asian hate](#) has [existed far before the COVID-19 pandemic](#). Asians have been in Canada and the United States since the late 1700s. Throughout history, North American governments have enacted exclusionary laws and policies to limit the rights of Asians to vote, attend school, marry, and immigrate. These laws were mandated by the same white-settler policymakers that legislated Indigenous residential schools and the enslavement of people of African descent. Though it is important to make these cross-racial connections to the impacts of colonization and white supremacy, anti-Asian racism is not the same as [anti-Black](#) or [anti-Indigenous](#) racism. [Racism hurts everyone](#). As stated in [Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators](#), "anti-Asian racism has its own unique sting that generates fear, humiliation, trepidation and anger."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, East Asians were blamed for spreading the virus. [Community-based reports of anti-Asian racism](#) went up by 47% between 2020 and 2021. Such incidents are described in *Everyone Is Welcome* when Mrs. Lee is pushed onto the street and when a friend of the main character says [he can no longer play with her](#).

Across Canada, [community organizations are standing up to anti-Asian racism](#) by naming the issues, working in solidarity with other marginalized groups, and [documenting peoples' experiences](#) with racism. When teaching about racism, it is especially important to include stories of [community strength](#), [resilience](#), and [resistance](#).



Before Reading



Cover Clues

- What treats do you notice on the cover?
- Are you familiar with any of the treats?
- Who are the characters in the middle?
- How are characters relating with each other?
- What does the title, *Everyone Is Welcome*, tell us about the story?
- What are ways to make people feel welcome?
- What are ways that make people feel unwelcome?





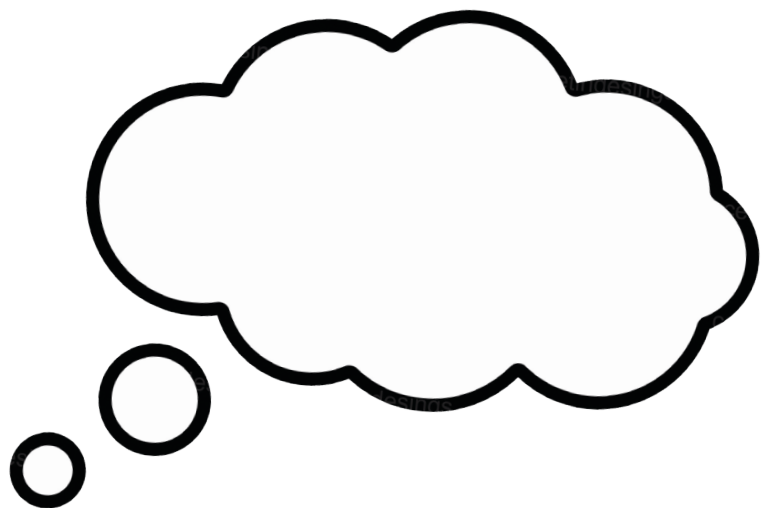
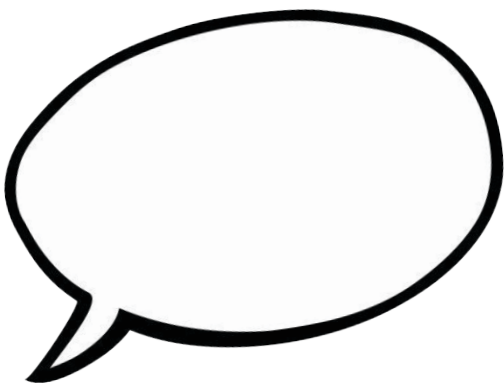
Responding to the Book

Discussion Prompts and Illustration Inquiry

The following discussion prompts may be used to generate classroom discussion that dig deeper into some of the themes in *Everyone Is Welcome*. The prompts may be used during a class read-aloud. The references below include statistics, links to online resources, and background information to help provide context about Asian cultures and anti-Asian racism, especially with older students.

HERE ARE OTHER WAYS THAT THESE PROMPTS MAY BE USED:

- **Think, Pair, Share**—Provide a prompt for students to think on their own or with a partner and share their reflections with the class or in small groups.
- **Illustration Inquiry**—After reading the book to the class, show certain pages to focus on some of the powerful illustrations. Use the prompts that highlight the valuable insights from each illustration.
- **Speech Bubbles and Thought Clouds**—Print templates of speech bubbles and thought clouds. Students may also draw their own. Students may select prompts (printed or on the board) to respond to characters in the book with a comment (speech bubble), a thought, or an inquiry (thought cloud).
- **Reading Response Journal Prompt**—Print a series of prompts for students to select and respond to independently in a reading response journal.



Page 3

Page and Text/Images	Theme/Reference	Prompt
<p>Page 3 "...kids called out, 'Ching chong!' They pulled at the corners of their eyes..."</p> <p>Important note: <i>Teachers should only say the slur once during the first read-aloud. After that, when discussing this passage, teachers should only refer to the word as a slur or a racial insult and it should not be repeated. See Vocabulary section above for more information.</i></p>	<p>ANTI-ASIAN RACISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main character's mother retells an experience with racism when she was a child. • When someone acts out of feeling mean or angry, it does not always involve the other person's identity. • The group's actions are both mean and racially targeted since they insult two aspects of the mom's racial identity. • This name-calling mocks East Asian languages and the gestures imitate East Asian eye shapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does racism look like? • How is this kind of name-calling and gesturing different from just being mean?
<p>"Mom just ignored them."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mom's response conveys resilience and dignity. She shares this story to teach her daughter about what racism looks like and how to safely exit the situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think the mom felt when she encountered racism?

Page and Text/Images	Theme/Reference	Prompt
<p>"I think that's so silly because my mom was born here, and we mostly speak English at home."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This racially targeted insult mocks Asian languages, even if we do not primarily speak those languages. • This is an example of racial prejudice, when people make assumptions about racialized people, regardless of citizenship. Asian identities, cultures, and languages are diverse and complex. • The child clearly has a strong sense of her identity and belonging by saying "that's so silly." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the child feel about the situation that her mother experienced?
<p>Illustration Inquiry</p>	<p>ANTI-ASIAN RACISM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the illustration, how does the size of the group of kids compare with the mom and child? • What does this convey about the impact of this experience on the child's mom? • What expression does the child have?
	<p>CONNECTING TEXT-TO-SELF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What languages are spoken in your family?

Page 5

Page and Text/Images	Theme/Reference	Prompt
<p>Page 5 Illustration Inquiry</p>	<p>CULTURE AND IDENTITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culturally specific Chinese decorations and signs in the store are along the top right of page 5. There are signs in Chinese for “great deals” and sales on grocery store items.• On the far right, there is a display of pomelo—a large citrus fruit often served during Lunar New Year and that represents good health and happiness.• Along the top of the page, there are New Year greetings in Chinese. The signs are in red and gold, which are popular colours for Lunar New Year because they symbolize prosperity.• In the lower centre and right, there are sugared fruits on skewers (known as “tanghulu”) and packages of candies.• The main character feels a strong sense of belonging at the Asian market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you notice about the decorations and food in this Asian market?
	<p>CONNECTING TEXT-TO-SELF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where do you feel a sense of belonging?

Page 7–13

Page and Text/Images	Theme/Reference	Prompt
<p>Pages 7–13 "...someone pushed her right onto the road!"</p>	<p>ANTI-ASIAN RACISM</p> <p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened to Mrs. Lee is an example of anti-Asian hate or racism. • Anti-Asian hate incidents increased by 48% from 2020 to 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic. • Community support initiatives to provide grocery delivery and safe walk accompaniments helped to address fear and concerns about public anti-Asian hate incidents by students and the elderly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the feelings that the main character has about Mrs. Lee, the high school students, and her mom’s experiences with racism?
<p>Page 13 Illustration Inquiry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main character feels worried when she connects the experiences with racism around her. She wants to go to recess to feel better. • Play is important for children to manage emotions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the artwork express the main character’s feelings?
	<p>CONNECTING TEXT-TO-SELF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you do when you’re feeling worried?

Page and Text/Images	Theme/Reference	Prompt
<p>Page 15 “...he can’t play with me anymore. His dad told him that everything bad that’s happened in the world is my fault.”</p>	<p>PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION</p> <p>ANTI-ASIAN HATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The friend describes his dad’s prejudice or bias against Asians. This comment is an example of discrimination or anti-Asian hate, when someone acts out of their prejudice or bias.• The Linda Lindas, a band with three young Asian American musicians, wrote a song in response to a similar incident in 2021 called “Racist, Sexist Boy.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the friend feel about his dad’s idea?

Page and Text/Images	Theme/Reference	Prompt
<p>Pages 17–19</p>	<p>FAMILY</p> <p>WHAT CAN CHILDREN DO WHEN THEY ENCOUNTER RACISM</p> <p>CULTURE AND IDENTITY</p> <p>CONNECTING TEXT-TO-SELF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When children encounter racism, it is very important for them to know that they are not alone and that they can tell a trusted adult or family member. Friends or adults can be in allyship by listening and affirming the feelings of children who have experienced racism. Acts of kindness and self-care are valuable to restoring one’s sense of belonging. • As allies and good friends, it is important to respond meaningfully, acknowledge that harm has been done, and to not dismiss, minimize, or question the experience with racism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the trusted adults in your life? • Who would you tell if you encounter racism or unfairness? • What are the qualities of a good friend? • How can you be a good friend to someone who experiences racism? <p><i>These prompts may also be used in the Head, Heart, Hands, and Feet activity below.</i></p>

Page and Text/Images	Theme/Reference	Prompt
<p>Pages 20–22</p> <p>“...a lot of bad things have happened to a lot of Asian people, and we are scared...”</p> <p>“Everyone is welcome.”</p>	<p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT</p> <p>CONNECTING TEXT-TO-SELF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting community support to act on injustices is something people of all ages can do. The main character and her friends talk about anti-Asian hate. The main character follows her mom’s advice to be a good friend by inviting everyone to sign a Get Well card. They express kindness and allyship with Mrs. Lee by making a card full of messages and stickers.• “Everyone is welcome” is a powerful phrase. This phrase refers to a sentiment of exclusion, far beyond the schoolyard to country borders, highlighting the historical and present-day discrimination that Asian immigrants face.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does “everyone is welcome” mean to you?



Reflection Activities

Nurturing a Sense of Belonging in the Classroom Community

THE MEANING OF OUR NAMES:

- Invite students to share stories of the meaning of their names. Ask parents to help students to learn about their names. These stories may be written, presented orally, or used to create posters about their names. Here are some prompts about names:
 - What's the story of your name?
 - Do you have a middle name?
 - What's a story of your family name?
 - What do you know about the meaning of your name/family name?
- Stories may include name origins, people with the same name, cultural traditions, intergenerational connections, languages, as well as silly and fun stories about names in the family.

WE ARE UNIQUE:

- Gather resources such as images, art supplies, etc. and ask students to find, draw, or print what makes them unique. Some prompts may include what they like to do, celebrate, eat, watch, what is their favourite colour, toys, etc.
- Create a large collage of these words, images, and drawings.

BEING A GOOD FRIEND:

- Have students trace themselves or their handprints and make cutouts on large or colourful paper.
- Each student may print words or speech bubbles or draw pictures of what makes a good friend to display together with the cutouts of bodies or handprints.

Head, Heart, Hands, and Feet Activity

This is a group reflection activity for students to express questions, feelings, and ideas and to connect self-to-text.

Draw a silhouette on a board or flipchart with a head, heart, hands, and feet. Students write their reflections with the following prompts:

- **Head:** What did you learn by reading *Everyone Is Welcome*? What are some questions that you have about racism? Note: Student responses may provide insight for a student inquiry project or interest to do further work on this topic in class.
- **Heart:** What feelings do you notice that the main character had when she learned or experienced racism? What do you feel about the experiences of racism in the book?
- **Hands:** Who does the main character talk with about her experiences? Who are the trusted adults in your life? Who would you talk with when you encounter racism or unfairness? What makes a good friend?
- **Feet:** What does the main character and her friends do to help Mrs. Lee? What are some things you can do to help a friend in need?

What Children Can Do When They Encounter Racism

FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS:

- Find [age-appropriate ways](#) to engage with racial and cultural differences.
- Provide [learning opportunities](#) for students to develop and express their sense of identity and belonging.
- [Sharing family stories](#) is valuable for cross-cultural learning and for nurturing an anti-bias classroom environment. When students understand the interrelationships between self, family, and community, they are better equipped to have empathy, to be good friends, and to challenge racism and injustice.

FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 4 AND UP:

- [Practice strategies and responses in scenarios](#) to name the problem, ask questions about what happened, [acknowledge the feelings](#) that come up, and express allyship.
- There are many resources available [for teachers](#), [students](#), and [parents](#) to get support, [learn about, and respond](#) to experiences with racism.
- Use the three encounters with racism in the book to practice strategies and responses. The three examples are as follows:
 1. A group of kids make racist comments or gestures while you are walking to the store.
 2. Someone pushes a person in public.
 3. A friend tells you that they can no longer play with you because their dad told them you belong to a group of people that they think is bad.
- As a class, brainstorm strategies on how respond to the scenarios above.
- Use some of the responses provided in this [infographic](#) and [video series](#) to practice or develop strategies.
- Print copies of [this infographic](#) for your students with the strategies and ways to respond to these scenarios.

