

Ten Blocks to the Big Wok

written and illustrated by Ying-Hwa Hu

About the Book

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Format: 40 pages, 9" x 10-3/4"

ISBN: 9781643790688

Reading Level: Grades 1-2

Interest Level: Grades PreK-3

Guided Reading Level: L

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
N/A

Lexile™ Measure: N/A

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Bilingual, China, Cultural Diversity, Education, Food, Asian/Asian American Interest, Families

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/ten-blocks-to-the-big-wok

SYNOPSIS

As Mia and her uncle Eddie travel the ten blocks from their apartment to the Big Wok restaurant, Mia spies one giant panda ride, two lion statues, three swimming turtles, four bonsai trees, five Tai Chi Chuan practitioners ... There are so many things to see in Chinatown! And when they reach the Big Wok, they find ten yummy dim sum dishes to eat. But what route should they take back home?

This sweet story about a girl, her uncle, and a little cat they meet on the way accomplishes multiple fun and useful aims: It's a fully bilingual counting book that teaches readers the numbers one through ten in both simplified Chinese and English. It provides a fun tour of a typical Chinatown--a beloved neighborhood in many cities around the world. Children will enjoy spotting the kitten in every illustration as it trails Mia and Uncle Eddie through the streets. And with each item that Mia encounters on her walk, the book introduces some fascinating new aspect of Chinese culture or myth, as explained in the friendly backmatter. Join Mia and Uncle Eddie as they wander *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*!

Watch the book trailer to find out more! (https://www.leeandlow.com/uploads/loaded_document/1014/Cat_Promo_REV__Ten_Blocks_1__1_.mp4).

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

BACKGROUND

Author's Note from Ying-Hwa Hu

As Mia travels the *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*, she encounters many elements of Chinese culture in her neighborhood! You can learn more about these elements below.

Dim sum loosely translates to “touch the heart.” These savory and sweet snacks do just that. Dim sum is a popular brunch consisting of small plates of steamed or fried foods from Guangdong, a province in southern China. Dim sum dishes are usually carried out from the kitchen on small carts that are pushed around the restaurant by servers. Diners order from the carts without having to leave their seats.

The panda is a bear native to south-central China. As one of the animals most at risk of extinction, the giant panda has long been a symbol of world wildlife conservation efforts. Pandas love to climb trees, so the Chinese people call them xiong-mao, meaning “bear-cat.”

Stone lions are traditional guardians of both public institutions and private estates in China. They are seen as protectors of peace and keepers of good fortune.

Turtles are associated with long life and wisdom in Chinese culture. Turtle shells were used to predict the future in religious ceremonies in ancient China.

Penjing means “beautiful scenery in a pot.” The Chinese people started creating petite landscapes over two thousand years ago. Artistically pruned dwarf trees and rock arrangements capture the beauty of nature on a miniature scale.

Tai Chi Chuan (Tai Ji Quan) was originally developed for self-defense but has evolved into a graceful form of exercise. With roots in both Taoist and Confucian Chinese philosophy, Tai Chi Chuan promotes serenity through gentle, flowing movements, and is often described as meditation in motion.

Lychee (li zhi) is a tropical fruit native to China. Emperor Tang Xuanzong's favorite consort, Yang Guifei (719–756 CE), loved lychee. When the fruit was in season, the emperor had daily deliveries of fresh lychee brought in to please Yang Guifei. The fruit had to be carried by relay horses traveling hundreds of miles to reach the palace! Lychee has been closely associated with the beautiful consort in Chinese literature ever since.

Silk has been made in China for more than 8,500 years. As the Western Han dynasty (206 BCE–9 CE) expanded its trade routes west, the silk carried along by the traders reached as far as Rome and Africa. Centuries later, travelers dubbed this path the Silk Road.

Goldfish are a mutation of carp fish first bred in China over 1,700 years ago. The imperial color of China was golden yellow, so during the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE), only the emperor's family could keep the yellow fish. However, goldfish lovers continued to reproduce these beautiful fish in

other colors. Over time, orange became one of the most popular hues.

Fortune cats were created in Japan, where they are known as maneki-neko or the “beckoning cat,” but these lovely waving figurines have many adoring fans in Chinese communities around the world.

Paper lanterns were first seen in China shortly after the invention of paper, around 200 BCE. Lanterns are lit in the main entrance to each household and in temples to bring good fortune. The Lantern Festival is held at the end of Chinese New Year celebrations worldwide.

Chinese Numbers

For a list of Chinese numbers and their pronunciation, consult the back of *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*. You can display the chart in your classroom or setting of your choice.

The History of Chinatowns

PBS has a Chinatown Resource Guide that has related books, teaching tools, different organizations, resources and more (<https://www.pbs.org/kqed/chinatown/resourceguide/index.html>).

The Chinese Historical Society of America has a historical timeline of San Francisco's Chinatown from 1906-2006 as well as a Chinatown Architecture Walking Tour Map (<https://chsa.org/education/resources/>).

The Museum of Chinese in America also has a page dedicated to teachers and provides information on workshops, exhibits, learning resources, and more (<https://www.mocanyc.org/learn/teachers/>).

Counting and Everyday Math

Stanford University's “What Children Know and Need to Learn About Counting” (<https://prek-math-te.stanford.edu/counting/what-children-know-and-need-learn-about-counting>) provides information on how young students develop non-verbal basic concepts of quantity, the use of counting words in everyday life, and the conceptions of perception and precision in counting (<https://prek-math-te.stanford.edu/counting/what-children-know-and-need-learn-about-counting>). Zero To Three's “Everyday Fun with Counting” also provides additional details about establishing a strong foundation for early math skills and various activities associated with counting throughout your day (<http://toosmall.org/body/Early-Math-Tip-Sheet-Counting.pdf>).

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and 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:

- What are some of your favorite things about where you live? Why do you like those things?
- Ask students to think about their neighborhood. What is unique about their neighborhood? What do they see when they walk around?
- How do you use counting and math in your everyday life? What are some of the different things that you have to count every day? Think about your daily routine. How is math and counting a part of it?
- Ask students to think about their family and what family means to them. How is family important to you? What are some favorite childhood memories of your family and/or family members? Why are these special or important to you?
- Do you have a favorite family member or adult in your life? What do you like to do with them? Why do you like doing those things? What does this person mean to you?
- Tell students that this is a bilingual book in English and simplified Chinese. If students speak Mandarin and are comfortable sharing, ask them how it felt to read a bilingual book in both English and simplified Chinese. What was the experience like reading the book in English? What was it like in simplified Chinese? Have students discuss the different translations.

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)

- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book, *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*. 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?
- **Read Ying-Hwa Hu's Biography:** Read about author and illustrator Ying-Hwa Hu on the back jacket flap. How do you think Ying-Hwa Hu comes up with ideas for her books? What do you think inspired her to write and illustrate *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*? What does her process look like for writing and illustrating a book?
- Encourage students to stop and jot down notes in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.
- Have students quickly write their feelings in their notebooks during reading. After reading,

ask students why they wrote down those feelings and have them write journal entries about them.

- Ask students to make a prediction: Do you think this book will be fiction or nonfiction? What makes you think so? What clues are given that help you know whether this book will be fiction or nonfiction?

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- where the story takes place
- what Uncle Eddie and Mia see during their walk through Chinatown
- what elements of Chinese culture Uncle Eddie and Mia engage with during the story
- how counting is a part of the book and our everyday lives
- what family means to Mia and Uncle Eddie
- how family and childhood influence your life
- why it's important to acknowledge and learn about your own culture and/or cultures different from your own

Encourage students to consider why the author and illustrator, Ying-Hwa Hu, would want to share with young people this book about a young girl and her uncle exploring Chinatown.

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

Big Wok, dim sum, soup dumpling, panda, community center, stone lions, souvenir shop, Penjing Garden, Tai chi, Emperor lychee, fruit stand, silk fans, fortune kittens, red lanterns, fried wontons, shumai, tofu-skin rolls, chive dumplings, cartoon face buns, barbeque pork puffs, spring rolls, egg tarts, steamed anchovies

Academic

cheers, gentle, greet, ageless, miniature, practice, bundles, dance, bright, dart, palace, friendly, sway, share, route, laughs

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 textual 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. How does the story begin? Where is Uncle Eddie taking Mia?
2. How does Mia react when Uncle Eddie tells her where they are going?
3. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the first block?
4. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the second block? Where are they?
5. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the third block? Where are they?
6. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the fourth block?
7. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the fifth block? What do they do when they see their neighbors?
8. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the sixth block? What does Mia take with her?
9. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the seventh block?
10. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the eighth block?
11. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the ninth block?
12. What do Uncle Eddie and Mia see on the tenth and final block? Where are they?
13. What does Mia count while she's eating? What kind of food does she see?
14. What food does Mia ask to take home? Who is it for?
15. What does Mia suggest at the end of the story to Uncle Eddie?

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. What does the title *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* mean to you after reading? Why do you think the author chose this particular title?
2. How does the Chinatown neighborhood play a role in *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*? How are Mia and Uncle Eddie inspired by the world around them?
3. What does Uncle Eddie teach Mia during their walk? What does he point out to her as they're

heading to the Big Wok?

4. How is Uncle Eddie a positive role model for Mia? How does she act around him? How do you think he presents himself as a supportive, loving family figure in her life?
5. Why is it important to use your imagination? What are the ways that you use your imagination in your daily life? How does it make you feel?
6. Have you read other books that feature counting? How is this book different from other books that have counting in them?
7. How is counting an important part of the book? What are the ways that the author uses numbers throughout the story?
8. Why do you think the author chose to make this a bilingual story? If you speak Mandarin, how did it make you feel reading this book? If you don't speak Mandarin, what did you learn about Chinese numbers or characters?
9. Why is it important to explore your community and be outdoors? How does your neighborhood inspire you?
10. How does *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* teach about the importance of observing the world around you? What makes you think that?
11. What are the ways that Uncle Eddie and Mia demonstrate that they have a loving and caring relationship? How do they act with one another? What are some of the qualities of a positive relationship?

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. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about your own culture, heritage, and identity. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think Ying Hwa-Hu's message is to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Ying-Hwa Hu's intentions to write this book about Uncle Eddie, Mia, and their walk to the Big Wok. Why do you think she used numbers to guide the story?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make between the story and your own life? What did you relate to and how did the book make you think of your own childhood or growing up experiences?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while reading *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make between the text and art in the book and what you have seen happening in the world, such as

on television, in a newspaper, or online? What in this book made you think of that?

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 tell what they learned about one of the spreads. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about which spread they identified with the most from *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* and why.
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.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)
(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 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 this book.

1. Which illustration in *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* do you think best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it is. How does the artist portray that emotion?
2. Choose an emotion such as happiness, hope, sadness, and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.

3. Uncle Eddie plays a big role in Mia's life in *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*. Do you have a family member that is important to you, besides your caregiver? Do you have an aunt or uncle that you look up to as a role model? What about another adult family member, or friend or teacher? What are they like? How do they make you feel? How do you show love to one another? What do you like to do together? Why do you think it's important to have multiple positive adult role models in your life?
4. What one part of your heritage, culture, or identity are you most proud of? Do you think your school or classroom has been a safe place to share that part of yourself? Why or why not?

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 and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **Have students come up with a list of questions to ask author Ying-Hwa Hu.** What do students want to know about the process behind writing a children's book? How did Ying-Hwa come up with the idea to write *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*? What research did she do? Was she inspired by events from her own life? Even though Ying-Hwa Hu has illustrated many children's books, this was her first time as a debut author. What was it like to write and illustrate a children's book at the same time? Consider contacting Ying-Hwa Hu and inviting her to your school, library, or other relevant setting for an in-person or a virtual author visit (yinghwahu.com).
- **Encourage students to watch the book trailer** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/ten-blocks-to-the-big-wok>) **for *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.** If the necessary equipment is available at school or in students' homes, encourage students to record and edit their own book trailers for *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*. For ideas, check out this Creating Reading Excitement with Book Trailers lesson plan (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroomresources/lesson-plans/bookreport-alternativecreating-c-30914.html>) by ReadWriteThink.org.
- **Use *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* to inspire students to write about walking around their own neighborhood.** Students can brainstorm how to use numbers to describe the different things that they see. They should also pay attention to small details like those that Mia and Eddie notice in the story. Students can model Eddie and Mia's trip by counting different objects that they see throughout their walk. After, students can write a story about the different objects that they observed and counted on their walk. If walking around the neighborhood is not an option, consider doing a virtual walk with Google Maps (using the street view option) or Google Earth to explore other neighborhoods around the country.

- **The five senses are used frequently throughout *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.** Have students write a poem or sentence using each of their senses (sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste). If possible, provide students with props that pertain to each of the senses in your classroom (for example, provide a leaf for sight and a feather for touch; play classical music for hearing; spray a scent in the classroom for smell; offer orange segments for taste). Students can write a small moment writing piece for each object using that specific sense.
- **Have students select one of the elements of Chinese culture from the backmatter of *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*, which are also listed in the Background section of this guide.** Students can conduct additional research about the specific element with a partner or small group, and think about the following questions: What is the specific element of Chinese culture that you're focusing on? Why is it important in Chinese culture? What does it represent? Where can you see or interact with this specific element? Students can provide photographs or a visual presentation to demonstrate their findings, and discuss what they learned during this research project.
- **Use *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* to teach descriptive writing.** Reading Rockets has additional information and ideas on how to teach students descriptive writing and how to make writing engaging and interesting (https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/descriptive_writing). Students can model what they learn in their own writing.
- **What does identity and culture mean to students after reading?** Uncle Eddie and Mia love exploring the neighborhood and the different elements associated with Chinese culture during the story. After reading *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*, what does identity, culture, and heritage mean to students? Why? If students feel comfortable, have them share with a partner or a small group about different elements or traditions in their culture that they enjoy and are special to them.
- **Encourage students to write poems about a childhood memory or something that is meaningful to them about their identities, cultures, or heritages.** Using inspiration from *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*, have students think about what they want to communicate about themselves, their families, and/or their favorite childhood experiences. What do they want to share and why did they pick that particular thing to write about? Students can share their work with a partner, a small group, or the whole class. Consider creating a class book with illustrations and have the book available to students in the classroom library.

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **If possible, have students take a walk around their communities near their school as a field trip.** Using inspiration from *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*, have students pay close attention to their surroundings to mirror what Mia and Eddie did in the story. What do they see and hear? What's important in their neighborhood around their school? Pick a few places

to stop along the neighborhood walk and have students write about them. After the field trip, have students write a reflection essay about the experience and what their neighborhood and community mean to them.

- **Explore a specific Chinatown virtually or physically, if accessible and possible from the school.** *The New York Times*' "Chinatown: Resilient and Proud" is a virtual walk through Manhattan's Chinatown. Los Angeles has a virtual walking tour that shows different shops and places throughout Los Angeles' own Chinatown (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5KoxKXQQA4>). The San Francisco Historical Society also has their own Chinatown virtual tour that provides background information about each of the stops (<https://www.sfhistory.org/publications/virtual-tour-of-chinatown/>). Google Earth can also be an option to explore other Chinatown neighborhoods around the country or world. Have students record what they notice, whether they are exploring their own Chinatown close to their school, or a virtual Chinatown. What do they see? What kinds of shops are present? What kinds of elements of Chinese culture that were shown in *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* are evident in the walking tours? Students can write a reaction piece after their physical or virtual tour concludes, and answer the guiding questions about what they learned and how they can connect what they observed to *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.
- **Conduct a research study on the history of Chinatowns in the United States.** What is unique about particular Chinatowns across the country? How are Chinatowns different across the country? What can you typically find in a Chinatown? Why were Chinatowns created? How was the creation of Chinatowns problematic? What are Chinatowns like today? The National Trust for Historic Preservation's article, "Gold Mountain and Beyond: A History of Chinatowns in the United States" (<https://savingplaces.org/stories/gold-mountain-and-beyond-a-history-of-chinatowns-in-the-united-states#.Yk3M9dPMI-U>) provides more information and a compact history of Chinatowns in the United States, how they originated, the formation of Chinatowns, and Chinatowns today. PBS Learning Media's "Chinatown: The Story of Chinatown" (<https://savingplaces.org/stories/gold-mountain-and-beyond-a-history-of-chinatowns-in-the-united-states#.Yk3M9dPMI-U>) also has different article and videos about Chinatowns in the United States. Consult other sources, including (<https://www.archaeology.org/issues/131-1405/features/chinatowns/1959-food-in-chinatowns-american-west>) (<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/chinese/building-communities/>) for additional research and information. Have students share their research findings in a visual presentation format of their choosing.
- **Have students select one of the topics from the backmatter, as provided in the Background section of this guide.** Students can research more about this element of Chinese culture using different books from their classroom as well as other texts and online resources. What did they learn? If they already knew about that specific element of Chinese culture, what additional information did they find out during their research process? Students can write about what they found during their research, how it relates to their own life, and make any connections to *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.

Math

(Mathematics Standards, Grade 5, Number & Operations in Base Ten, Strands 5 and 7 and Operations & Algebraic Thinking, Strands 1 and 2)

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

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 2 and 3)

(Writing Standards, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strand 9)

- **Have students think about the objects they count in their everyday lives.** Students can write down every time they have to count, thinking critically about the different parts of their day that would involve counting like Eddie and Mia. For example, Mia counts all of the different foods that are part of their meal at the restaurant. Have students record their thoughts in a notebook, and then they can write a sentence modeled off of the text in *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*, with an accompanying illustration. For more information on teaching students and developing everyday math for young children, consult Stanford's "What Children Know and Need to Learn About Counting" (<https://prek-math-te.stanford.edu/counting/what-children-know-and-need-learn-about-counting>).
- **Practice counting in Chinese.** In *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*, there is a chart at the back of the book that can be displayed anywhere in the classroom. Have students go through their classroom and select objects to count from one to 10. They can collect different sets of objects (i.e. 5 crayons), and then state the number in Chinese. On Ying-Hwa Hu's website, she has videos of Mia counting in Chinese (<https://www.yinghwahu.com/mia>) that students can refer to for pronunciation guidance.
- **Ask students to evaluate how they use math in their everyday life.** Edutopia's article "7 Real-World Math Strategies" has additional examples and ways to incorporate math from the classroom. Consider having students come up with their ideas and put them on a wall or chart paper for everyone to see how math is used so often (<https://www.edutopia.org/article/7-real-world-math-strategies>).
- **Play a counting scavenger hunt.** Select specific sets of items from zero to ten (in both English and Chinese), and have students work with a partner to find the objects in the classroom, or outside if possible (i.e. find one pencil, find two crayons, etc). Zero to Three and Too Small to Fail's "Let's Talk About Math" provides additional activities for young students in how to incorporate everyday fun with counting in their daily lives (<http://toosmall.org/body/Early-Math-Tip-Sheet-Counting.pdf>).

Art & Media

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **Have students conduct an illustrator study on Ying-Hwa Hu** (<https://www.yinghwahu.com/>). Ying-Hwa Hu's other books that she illustrated at Lee & Low include *A House By the River* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/a-house-by-the-river>), *Baby Flo* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/baby-flo>), *Zora Hurston and the Chinaberry Tree* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/zora-hurston-and-the-chinaberry-tree>), *Sam and the Lucky Money* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sam-and-the-lucky-money>) and *The Legend of Freedom Hill* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-legend-of-freedom-hill>).

www.leeandlow.com/books/the-legend-of-freedom-hill), all with her husband Cornelius Van Wright. What kind of style does she use in her artwork? What do you think her process is for creating the illustrations for a children's book? How does she work with Cornelius Van Wright when she creates her art? Consider reaching out to Ying-Hwa for a virtual illustrator visit. Students can investigate other works by Ying-Hwa and see how her other works compare to the artwork in *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.

- **Encourage each student to create an illustration that represents her or his culture, identity, and/ or heritage.** Afterward, students may share their artwork with a partner, a small group, or the whole class. What did students learn about themselves during this process? Why did they choose a particular artistic style and items to include in their artwork? What do their images mean to them? If time allows and students want to continue illustrating, they can also create more than one illustration to create their own version of *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok* with items that represent their culture, identity and/ or heritage.
- **Encourage students to select an illustration that resonated with them the most from *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.** Have students write a reflection about the illustration. What stood out to them? How did it make them feel? What did it make them think about?
- **Check out author Ying-Hwa Hu's Crafts for Kids! page on her website (<https://www.yinghwahu.com/general-7>) for additional ideas on how to engage students with artwork relevant to *Ten Blocks to the Big Wok*.**

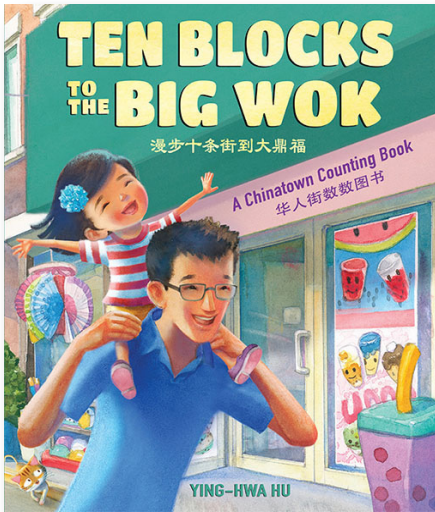
School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **Encourage students to interview family members about a favorite or powerful childhood memory.** How did that event influence the family member? How did it affect the person's life moving forward? Consider having children, if comfortable, share their findings with a partner, a small group, or whole class.
- **Have students and their family members think about how they use counting at home and when they're together. How do they count during their everyday lives?** For example, what do they count when they're cooking dinner, or how do they count things when they're getting ready to go to school? Students can reflect with their families on how counting and math are a critical part of our lives.



Ordering Information

🌐 General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

🔒 Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/ten-blocks-to-the-big-wok

📞 **By Phone:** 212-779-4400 ext. 25

📠 **By Fax:** 212-683-1894

✉️ **By Mail:**

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

ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

Ying-Hwa Hu has been illustrating books featuring children of many cultures for more than three decades. With her husband, Cornelius Van Wright, she created the art for numerous classic picture books, including *Jingle Dancer* by Cynthia Leitich Smith, *Princess Grace* by Mary Hoffman, and *Sam and the Lucky Money* by Karen Chinn. This is her first book as a solo author and illustrator.

Ying Hwa's favorite dim sum dish is chive dumplings, which she gets in the Chinatown of New York City, where she lives. You can learn more about her and find fun Chinese-language activities at yinghwahu.com.

REVIEWS

"VERDICT: This engaging read is almost as enjoyable as the everyday adventure it depicts. A good choice for story time as well as one-on-one sharing." –*School Library Journal*

"Hu's charming bilingual book, written in both English and Mandarin Chinese, will be an entertaining counting book for young children of any background." –*Booklist*

"Hu's bright, cheerful digital illustrations of a child whose smile never wavers invite the reader to notice and enjoy the many special elements of Mia's neighborhood." –*The Horn Book*

"The softly textured, warm-hued watercolor and pastel artwork, manipulated digitally, provides sunny accompaniment to the duo's outing, with recognizable contemporary touches such as signs for boba as well as steamed custard buns in the shape of pigs and pandas." –*Publishers Weekly*

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.