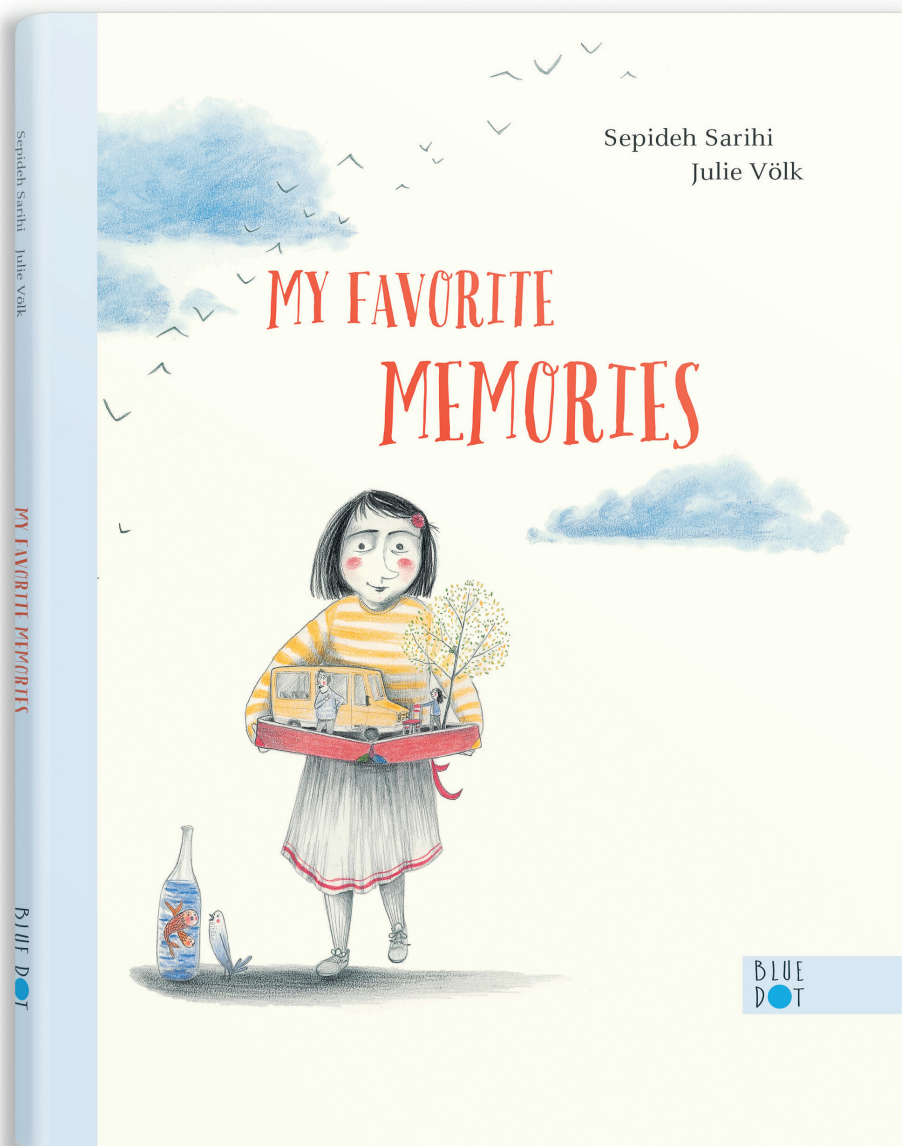




Your Teacher's Guide

from Blue Dot Kids Press



“A gentle story about change, home, and the hope life hands us when we open our hearts to receive it.”

— Amina Chaudhri, *Booklist*, STARRED REVIEW

My Favorite Memories, by Sepideh Sarihi & illustrated by Julie Völk
Published August 2020 | ISBN 9781733121248 | Ages 5-8



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Before Reading

Discussion

- What is a memory?
- Why are memories important?
- What kinds of memories are happy?
- What kinds of memories are sad?

Show the students the book *My Favorite Memories*, written by Sepideh Sarihi.

- Discuss the title and cover illustration.

Take a picture walk through the book.

- Why do you think the girl has a small red suitcase?
- Where do you think this story takes place?
- Does the little girl live near where you live or far away?
- Predict what the story will be about.

Mini Lesson

Write on the board or chart paper:

STORY ELEMENTS: THE 5 W'S

WHO: CHARACTERS

WHERE: SETTING

WHEN: SETTING

WHAT: PLOT

WHY: PLOT



- Discuss with the group the importance of thinking about “story elements” as we read.
- Use a story previously read by the group as an example.

During Reading

Read or listen to the story uninterrupted.

- Who is the main character?
- What does the girl say, think, and do in the story to let you know how she feels?
- Who is telling the story? What is the point of view?
- Where does the story take place?
- What is the problem in the story?
- How does the girl solve her problem?
- How does the girl change from the beginning to the end of the story?
- How do you feel as you are reading the story?
- Can you relate to the girl?
- How does the illustrator Julie Völk create a mood or tone through her pictures?
- What do the illustrations tell you that the words do not?

After Reading



Describe the main character.

- What character traits does the girl possess? (*e.g., kind, accepting, patient, creative, understanding*)

What is the central idea of the story? Theme?

Discuss the theme of moving to a new place.

- Why was the girl only allowed to bring one small suitcase?
- What are your favorite things? Create a list or draw pictures.
- How would you feel if you were only allowed to keep the things that fit into one small suitcase?
- What are different reasons that people move?
- Have you moved? Have members of your family moved?
- Why do you think the girl and her family moved?

- Did they move close to home or far away?
- What is “home”? (e.g., *Home is where you feel safe and with your family or people who love you. Home is where you are.*)

Social Studies Connection: Discussing Immigration



What Is Immigration?

The United States is a nation of immigrants from a variety of different backgrounds. These immigrants come from nations across the world with different reasons for living in the United States and unique stories about their journey.

- Except for people from Native American backgrounds, every person living in the United States comes from a family of immigrants.
- Since the founding of the United States, millions of people have made their way to America.
- Most immigrants are drawn by the promise of greater freedom and opportunity.

Discussion

Where did your families or ancestors come from?

- How can each of us share our ancestry with others?

What does this quote mean?

- *“The girl learns that as she moves through the list of the things she loves, she comes to understand that while we cannot always carry things with us physically—maybe they can travel with us in other ways.”*

Go back to the story. Explain what the girl meant when she said . . .

- *“I know it might take a little while. But that’s okay—I can wait.”*
(page 22)
- *“That’s the great thing about the ocean—it’s everywhere.”*
(page 16)

Brainstorm other ways people can carry things with them as memories. (e.g., *scrapbooks, photo albums, journals, letters*)

Activity

Read the words in the boxes. Referencing the story, explain why they are the girl's favorite things. Draw a picture of each.

Aquarium	Wooden chair	Bus driver
Best friend	Pear tree	Ocean

Draw five or six bottles, like the ones shown in the story, large enough for students to illustrate what they would put in the bottles.

- What are some of your favorite things?
- What things would you put in bottles to hold on to special memories?





Blue Dot Kids Press inspires curiosity with beautifully crafted stories that connect us to each other and the planet we share. Written and illustrated by impassioned **storytellers and artists from around the world**, our books engage young readers' innate sense of **wonder and empathy**, connecting them to our global community and **the pale blue dot we call home**.

As an **independent, mission-driven**, children's publisher based in San Francisco, California, and Wellington, New Zealand, our **passion for nature and its stewardship** are evident in every book we publish—as well as in our business practices.

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