

HAND OVER HAND

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Ages 5-8 / Grades 1-3
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Summary

When a young Filipino girl named Nina asks her grandfather if she can join him on his day of fishing, he tells her that a boat is not a place for a girl. Nina convinces her grandfather to take her and she proves that by working “hand over hand” she has the ability to catch fish, thereby teaching her grandfather, the fishermen in the village, and herself a lesson about girl power.

Learning Opportunities

- ▶ Social Justice, Diversity, and Equity (Sexism)
- ▶ Gender Identity
- ▶ Family Relationships
- ▶ Occupations
- ▶ Social Studies (cultures around the world)
- ▶ Perseverance

Vocabulary

- ▶ banca boat
- ▶ jig
- ▶ scoff
- ▶ unravel
- ▶ lolo

Preparing to read *Hand Over Hand*

1. Invite students to share experiences they’ve had (or someone that they know has had) with going fishing. What instructions might they offer to someone who wants to catch fish?
2. Are there some jobs that are more suited to women than men? Consider the following examples: baker, doctor, teacher, bus driver, police officer, astronaut.
3. **Play the Agree/Disagree game.** Divide the classroom in half and place a Yes and No sign on opposite walls. Students listen to a sentence/statement and decide if they agree/disagree with it. If they agree, they go to the Yes sign. If they disagree, they go to the No sign. If they are unsure, they go to the middle of the room.

Sample Statements:

- ▶ Students should go to school in the summer.
- ▶ Grade 1 students should not have recess.
- ▶ Dogs are the best pets.
- ▶ All boys are good at sports.
- ▶ Only girls can be nurses.
- ▶ Only boys can be firefighters.

The discussion can be ongoing after each statement. You may ask students to explain why they agree or disagree.

4. Using a map of the world, point out the location of the Philippines. Ask: What information do you know about the Philippines?
5. Post pictures around the room depicting life in the Philippines. Have students go on a gallery walk and examine the pictures. Have students choose one picture they would like to know more about. Students can record questions or comments on sticky notes and place them around the pictures for class discussion afterwards.

Questions for Discussion

1. (a) Nina's grandfather says, "A boat is not the place for a girl. Your job is on the shore."

Why might the grandfather (and the other fishermen) think this way?

(b) Have students reflect on a time when they were told they couldn't do something. How did they react? What reasons were given?

2. Throughout the story, words are written in bold face. For example, draw students' attention to the words **WOOSH**, **WOOSH**, **WOOSH** that appear on the first page. Ask: Why might the author present the words in this way? Encourage students to make the sounds that these words suggest as they listen to/read the story.
3. We can learn about the setting of a picture book story from words and pictures. How do the illustrations help you to understand the setting of this story? Which illustration do you think best describes the fishing village?

4. What words might you use to describe the relationship between Lolo and Nina? How do we know Lolo is a good grandfather? How do we know that Lolo is a good teacher?
5. At the conclusion of this story, Lolo tells his granddaughter, “Nina you’re a fisher-*person* through and through!” Why does grandfather praise Nina in this way? How did Nina earn this praise?
6. Do you think the fishermen in this story will change their opinions about girls and fishing? Explain.
7. How does Nina’s story help readers understand that girls can do most anything that boys can do? How is *Hand Over Hand* a good story to help us understand “Girl Power”?
8. What do you think Nina may have learned from this experience? What do you think the other fishermen may have learned? What do you think Nina’s life might be like in the future?

Responding to *Hand Over Hand*

WRITING: Fishing Instructions

Using information from *Hand Over Hand*, have students write four or five instructions that are important to follow in order to be a good fisher-person. (For example: When a fish is caught, wrap the end of the line around a bench so it doesn’t head out to the sea; Guide the fish close enough to the boat to haul it in.)

OR

Have the students write a procedural piece outlining how to catch a fish.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE: Oral and Written

Invite students to share stories about fishing or being on a boat with a parent, grandparent, or relative. What made the experience memorable? Have students who have not been fishing or on a boat *imagine* what their first experience might be like. Have them write a brief description of their experience.

WRITING: Free Verse Poetry

1. (a) Draw students' attention to the way the words *hand over hand* are written throughout the story.

Hand
 over
 hand

Explain that this is an example of free verse writing. This writing format can be recognized by having one or more words appear on a line. Some lines are indented to create white spaces.

- (b) Demonstrate how to create a free verse poem by transforming a sentence from this story into poetry. For example: The first sentence of the story, "On the shores of a Filipino fishing village an old banca boat rocks as waves lick its keel" might appear as:

On the shores
 of a Filipino
 fishing village
An old banca boat
rocks
 as waves
 lick its keel.

Invite students to create a free verse poem by transforming one sentence from the story into poetry by creating line breaks and indentations.

2. Older students might want to try writing free verse this way:
 - Brainstorm a list of words that might be connected to the topic of water or fishing. Consider the following:
 - What might water feel like? Look like? Sound like?
 - What might fish look like? Smell like? Taste like?
 - Encourage students to arrange the words to look like a poem.
 - Remind students of the features of a free verse poem. Then have them

experiment with writing the water and fishing words, phrases and statements as free verse with line breaks and white spaces.

- Students can write a published version of their poem, perhaps including an illustration.

DRAMA: Storytelling and Interviewing in Role

What story might Nina tell her mother or father or friends about the day of fishing? Students can work in groups of two or three to interview Nina about her adventure. One student can role-play the part of Nina. What questions might her relatives or friends ask? What story(ies) might Nina tell?

MEDIA CONNECTIONS: Exploring Advertisements

Provide students with samples of advertisements that appear in magazines. Ask the following questions to help students see how media can appeal to different genders:

1. What product is being advertised?
2. Do you think this advertisement appeals more to girls? Boys? Both?
3. Is there a girl featured in this advertisement? A boy? Both?
4. Does the advertisement do a good job of “selling” the product?
5. Which gives information about the product more clearly: The words? The picture? Both?

INQUIRY: Research and Reporting

Ask the students: What questions might you have about living in the Philippines?

Using the Internet: Have students gather information about the Philippines. Students can find and list at least five facts that they learned. Working in pairs or small groups, students can report and compare information that they learned about the Philippines.