

# **EACH KINDNESS**

## **BY JACQUELINE WOODSON**

### **PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE, 2012**

## **Synopsis**

Annotation from CCBC Choices 2013

When the new girl Maya first comes to school, "Her coat was open and the clothes beneath it looked old and ragged." Chloe ignores Maya's smile that first day and every day afterward. And at recess, Chloe and her best friends, Kendra and Sophie, reject Maya's attempts to play with them or impress them. Kendra calls Maya "Never New," because "everything she has come from a secondhand store." Maya isn't at school the day their teacher brings a bowl of water and a stone to class. She drops in the stone and tells the students that kindness is like the ripples of water: "Each little thing we do goes out, like a ripple, into the world." Chloe thinks about Maya, and is determined to smile back the next time she sees her. But day after day Maya doesn't come back, and then the teacher announces Maya has moved away. Jacqueline Woodson's moving story is anything but predictable as a young African American girl is left feeling regret for kindnesses undone, but also is surely changed. The writing pulses with feeling in Woodson's quietly powerful narrative set against E. B. Lewis's light-filled illustrations. Winner, 2013 Charlotte Zolotow Award (Ages 5–9)

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## **Hooks**

- Discuss aspects of friendship: Is it difficult to make friends with a new classmate?
- Are you afraid of developing new friendships? Do you worry about what others may say about your friendship with another person? How would you feel, if you wanted to be friends with someone and they ignored you?

## **About the Author**

Born on February 12, 1963, in Columbus, Ohio, Woodson grew up in Greenville, S.C., and Brooklyn, N.Y., and graduated from college with a B.A. in English. A former drama therapist for runaways and homeless children in New York City, she now writes full-time. Woodson also enjoys reading the works of emerging writers and encouraging young people to write; heated political conversations with her friends; and sewing.

## Why she wrote Each Kindness

At some point in our lives, we are all unkind. At some point, we are all treated unkindly. I wanted to understand this more. I think too often we believe we'll have a second chance at kindness – and sometimes we don't. I do believe, as Chloe's teacher, Ms. Albert, says, that everything we do goes out, like a ripple into the world. I wrote this because I believe in kindness.

## Fun Facts About Me (as shared by the Jacqueline Woodson)

I can only write with my notebook turned sideways. When I was a kid, I wrote with it turned upside down.

- I write, catch, and eat with my right hand. Everything else – batting, shooting a basket, holding a golf club, etc. is done with my left.
- I can shake my eyeballs in bright light.
- I have a long, long list of foods I don't like. (I guess this isn't really a 'fun' fact!)
- I am very, very neat. Except when I am not.
- I know the lyrics to about a thousand bad songs from the 1970s, including songs from tv commercials and television shows.
- I have a lot of my writing memorized so that I don't have to carry my books everywhere.
- I once wrote a book in two weeks and it only needed a little revision.
- The next book I wrote took four years.
- I have only lost at checkers once or twice. I have only won at Chess once.
- I can jump double-dutch.
- Even though I can walk to a Brooklyn Nets game from my house, I'm still a die-hard Knicks fan.
- I love it when it's quiet and sunny.
- Fall is my favorite season.
- My son was born in the United States but since then, has never spent a birthday in this country. (His birthday is February 19<sup>th</sup> which is usually Winter Break.)
- I share a birthday with Abraham Lincoln and Judy Blume.
- I laugh at really dumb jokes.

## Awards

- Coretta Scott King Honor Book
- 2013 Jane Addams Peace Award
- 2013 Charlotte Zolotow Award
- Best Book of 2012 – School Library Journal

## EACH KINDNESS

Written by Jacqueline Woodson

Illustrated by E.B. Lewis

Nancy Paulsen Books, an imprint of Penguin

What a quiet, yet powerful statement Jacqueline Woodson makes as she tells the story of Chloe and her classmates as they shun a new girl who arrives at school ready to

make friends. With her teacher's help, Chloe learns too late the ripple effect of acts of kindness.

E.B. Lewis' watercolors amplify Woodson's poignant story.

## ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

- After reading the story, students may share of a time when they were extra kind to someone.
- Writing. Students will write a letter to their best friend telling them about what makes them extra special.
- Drama. Students will keep a daily journal of two acts of kindness that they take part in daily.
- Science. Learn about surface tension together. Use a bowl of water to see which of the following float, sink, or ripple: a pebble, a stone, a feather, a small square of paper, a foam ball, a leaf, a bubble, a marble, a bottle cap, etc. Students can make predictions of what will produce ripples.

## RELATED TITLES

- *Virgie Goes to School with Us Boys* written by Elizabeth Howard, illustrated by E. B. Lewis, published by Simon & Schuster

## IN THE CLASSROOM

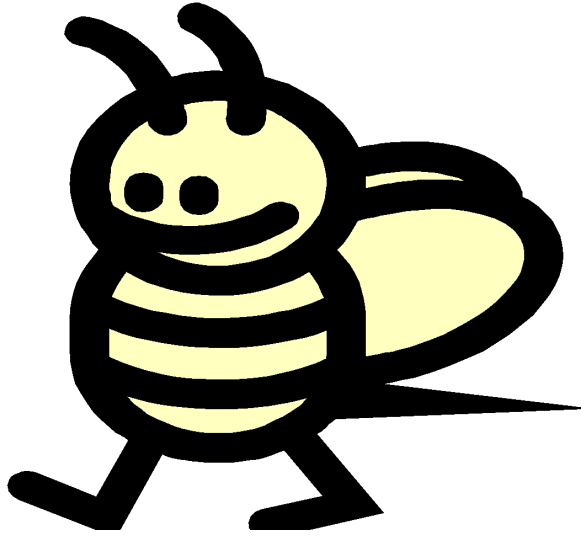
- [www.jacquelinewoodson.com](http://www.jacquelinewoodson.com)
- Video Interview with Jacqueline Woodson

[www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/Woodson](http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/Woodson)

There are a plethora of lesson plans on TeachingBooks.Net ; including this one from Loretta Scott King. You may access TeachingBook.net on a 14 day trial basis.

Elementary level poems to build community and support random acts of kindness.

Substitute your classroom mascot or school mascot name for "Busy Bees"



Busy

Bees

Are

Kind!!

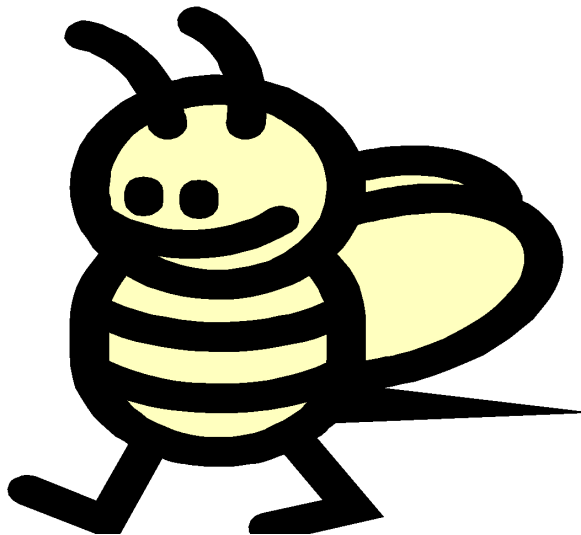
Busy Bees are KIND!

They don't care where  
they stand in line,

Number 9?

Or behind?

We'll all get there at  
the same time!



Busy Bees

Are  
Kind!!

Busy Bees are KIND!  
They pick up what they  
find.

Is it yours?  
Is it mine?

It doesn't matter whose it  
is.

We just want our school to  
SHINE!!!!

edutopia

# Kindness game

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| SMILE AT 10 PEOPLE                     | SLIP A NICE NOTE INTO SOMEONE'S BACKPACK  | LEARN TO SAY THANK YOU IN A NEW LANGUAGE           | SIT WITH A NEW PERSON OR GROUP OF PEOPLE AT LUNCH  |
| GIVE SOMEONE A HIGH FIVE               |  | HOLD THE DOOR FOR SOMEONE                          |  |
| MAKE A THANK YOU CARD FOR YOUR TEACHER |   | FIND SOMETHING YOU HAVE IN COMMON WITH A CLASSMATE |  |
| CREATE YOUR OWN KIND DEED...           | ASK SOMEONE ABOUT THEIR DAY   | COMPLIMENT SOMEONE                                 | WRITE DOWN THREE REASONS YOU ARE PROUD OF YOURSELF |

# **THE KITE THAT BRIDGED TWO NATIONS:**

## **HOMAN WALSH AND THE FIRST NIAGARA FALLS**

### **SUSPENSION BRIDGE**

**AUTHOR: ALEXIS O'NEILL, ILLUSTRATOR: TERRY WIDENER**

**CALKINS CREEK, 2013**

### **Synopsis**

Flying a kite seems like an innocent pleasure except to Homan. He sees kite-flying as a means to win the contest money. At the same time, the winner will provide the first step in set up a way to link two countries. Sometimes, a process takes more than just one try.

### **Hooks**

- How would you build the best kite to fly over a waterfall? How many times would you take to make a successful flight?
- Why would people even be interested in trying to create a faster/shorter journey to the other side of the falls?
- How could you practice your kite-flying skills to make it possible to connect two nations?

### **About the Author**

Alexis O'Neill was born in Boston, Massachusetts and later moved with her family to Wakefield, Massachusetts. She says on her website that she became a teacher at age seven. She corralled neighborhood children to be her students in front of a blackboard in her garage.

Her next career began in sixth grade. She reinvented herself into a writer. Alexis continued writing all the way to college. She taught at the elementary school level. Her Ph.D in Teacher Education is from Syracuse University.



Besides writing award-winning children's books, she teaches writing through the UCLA Writers' Program and was a Regional Advisor for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

### **Related Links**

[www.alexisoneill.com](http://www.alexisoneill.com)

[www.niagarafallsstatepark.com](http://www.niagarafallsstatepark.com)

[www.niagarafallslive.com](http://www.niagarafallslive.com)

[www.niagarafallsinfo.com](http://www.niagarafallsinfo.com)

## **Connections**

### **Other Popular Books by Alexis O'Neill**

Estela's Swap, 2002.

Loud Emily, 1998.

The Recess Queen, 2002.

The Worst Best Friend, 2008.

### **Other Books Like The Kite That Bridged Two Nations**

This Bridge will not be gray. Dave Eggers. McSweeney's, 2015.

The World's most amazing Bridges. Michael Hurley. Raintree, 2012.

Red kite, blue kite. Ji-li Jiang. Disney/Hyperion Books, 2013.

King for a day. Rukhsana Khan. Lee & Low Books, 2013.

Francisco's kites. Alicia Z. Klepeis. Pinata Books, 2015.

Bridges and Tunnels; investigate feats of engineering: with 25 projects. Donna Latham. Nomad Press, 2012.

Windblown. Stephen Messer. Random House Children's Books, 2010.

Night sky dragons. Mal Peet and Elspeth Graham. Candlewick Press, 2014.

The Heist of Niagara Falls. Steve Stevenson. Penguin Group, 2013.

## **Activities**

### **Build your own kite**

There is a barn door kite shown on Youtube (ActivityTV) that can be accessed from Alexis O'Neill's website ([www.alexisoneill.com/activities](http://www.alexisoneill.com/activities))

**Experimental materials for bridges**

Research the different types of bridges and their materials.

**Build a bridge**

Create a diorama for the bridge setting. Use a river, waterfall, or bay entrance as possibilities. Try different types of bridges and keep a journal of each attempt. It may take more than just effort to build a bridge that will suffice.f

# **PAPER SON: LEE'S JOURNEY TO AMERICA**

**WRITTEN BY HELEN FOSTER JAMES AND**

**VIRGINIA SHIN-MUI LOH**

**SLEEPING BEAR PRESS, 2013**

## **Synopsis**

A twelve-year-old Chinese orphan in 1926 makes his way via train and ship to the United States of America. His arrival in San Francisco terminates at Angel Island and a long interrogation period. Lee was coached on all aspects of his supposed "relative's" house in order to pass the examination. Lee is just one of the "paper sons" to make this arduous journey.

## **Hooks**

- How much would you pay to become a U. S. citizen? Lee's parents purchased a slot for their son for \$1,200.
- What kind of history would you need to create to enter the U. S. today? Is it even possible?
- How challenging is it to become a United States of America citizen?

## **About the Author**

Dr. Helen Foster James is the author of more than a dozen books for children. She loves holidays; she was born on Labor Day and married on Memorial Day. When she's not reading, writing, and rhyming words she likes to travel the world, find interesting treasures at flea markets, and hike with her friend in the mountains where she is a naturalist interpreter. She lives in San Diego with her very kind and smart husband Bob. She used the California Young Reader Medal program while she was in the classroom and later as the coordinator of library media services for her district. She is also a

former member of the California Young Reader Medal committee. (from Dr. James own words)

Dr. Virginia Loh-Hagan is an author, educator, and curriculum designer. She is a faculty member and Team Leader of two teacher credential programs at San Diego State University. She enjoys a wide background in public schools, online learning, and academic research. Upon graduation from the University of Virginia, she received the “Outstanding Woman Scholar in Education” award. She is the Cover Editor and Book Nook columnist for *The California Reader*, the peer-reviewed journal for the California Reading Association. She currently lives in North County San Diego with one low-maintenance husband and two high-maintenance dogs. (from Dr. Virginia Loh-Hagan’s own words)

Wilson Ong was born and raised near San Francisco, California. He attended the Brigham Young University for his BFA and also attended The Art Students League of New York where he began a professional career of painting and illustrating. His artwork has been exhibited nationally and gathered numerous awards. He teaches art at schools and workshops and painting for himself. His family lives in Corning, New York.

### **Related Links**

[www.virginialoh.com](http://www.virginialoh.com)

[www.angelisland.com/history](http://www.angelisland.com/history)

[www.parks.ca.gov/angelisland](http://www.parks.ca.gov/angelisland)

## **Connections**

### **Other Popular Books by Dr. Helen Foster James, Dr. Virginia Loh-Hagan, and Wilson Ong**

Grandpa Loves You. James, Helen Foster. Sleeping Bear Press, 2016.

Splash! Discover Bottlenose Dolphins. Loh-Hagan, Virginia. Cherry Lake Publishing, 2015.

Splash! Discover Hammerhead Sharks. Loh-Hagan, Virginia. Cherry Lake Publishing, 2015.

Splash! Discover Great White Sharks. Loh-Hagan, Virginia. Cherry Lake Publishing, 2015.

Splash! Discover Sea Turtles. Loh-Hagan, Virginia. Cherry Lake Publishing, 2015.

Little California [board book]: lot of fun with rhyming riddles. James, Helen Foster. Sleeping Bear Press, 2011.

Little America [board book]. James, Helen Foster. Sleeping Bear Press, 2011.

T is for Tutu: a Ballet Alphabet. Rodriguez, Sonia and Kurt Browning and illustrated by Wilson Ong. Sleeping Bear Press, 2011.

Heaven is for REal for Kids. as told by Colton Burpo to his parents Todd Burpo and sonja Burpo, illustrated by Wilson Ong. Tommy Nelson, 2011.

S is for S'mores: a Camping Alphabet. James, Helen Foster. Sleeping Bear Press, 2007.

The Jade Dragon. Loh-Hagan, Virginia and C. Marsden. Candlewick Press, 2006.

### **Other Books Like Paper Son**

Kai's Journey to Gold Mountain : an Angel Island story. Currier, Katrina Saltonstall. Angel Island Association, 2005.

Landed. Lee, Milly. Farrar, Straus Giroux, 2006.

The Dragon's Child : a Story of Angel Island. Yep, Laurence and Kathleen S. Yep. HarperCollins, 2008.

## **Activities**

### **Personal Response**

Read Paper Son: Lee's Journey to America. What was your favorite part of the book? Why was this your favorite part? What would you have done differently if you were Lee?

What three questions do you have for the authors? Be specific to the text. (created by Dr. Loh-Hagan. Check out Dr. Loh-Hagan's website for more activities.)

### **Timeline**

Create a timeline chart for world events for the year 1926. Be sure to include inventions, wars, names of nations and individuals.

### **Miniature Suitcase**

Use a shoebox or other small box as a suitcase to demonstrate all of the important things to pack for a long trip from China to America. Create images of the items in Word and cut them out, or find inexpensive replicase in a discount store. Write an explanation for each item and where it would place on a priority list.

### **Picture Puzzle**

Create your own picture puzzle of the dormitory on Angel Island and have another student try to solve it.

