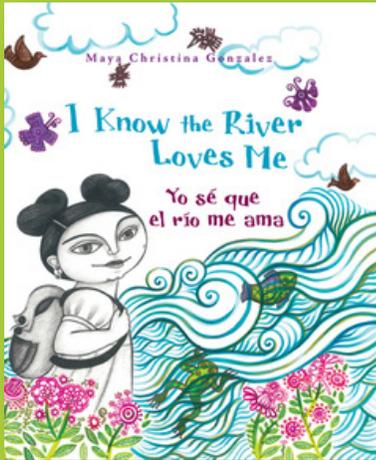


TEACHER'S GUIDE



LEE & LOW BOOKS

I Know the River Loves Me / Yo sé que el río me ama

written and illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez

Reading Level

Reading Level: Grade 2

Interest Level: Grades PreK–3

Guided Reading Level/Spanish

Guided Reading Level: J/K

Accelerated Reader® Level/

Points: N/A

Lexile™ Measure: AD580L

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Nature & Environment, Sharing & Giving, Responsibility, Respect, Imagination, Exploring Ecosystems, Human Impact on Environment, Environmental Sustainability, Optimism & Enthusiasm, Water, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest

Synopsis

Listen. . . Can you hear the river calling you? Rushing and bubbling, splashing or still, the river has so much to teach us.

Whenever Maya visits the river, the river jumps up to greet her. It cools her down when the summer sun is too hot, and holds her up when she dives in. It keeps her company in the quiet of winter. The river takes care of Maya and Maya takes care of the river.

In this gentle story of love and respect for nature, Maya Christina Gonzalez combines her award-winning talents as an artist and storyteller. Young readers will be inspired by the joy and wonder of being outdoors, and learn powerful lessons about their environment and themselves. The awards for *I Know the River Loves Me/Yo sé que el río me ama* include the Américas Award Honorable Mention, the International Latino Book Award, Best Children's Picture Book in 2nd place, and a finalist for the ForeWord Book of the Year and ReadBoston Best Read Aloud Book Award.



BACKGROUND

Rivers: National Geographic defines as a river as “a large, natural stream of flowing water.” Rivers of various sizes are found on every continent. Some rivers change seasonally. A river begins at its *source* and flows downhill. Precipitation and groundwater add to the river’s volume; oftentimes streams or tributaries do as well. A river ends when it flows into another body of water (ocean, lake, or another river.) This is called its *mouth*. For more information and a slideshow of rivers around the world, visit <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/river/>. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, about 3% of all water is freshwater and an even smaller amount of that is rivers (<https://www.usgs.gov/special-topic/water-science-school/science/freshwater-lakes-and-rivers-water-cycle>).

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- Where do you love to spend time outside? Why?
- Have you ever seen a river? How would you describe it? What could you see and do when visiting a river?
- What role do you think rivers play in the environment?
- Why do you think rivers important to humans?

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1, Craft & Structure, Strand 5, and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Talk about the title of the book. Then ask students

what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?

Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, illustrations, bilingual text, and author’s note and dedication.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- More information about rivers
- Why the river is special to the narrator
- How the river makes the narrator feel

Encourage students to consider why the author, Maya Christina Gonzalez would want to share this story with young people.

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What is the girl doing as the story begins?
2. Why does the girl think the river loves her? What reasons does she give?
3. What does the girl do while she’s at the river?
4. What do the illustrations show the girl doing?



VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below. Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Content Specific

river

Academic

cool, leap, tug, flow

5. What plants and animals do you see in the illustrations?
6. How does the girl say the river changes?
7. What does the girl say as she's leaving the river?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Why do you think the narrator describes the river as one of her best friends?
2. What real sounds do you think the narrator hears when the river is “calling” her? What might she imagine?
3. What does the girl see when she looks into the river? Does the river really have a face?
4. When the girl swims in the river, what does she imagine? What do you think actually happens?
5. What do you think the narrator means by, “I watch her change like me?”
6. What do you think the narrator means by, “The river takes care of me and I take care of the river. I only leave behind what already belongs to her?” What doesn't she do when she visits the river?
7. What do you think the last illustration shows? Why do you think the author chose to end the book that way?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion. You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. If you could take a walk alone in nature like the girl in the story, where would you go and why? What real things would you see and do? What would you imagine?



2. Pick a favorite place or thing of yours and write your own “I Know the ____ Loves Me” story, referring to it as a friend the way the author does.
3. What might happen if people don’t take care of rivers and other parts of nature? Write an example of a sign that could be posted at an outdoor place you love telling people why and how to take care of it.
4. What does this story teach readers about being a good friend? Share examples from the book and relate them to your own experiences being or having a good friend.
4. Have students give a short talk describing an outdoor place special to them. Encourage them to share details related to each of the five senses.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students’ prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.
6. Use the Spanish text if it is helpful for your students. For an example of how to utilize parent volunteers to present the text in two languages, see <https://blog.leeandlow.com/2013/10/28/using-dual-language-and-bilingual-books-in-first-and-second-grade/>.

ELL Teaching Activities

(*Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6*)

(*Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6*)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students’ level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.
 - Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.

Social and Emotional Learning

(*Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6*)

(*Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6*)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one’s own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships. Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of *I Know the River Loves Me*:

1. Have students chart the narrator’s emotions over the course of the story. How does she feel when she’s interacting with the river? Use the illustrations as a visual reference and way to tap into students’ visual literacy skills.



2. What Social and Emotional Learning skills does the narrator exhibit over the course of the book? (some examples include problem-solving, grit and perseverance, and perspective taking) How do they influence her character? Why was it important for her to demonstrate those skills?
3. Have students in an essay argue whether the narrator is a role model for young people or not. What evidence can students find in the text that demonstrates the narrator's character and whether the author encourages young people to emulate her or draw caution from her.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3, Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 5, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strand 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3)

1. List the verbs the author uses to describe both the girl's and the river's actions. Act out the verbs and encourage students to use precise and vivid verbs in their own writing.
2. Read other titles that celebrate water, such as *Water Rolls, Water Rises/El agua rueda, el agua sube*. Make connections between texts (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/water-rolls-water-rises-el-agua-rueda-el-agua-sube>).

3. Read other titles that celebrate nature, such as *Call Me Tree* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/call-me-tree-llamame-arbol>) or *My Colors, My World* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/my-colors-my-world-mis-colores-mi-mundo>) by the same author. Make connections between texts.
4. Use this book to examine the concept of point of view. How does the girl's point of view shape the story? Brainstorm how the book could be different if written by someone else (e.g., someone who works in the fishing industry, a scientist, an animal, someone scared of water.)

Art

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. Invite students to use drawings from the story as inspiration for creating their own drawings of their favorite places. Encourage them to explore using lines to convey movement and detail.
2. Discuss why Maya Christina Gonzalez may have chosen to draw the girl in black and white and the scenery in color. Experiment with creating drawings using the same technique, or have students create colorful pictures of a favorite place and glue a black and white photo of themselves onto it for a collage effect.

Music

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strand 7)

View this read-aloud video of the book set to music: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=gj4W8xJfRKM. Discuss how the addition of music enhances the story. Have students experiment with playing music as you read the book aloud.



Science/Geography

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strand 7)

(Writing Standards, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9)

1. Experiment with moving water by having students create “rivers” in a sand table or outdoor sand pile or box. Explore the concepts of a river’s source and mouth, and how streams, tributaries and precipitation can add to a river’s flow. Encourage students to experiment with making the water flow quickly and slowly.
2. Learn more about a river as a habitat. Read nonfiction books or view online content about freshwater fish and other river animals and plants.
3. Have students formulate research questions and hypotheses related to some rivers’ seasonal changes, as mentioned in the book. Guide them in conducting research and communicating their findings.
4. Have students look up the nearest river system to their town. How does their town get water? Which animals can be found in or near this river system? What risks does this river system face?

Social Studies

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types and Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production and Distribution of Knowledge Strands 4-6, and Research to Build and Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. Read the author’s note that lists rivers she’s visited. Locate them on a map and have students research more about each one, comparing and contrasting their findings. Have students use their research to illustrate and write imaginary postcards as if they were visiting various rivers.
2. The author credits the Yuba River in California as being her favorite. Locate this river on a map,

noticing its various forks and sections. Learn more about the history and geography of the river, as well as conservation efforts.

3. Read this book as part of an exploration of gratitude. Discuss how the author conveys her gratitude for rivers. Pair the book with other titles about gratitude, such as *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message*. (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/giving-thanks>)
4. Use this book as a springboard for discussing how to make your classroom a safe, friendly, and special space. For a complete lesson plan, see https://www.leeandlow.com/uploads/loaded_document/349/Building_Classroom_Community_in_Second_Grade_Lesson_Plan_8.pdf.

School/Home Connection

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3)

1. Ask families to request that friends and family members who live in other locations send postcards or photos of themselves enjoying nature. Find locations Compile responses received into a class book or bulletin board celebrating time outdoors and have students write about where they’d love to visit someday and why.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Maya Christina Gonzalez is a widely exhibited artist renowned for her vivid imagery of strong women and girls. She has illustrated nearly twenty children's books, and her artwork has appeared on the cover of Contemporary Chicano/a Art. *My Colors, My World/Mis colores, mi mundo* was the first book Maya both wrote and illustrated. Bilingual books that Maya illustrated include *Laughing Tomatoes*, *From the Bellybutton of the Moon*, and *Angels Ride Bikes*. She lives and plays in San Francisco, California. Visit her online at <http://www.mayagonzalez.com>.

ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

LEE & LOW BOOKS is the largest children's book publisher specializing in diversity and multiculturalism. Our motto, "about everyone, for everyone," is as urgent today as it was when we started in 1991. It is the company's goal to meet the need for stories that children of color can identify with and that all children can enjoy. The right book can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, prompt discussion about race and ethnicity, and inspire children to imagine not only a world that includes them, but also a world where they are the heroes of their own stories. Discover more at leeandlow.com.

ORDERING INFORMATION

On the Web:

www.leeandlow.com/contact/ordering (general order information)

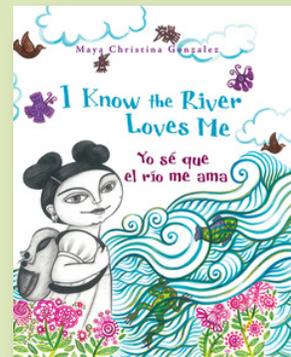
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/i-know-the-river-loves-me-yo-se-que-el-rio-me-ama> (secure online ordering)

By Phone: 212-779-4400 ext. 25 | **By Fax:** 212-683-1894

By Mail: Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Book Information for

*I Know the River Loves Me /
Yo sé que el río me ama*



\$10.95, PAPERBACK

9780892392360

24 pages, 8-1/4 X 10

*Reading Level: Grade 2

Interest Level: Grades PreK–3

Guided Reading Level/Spanish

Guided Reading Level: J/K

Accelerated Reader® Level/
Points: N/A

Lexile™ Measure: AD580L

THEMES: Nature & Environment, Sharing & Giving, Responsibility, Respect, Imagination, Exploring Ecosystems, Human Impact on Environment, Environmental Sustainability, Optimism & Enthusiasm, Water, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest

RESOURCES ON THE

WEB:

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/i-know-the-river-loves-me-yo-se-que-el-rio-me-ama>

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.