

Solli
Raphael

OUR Stories



29
Things
You Didn't
Know
About
Me

olana
Janfa

TEACHERS' NOTES

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Reflect on friendships and how they change over time.
- Explore the similarities and differences that make each person unique.
- Write a poem about an activity or food they love.
- Learn and discuss the reality of diverse stories taking place on Aboriginal land.
- Learn about diversity, empathy, inclusion and acceptance.

ABOUT THE STORY

Franco is excited for his new friend, Lucas, to come over for a sleepover. They have a wonderful time telling each other about their interests, fears, favourite foods and more, often speaking in rhyming verse.

BEFORE YOU READ THE STORY

Consider the front cover illustration and the back cover blurb. What do you think the story will be about? What do you think Franco and Lucas will be like, from the cover illustration?

Read this book aloud to fully experience the rhyme and rhythm.

QUESTIONS

1. At the front of the book, author Solli Raphael says: 'Friendship is the joy that connects us.' (page vii) What do you think about this idea? How might friendship connect people? Are there times that friendship can make you feel less connected and left out?
2. Why is Franco waiting at the door in Chapter 1? What emotions does he feel? How can you tell?
3. In Chapter 2, Franco and Lucas talk about how their friendships have changed this year. Have you experienced changes in your friendships? Do you think making new friends is easy or hard? Why do we make new friends?
4. Franco displays photos of his family in his bedroom, which shows that he is proud to be from Mexico. Are there any objects in your home that represent your family and culture? Where are they?
5. What are some examples of onomatopoeia (words that sound like what they describe) in Chapter 4? (Examples might include: flitter flutter, hissing, buzzing, roar.)
6. Franco and Lucas have so much fun talking to each other that they don't realise how much time has passed until they check Borange, Franco's orange alarm clock! What fun activities could you do all day, and make the time go quickly?
7. In Chapter 6, Franco and Lucas both use their creativity to imagine a jungle full of food. Can you identify all the food in the illustrations on pages 62-63? What foods would you have in your own food jungle?
8. What do Franco and Lucas have in common? What makes you the same as your friends?
9. What makes Lucas and Franco different? What makes you and your friends different? What would the world be like if we were all the same?
10. Do you think Franco and Lucas will be good friends in the future? Why or why not?
11. Read the note by the editor at the back of the book (page 89). 'Our Stories is told on land that was and always will be Aboriginal land.' What do you think this means?
12. In the note, the editor writes that the series is about 'inclusion' and 'diverse lives'. What's fun about diversity? Why do you think it's important to read stories about other people's lives? What steps can we take to make sure people feel included whatever their backgrounds? What makes you feel happy, safe and accepted?

ACTIVITIES

1. Ask students to draw a self-portrait with images and design elements (such as clothing, picture frame) that reflect who they are and where they are from. [See the activity worksheet provided at the back of these teachers' notes.]
2. Instruct students to look up the meaning of their name online and design a name tag or paper name plate (folded A4 paper) for themselves inspired by the definitions and origin. If students have trouble finding their name origin online, they can search variations on their names, or try looking up a family member's name. First names can be searched at www.behindthename.com and last names can be searched at www.ancestry.com.au/learn/facts
3. Have students write and illustrate a poem about a food or activity that they love. Share model poems in a variety of structures, e.g. rhyming couplets, acrostic, cinquain and concrete/shape poems.
4. Direct students to the list of Franco's 29 things at the back of the book as an example, and have them write their own list of unique and interesting things about themselves. [See the activity worksheet provided at the back of these teachers' notes.] Students can then swap lists with someone else in the class and 'present' or 'introduce' their new friend to the class using the information on the list. Students can also discuss their lists in larger groups to find out what they might have in common.
5. Brainstorm as a class the students' response to question 11: 'Our Stories is told on land that was and always will be Aboriginal land.' What do you think this means?
6. Ask the class to individually look up what Aboriginal country their school is on, and what language is spoken there. On a big piece of cardboard put the school's Aboriginal country and language in the centre, and then ask the class to write their own personal languages and countries of origin around it.
7. Making enough copies for each student, create a class roll call template with the names of each student in one column and a corresponding blank second column. Ask the students to look up the Aboriginal country and language of their home and write this in the blank space next to their name on the 'roll call'. Then ask the students to fill in the rest of the blank spaces by asking their classmates to tell them the Aboriginal country and language of their home.

8. Divide the board into four columns corresponding to the four sub-questions of question 12, as below. Ask the students to write their responses on the board, and as a class discuss these.

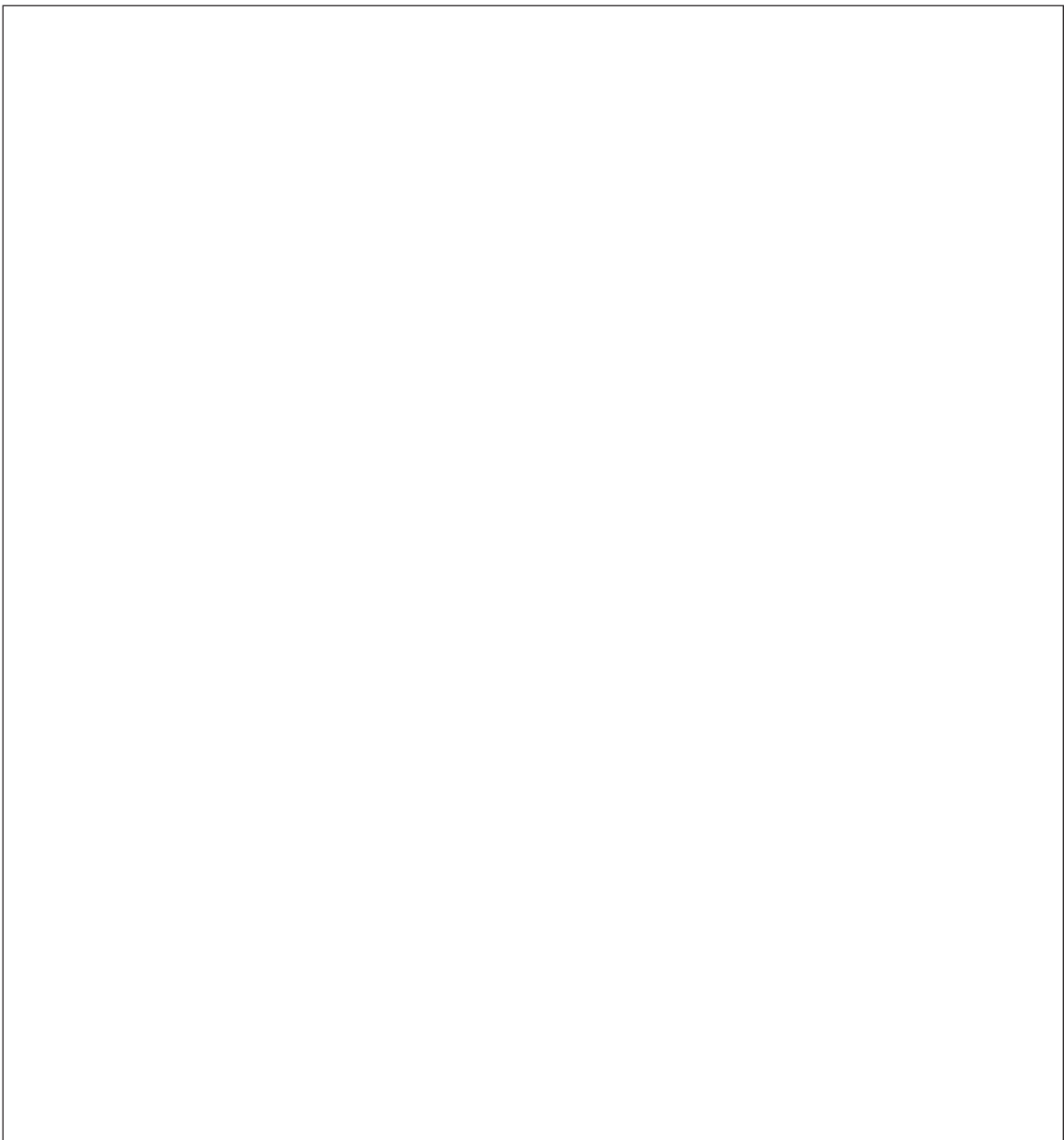
- What's fun about diversity?
- Why do you think it's important to read stories about other people's lives?
- What steps can we take to make sure people feel included whatever their backgrounds?
- What makes you feel happy, safe and accepted?

Ask the students to individually draw their happy, safe and accepted place on a piece of paper.

THIS IS ME

Create or draw a picture of yourself in the box below. You can use pencil, crayon, collage, or anything else to represent yourself. Add in details and objects that reflect your personality and interests. If you get stuck, try looking in a mirror!

Name: _____



10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ME

Write a list of 10 unique, interesting things about yourself that other people might not know about you. What do you like and dislike? How would your friends describe you? Where did you come from, and where do you want to go?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____