

My Name is Laloifi

by Dan Taulapapa McMullin
illustrated by Fifi Colston

Overview

Laloifi is starting a new school, and her mother explains that some of the children may have difficulty pronouncing her name. Laloifi's teacher introduces a game to help the class learn to say her name correctly and ensure that Laloifi feels welcomed, proud, and happy. There is an audio version of this text on the Ready to Read CD *Readalong 2006*.

Suggested purposes

This text supports the comprehension strategies of inferring, summarising, identifying the author's purpose, and analysing and synthesising. The sensitive illustrations are a rich source of meaning.

Text features

(Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the themes of inclusiveness (welcoming a new person to the class) and of the importance of pronouncing names correctly
- the feelings of the characters revealed in the text and in the illustrations
- the roles of Laloifi's mother and the teacher
- the satisfying ending that links back to page 5
- the third-person narrator
- the inclusion of dialogue
- the indicators of time – “As they walked”, “At last”, “After school”, “That night”
- the adjectives “beautiful”, “excited”, “favourite”, “new”, “pink”, “pleased”, “proud”, “strong”, “yellow”
- the contractions “couldn't”, “didn't”, “I'm”, “I'll”, “it's”
- the possessive apostrophe in “Laloifi's”
- the single quote marks for “criss-cross candy floss” on page 7
- the alliteration and rhyme in “criss-cross candy floss”
- the honorific “Ms”
- the Pasifika design features
- the instructions for the game on page 7
- the pronunciation guide for “Laloifi” on the inside front cover.

Introducing the text

Discuss the cover. *Have a talk with your neighbour about what's happening here and how you think this girl might be feeling. Why do you think that?* Confirm that this book is about a girl going to school. Ask the children to read the title. If necessary, use the pronunciation guide on the inside front cover and practise saying Laloifi's name. *What do you notice about her name? Does this fit with what you thought about the illustration? I wonder what her day at school might be like ...*

During the reading

Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

There are many subtle messages in the illustrations in this book. Depending on your purpose for reading, decide whether you want to discuss them in depth on the first reading or focus on them in a subsequent reading.

Title page – Laloifi's name on the pencil case underpins the theme of the importance of names.

Ask the children to read the text silently, pausing at various points for discussion or to clarify any difficulties.

Pages 2 and 3 – *How are the characters feeling? How do you know?*

Page 4 – *Why is Mum talking to Laloifi about her name?*

Page 5 – If the children need help with decoding “tease”, write it on the whiteboard and underline “tea”. Ask them to articulate “tea” and then to add on the “s” sound. *That's right, it's “tease”.* Check that they understand its meaning. *What does Mum mean by “I want you to be strong”?*

Pages 6 and 7 – If necessary, explain the use of the honorific “Ms”. Tell the children that the quote marks around ‘criss-cross candy floss’ show that these are words they will say in the game. Ask them to summarise the rules.

Page 8 – Break the reading at the end of this page to have a quick practice of the game. *I'm thinking about what Laloifi will say when it's her turn ...*

Page 9 – Practise saying Laloifi's dialogue together “in a proud voice”. *How do you think she feels now that she's had her turn?* Encourage the children to use the illustrations as well as the text to support their inferences.

Page 10 – Remind the children of their own experience of needing to practise Laloifi's name.

Pages 12 to 15 – *I'm interested in how the rest of the family might be feeling ...*

Page 16 – *What do you think Mum and Dad might be saying to each other? What is Laloifi doing? Why?* Refer back to Mum's comment on page 5 – “You can be proud of your beautiful name.” *Is this a good ending? Why?*

Support the children to summarise the main points in the text by asking *What things helped Laloifi have a good first day at her new school?* Write them on a chart. This summary will help them to infer the author's purpose. *What is his message for us? Why did he choose this title?*

After the reading

(Choose only one or two per session.)

Listen to the children reread the text with a partner, observing their fluency and confidence and how they manage the sections of dialogue.

Discuss how the illustrations complement the text. You could talk about how the illustrations on pages 6 to 9 reveal Laloifi's apprehension and then her delight on page 10. Explore what the teacher does to make Laloifi feel more comfortable while the game is being played. You could compare Laloifi's feelings on pages 4 and 5 with her feelings on page 11 at the end of her school day.

Discuss the writer's use of adjectives and experiment with alternatives, for example: "lovely" or "gorgeous" for "beautiful"; "eager" or "happy" for "excited".

Focus on the indicators of time in the text. *What words tell you when things are happening on page 11? On page 12?* Draw out the idea that these phrases help the reader to follow the story. Add them to a class chart as models for writing.

Locate examples of contractions in the text and talk about how they make the dialogue sound more natural.

Discuss the use of the possessive apostrophe on page 6. Explain that this is called a possessive apostrophe and that it's there because the teacher "belongs" to Laloifi. Talk about the function of the possessive apostrophes on pages 9 and 12.

Suggestions for further tasks

Listen to the audio version on the CD *Readalong 2006*.

Read other stories about being new at school, for example, *Let's See, Ling Lee* (Blue) and *Shimbir* (Orange).

Write thought bubbles for each of the characters on page 16.

Create a timeline together of the events in the story and add descriptions of Laloifi's feelings to show how they changed.

Play the "criss-cross candy floss" game with the class.

Find out the countries of origin of the names of class members.