

TEACHABLE BOOKS

Student Well-Being: Kindness, Respect, and Storytelling

By Jessica Eguia

GRADE LEVEL: Junior (4-6)

THEME: Student Well-Being

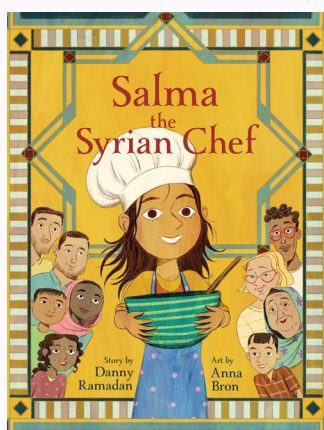
SUB-THEMES:

Kindness and Respect, Self-Image

LEARNING FOCUS

Food is a powerful medium for storytelling. Sharing our culinary stories around our favourite dishes, recipes and ingredients offers students the opportunity to share their connections with their identity, families and communities. How might food inspire storytelling? And how might food inspire kindness and respect for ourselves and each other?

FEATURED BOOK



Salma the Syrian Chef by Danny Ramadan, illustrated by Anna Bron (Annick Press, 2020)



LEARNING EXPERIENCE

MINDS ON PROVOCATION

Gallery Walk

Prior to the gallery walk, select food-related texts (e.g. quotations, images, documents), such as diverse meals, lunch boxes from around the world, ingredients, menus or local community celebrations that involve food (e.g. syrup festival, salmon festival, etc.) and place them around the room. Texts can be displayed “gallery style,” hung on walls or placed on tables.

During the gallery walk, ask students to consider: How might food inspire storytelling, kindness and respect?

If you wish, students can either take informal personal notes as they walk around the room or write their ideas on sticky notes and post them around the texts.

When students have had time to explore the texts, debrief the gallery walk. Record their thinking in response to the question: How might food inspire storytelling, kindness and respect?

Access your students’ background knowledge and ideas. Answers can range from personal stories or connections to texts and real-world experiences.

Advise students that they will be exploring how food can inspire storytelling and how food can provide the opportunity to nurture kindness and respect for themselves and each other.

READ, PLAN, AND PRACTICE

Share with the students that they will be revisiting the following questions: How might food inspire storytelling? And how might food inspire kindness and respect for ourselves and each other? Revisit some of the thinking they shared during the gallery walk.

To help with their thinking, share with the students that you will be reading the book, *Salma the Syrian Chef* by Danny Ramadan. Ask them: What can we learn from this author’s story? Did your thinking about storytelling, kindness and respect change? How might this story help you do better? How might food create a community of belonging?

After reading the story, go back to the ideas initially shared during the gallery walk. Are there ideas the students can add to their thinking? Can they make any changes? How might the ideas being shared about kindness and respect inform their own classroom community? Adjust ideas if the students decide it is necessary.



MAKE, TINKER, AND MODIFY

When asking students to demonstrate their understanding, you can provide them with the following choices:

Meal Making: With your class, discuss what foods they love. What meals do they share with their family? Invite students to create their favourite family meal out of coloured paper. The paper can be upcycled, recycled, or from an art cupboard. Meals can look something like this:

Images credit, left to right:
[Experiments in Art Education](#),
[Lee Jihee](#), [Freepik](#)



Students can write a personal reflection about why they chose this meal and why it is important to them.

Students can participate in a gallery walk and view the variety of meals and stories that exist in their learning community. Ask the students what they learned about respect and kindness through food and what they notice about their learning community. How might these ideas nurture a sense of belonging in their classroom community?

My Cooking Show: Invite students to have a conversation with their family about what foods or meals are special to them. Ask them how food is shared or prepared in their family. What stories do they have to tell about their family meals? Ask them to select a special family recipe for a mock cooking show. They can share their family stories and carry out the recipe with pretend ingredients, such as paper, playdough or natural materials. If you wish, procedural oral language and vocabulary can also be reviewed: first, next, last, step 1, step 2, step 3, mix, stir, add, combine, cook, cut, etc. Students can present their cooking shows to the class or record their recipes on a digital device. Ask the students what they learned about themselves and their classmates. Ask students what they learned about respect and kindness through food and storytelling.

Recipe Writing: Students can share their special family recipes through writing and drawing. Why is this recipe significant to them and their family? What ingredients do they need? How much of each ingredient is needed? What are the steps needed to make the recipe? Review recipe writing language, such as ingredients, first, next, last, step 1, step 2, step 3, mix, stir, combine, etc. When the students have completed their recipes, the recipes can all be bound together to create a class cookbook. Ask students what they learned about respect, kindness, and belonging by sharing their personal food stories and recipes.

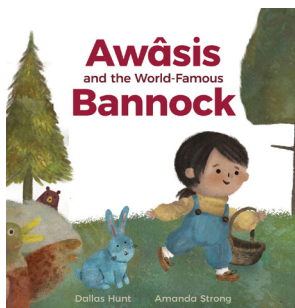
REFLECT AND CONNECT

Give students the opportunity to reflect back on the guiding questions:

- How might food inspire storytelling?
- What can we learn from the authors' and each others' stories?
- How might food teach us lessons about kindness, respect and belonging?
- How might learning about food, respect and kindness help us do better?

If wanting to go deeper, connect with your local organizations, such as farmer's markets, community farms, local family restaurants or food banks to learn more about people's real-life connections to food, respect, kindness and belonging.

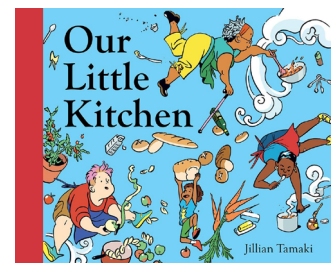
ADDITIONAL CANADIAN BOOKS AND BOOK LISTS TO SUPPORT THESE SUB-THEMES



Awâsis and the World-Famous Bannock by Dallas Hunt, illustrated by Amanda Strong (HighWater Press, 2018)



Teatime Around the World by Denyse Waissbluth, illustrated by Chelsea O'Byrne (Greystone Books, 2020)



Our Little Kitchen by Jillian Tamaki (Groundwood Books, 2020)

Further texts that support the themes of [kindness and empathy](#) can also be found via the Canadian Children's Book Centre.

ADAPTATIONS FOR THIS LESSON

These learning experiences can be adapted for online learning by turning the gallery walk into visuals shown via online instructional time. The independent learning experiences can also be carried out with materials found at home.

MORE RESOURCES

- Gallery walk [teaching strategy](#) from Facing History and Ourselves
- [How a love for food and belonging inspired Danny Ramadan to write a book for children](#) (CBC) – This article includes an interview with the author.