

Empanadas for Everyone

By Jackie Azúa Kramer and Lenny Wen

BEGIN

Show the illustrations on the end pages of *Empanadas for Everyone*. Ask, “What do you see? What are you noticing? What are you wonder?” Children’s answers may be general in nature, but some may recognize some of the foods pictured, including empanadas, dumplings, calzones, pierogies, samosas, and so on. Say, “The author of *Empanadas for Everyone*, Jackie Azúa Kramer, has family roots in Ecuador, Puerto Rico, and Spain. Illustrator Lenny Wen was born in Indonesia. Though their families are from different parts of the world Jackie and Lenny have similarities and differences—things the same and different.” Show *Empanadas for Everyone* and say, “The main character of the book, Carina, also notices similarities and differences. Carina is gathering ingredients to make empanadas—something she’s never done by herself before. Along the way Carina learns about foods that are similar to empanadas and different from empanadas.”

READ

Using your classroom technology, show the pages of the book as you read *Empanadas for Everyone*. If you do not have the needed technology, gather the children around as you read the book and show the illustrations. Point out on the cover the illustration of the empanadas sitting on a tray. Say, “As we read, let’s look for examples of foods that are similar to, but different from, empanadas.” As you read, pause when an illustration shows a food similar to empanadas allowing children to make discoveries, being cautious to not do the thinking for your students, then continue reading.

NOTE: Several Spanish words are used throughout the text. You may want to look up pronunciation guides for those words before reading. If you have Spanish-speaking students in your class access their knowledge to help with pronunciations and definitions.

DISCUSS

Show the illustrations on the end pages again. Ask students, “From reading and viewing the illustrations in the story, what have you learned about these foods? How are they the same? How are they different?” (Answers may include: *Each food has an outer layer of bread or pastry, each looks golden brown, each contains special ingredients inside*, and so on.) Lead the students to review the story by looking back at the illustrations. Ask specific questions related to what is shown. Such as: “What was Carina excited to do on Saturday? What did Tia Mimi’s note say? How did Carina first feel about making empanadas by herself? What food did Aamir sell that was like empanadas? What made Lila’s Jamaican meat patties so yellow? What did Carina gather from Kim’s Market? What did the Deli have that was like empanadas? What did the entire neighborhood do at the end of the story?” Throughout the review, remind students that the food and the neighbors were different and alike in many ways.

THINK

Activity: Same But Different Exploration

Supplies: White board and markers or chart paper and markers

To do: Make a chart with three columns labeled: *Neighbor, Ingredient, Food*.

After the discussing the book, guide children to put their knowledge into a chart by recording in order the neighbors introduced in the story, what each contributed to Carina’s version of empanadas, and the food that was similar to empanadas related to that neighbor. Use the chart below as a guide.

NEIGHBOR	INGREDIENT	FOOD
Carina	Gathering ingredients	Empanada (em-puh- na -duh)
Aamir	Corriander	Samosa (suh- mo -suh)
Lila	Achiote	Jamaican Meat Patties
Kim’s Market	Garlic	Mandu (man -doo)
Deli	Onions	Pierogies (puh- ro -gees)
Mrs. Chang	Beef	Jiaozi (jau -zee)

DO

Activity 1: Food Share

Supplies: A box or basket for collecting food items. Make copies of the note below or create your own note to send home with students.

To do: NOTE: Before conducting this activity, check with your school administrators to see if they have suggestions about where the food your students collect might be distributed. Perhaps your school guidance counselor provides food to families on an as-needed basis or maybe there is a food pantry in your community that accepts donations.

Ask students to recall where Tia Mimi had volunteered to work. (*The Meal Center.*) Guide students to infer—based on the text, illustrations, and their own life experiences—what the purpose of the Meal Center might have been. (*Answers will vary, but help students come to the understanding that the Meal Center provide food to those in needed.*) Ask, “At the end of the story, what did Corina and all the neighbors do to help at the Meal Center?” (*They all brought their special empanada-like foods to share with others at the Meal Center.*)

Next, guide children in a discussion about how they might share food with others just like the neighbors did in *Empanadas for Everyone*. Ask children if they know of any place in their community where people can go if they need food or a meal. Say, “We could collect boxed and canned foods to share with others.” Show the box or basket you prepared and provide each child

with a copy of the note prepared for families. Set a deadline for gathering food and determine how it will be distributed.

FOOD SHARE

After reading the book *Empanadas for Everyone*, our class has decided to create a food basket to share with people in need. Our basket will be donated to _____. If you would like to participate, please send a canned or boxed food item by _____.

Thank you!

WATCH

Video copy to be added.

TASTE

If possible, gather empanadas and other foods mentioned in the book to create a tasting similar to the one the book characters enjoyed at the Meal Center. Members of your school faculty, staff, and community may be able to provide samples of some of the foods or local merchants might be willing to help. A parent or school volunteer might be willing to make empanadas based on the recipe in the book. Remember this is a tasting—each item can be cut into several pieces for serving. NOTE: Empanadas and many foods mentioned in the book are also sold in the frozen section of grocery stores.

ALLERGY ALERT

Any time you serve food to students, be aware of allergies. Notify parents of the tasting well in advance of the day you plan to feature a food item. Posting an allergy alert sign outside your classroom door the day of the event is also advisable. Consider providing an optional food/snack for children who may not be able to participate in the tasting.

Additional Resources

Author website—<https://www.jackieazuakramer.com/>

Illustrator website—<https://www.lennywen.com/>

TeachingBooks®—<https://school.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?tid=90901>