

Grade 3

**Stella Díaz Has
Something to Say**
by Angela Dominguez

Novel Guide

ISBN 978-1-68391-725-0

© 2019 Amplify Education, Inc., and its licensors
www.amplify.com

All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, transcribed, stored in a retrieval system, or translated into any other language in any form or by any means without the written permission of Amplify Education, Inc.

Core Knowledge Language Arts and CKLA are trademarks of the Core Knowledge Foundation.

Trademarks and trade names are shown in this book strictly for illustrative and educational purposes and are the property of their respective owners. References herein should not be regarded as affecting the validity of said trademarks and trade names.

Stella Díaz Has Something to Say

by Angela Dominguez

Stella Díaz Has Something to Say is about a third grader whose family has immigrated to the United States from Mexico. Stella lives with her brother, Nick, and her mom near Chicago. Even though she has been in America since she was a baby, she still doesn't feel like she fits in. Her best friend, Jenny, is in another class, so Stella feels lonely all day, except for lunch when she and Jenny eat together. When her class gets a new student, Stella hopes it will be a girl who can speak Spanish and become her new best friend.

Additional Resources

- If you like this book, you might also like...
 - *Sled Dog School* by Terry Lynn Johnson
 - *Cilla Lee-Jenkins: Future Author Extraordinaire* by Susan Tan
 - *A Boy Called Bat* by Elana K. Arnold
- To learn more, you might look at these resources. Remember to get permission from an adult before using the Internet.
 - BrainPOP Jr. has videos on bullying, divorce, friendship, and anger, as well as science, math, English, and art.
 - StopBullying.gov has a section just for kids! Consult it to find out how you can help stop bullying.
 - Kids Against Bullying offers lots of resources for how to deal with problems and bullies.

Reading: Chapters 1-3

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Where was Stella born, and when did she move to Chicago?
- 2) Who is Nick?
- 3) What happens during the family's "weekly appointments?"
- 4) Who is Stella's pet?
- 5) What two things did Stella's teacher, Ms. Bell, say at school on Friday?
- 6) Stella is glad she is not a betta fish. Why?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella and her family came from Mexico. She speaks Spanish, eats *albondigas*, and salsa dances. What can you learn about Mexico?
- 2) Use the resources your teacher provides to find the meaning of the Spanish words in Chapters 1–3.
- 3) Jenny is Vietnamese. What can you learn about Vietnam? Research to discover facts about Jenny's native country.

Imagine

- 1) Imagine what it would be like to be a betta fish like Pancho, then write a journal entry from his point of view. In other words, pretend you are Pancho and write about your life, thoughts, and feelings.

- 2) If you could design the perfect “weekly appointment” for your family, doing things that are fun or special, what would you do? Draw a picture or write a descriptive paragraph about your appointment.
- 3) In Chapter 3, Stella imagines a rule book for friendships. If you made a rule book of the top ten things best friends need, what would they be? What would be the most important rule?

Observe

- 1) Why is Stella so excited her class is getting a new student, when she already has a best friend, Jenny?
- 2) After Jenny heads to class, Stella says that the friendship bracelet Jenny gave her “looks smaller than usual.” What does Stella mean?
- 3) Why might it be hard for Stella to make new friends?
- 4) Stella says that on the first day of school her “stomach was in knots all day.” What does Stella mean, and why does she feel this way?

Understand

- 1) Stella’s mom reminds her to help the new student “feel comfortable.” If you were new, how could others help you feel comfortable?
- 2) Stella hopes to turn the new student into another best friend. What kinds of things could you say or do to befriend a new classmate?
- 3) Stella appreciates “that Pancho likes to be alone and is okay being quiet.” What are the good and bad parts about being quiet and alone?

Reading: Chapters 4-5

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What is Stella's library book, and what does she read about in it?
- 2) Who is the new student, and what does Stella learn about him?
- 3) Why does Stella feel nervous around Jessica Anderson?
- 4) Why is the school having a special assembly for Don?
- 5) Stella remembers her mom being very nervous about getting the family's green cards. Think about what Stella learns about green cards. Why her mom might have felt nervous about them?
- 6) Why does talking about how to become a citizen upset Stella?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Don came to the United States from the Philippines. Research to learn where it is, how big it is, and what life can be like there.
- 2) Immigrants must take a test to become American citizens. Research this test's questions and see if you know any of their answers.
- 3) The students sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" in honor of Don's citizenship. What are the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner," and why is it an appropriate song to sing when someone becomes an American citizen?

Imagine

- 1) When Stanley is introduced to the class, Stella says he is "different from what I imagined." Describe the student Stella probably imagined.

- 2) “Proper library etiquette” is very important to Ms. Morales. Using what you know about her from the text, create a poster about proper library etiquette that Ms. Morales might hang in the school library.
- 3) During the assembly for Don, Stella says, “There is so much that I want to say to Jenny, but I can’t.” What would she say to Jenny if they were alone and Stella wasn’t worried about feeling embarrassed?

Observe

- 1) Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast how Stella acts and feels in the library with Ms. Morales versus in Mrs. Bell’s classroom.
- 2) Use a T-chart to compare Stella’s feelings about becoming friends with Stanley before and after she falls out of her chair.
- 3) Use a glossary format to define the immigration-related terms *natural citizen*, *visa*, *alien*, *green card*, and *resident*. Write each word on the paper’s left side and its definition on the right.

Understand

- 1) Stella feels nervous to stand up and introduce herself to Stanley in front of the class. What could Stella do to work through her nervousness? How could her teacher and classmates help?
- 2) Stella wonders if she will feel “normal” as an American citizen. Why might it be a problem to use words like *alien* to describe immigrants and *natural citizen* to describe people born in a country? How might people in each category feel when described this way?
- 3) Stella only shares her drawings if “they are perfect.” Is this a good policy? Why or why not?

Reading: Chapter 6

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Why does Stella say that speech class is a nice “escape” from her classroom?
- 2) Stella’s dad doesn’t live with her. Where is he, and what does he do?
- 3) Why does Stella think speech class is annoying?
- 4) Why is Stella excited to get back to class for math games?
- 5) What happens in the last round of the math game?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella lives in Illinois, and her dad lives in Colorado. Research these two states and find ways they are similar and ways they are different.
- 2) Stella says the Spanish alphabet is different from the English alphabet. Research the Spanish alphabet and see if you can pronounce each letter correctly in Spanish.

Imagine

- 1) During the final round of math games, Stella knows the answer but cannot make herself say it. How would the story change if Stella said it and won the math game? Rewrite the end of the chapter with Stella winning the math game instead of Stanley.

- 2) Jessica refuses to move over during math games. Why does she do this? Is it on purpose or accidental? Pretend you are Jessica and are writing a journal entry from your point of view. What does Jessica think about Stella?

Observe

- 1) Using a T-chart, make a list of Stella's dad's positive and negative qualities.
- 2) At the end of speech class, Stella gets stickers, which makes her "feel a little better about Ms. Thompson." What are Stella's feelings about Ms. Thompson, and why does she feel that way?
- 3) When Stella can't answer the math game question, she says, "This is a new low." What does she mean? List the ways her embarrassment affects how she behaves.

Understand

- 1) Stella wants Ms. Thompson to "stop asking so many questions" about Stella's dad. Though Stella doesn't say it, she appears uncomfortable. What are some physical signs that someone is uncomfortable?
- 2) During the last round of the math game, the whole class cheers for Stanley. How would it feel if no classmates cheered for you? What might you tell yourself to stay strong in that situation?
- 3) During speech class, Stella thinks, "At least I sound better than" Janelle. When can it be good to compare yourself to others, and when might doing this cause problems?

Reading: Chapter 7

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Stella smells like her mom after a hug. What does Stella's mom smell like, and how does that scent make Stella feel?
- 2) Why does Stella keep hiding from Stanley?
- 3) In gym, the class plays kickball. Why do the girls pick Stella to go first?
- 4) How does Stella get the nickname "Stella stares"?
- 5) What animal does Stella pick for her project, and what does Jessica have to say about it?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Research Jacques Cousteau. How did he get interested in the water, what is a "Sea Flea," and how did he share what he learned with others?
- 2) Sherlock Holmes is not a real person. What is he, who created him, and what makes him unique?
- 3) Stella's class has to research and write a report on an animal. If you were in Stella's class, what animal would you pick? What information can you find about that animal?

Imagine

- 1) Stella states that she is "more mortified than usual" during class. Describe what it would feel like if you went through a day mortified.

- 2) At the end of the chapter, Stella states that the solution to her troubles is to have Jenny in her class. If Jenny and Stella were in the same class, how would the day have been different, starting with the time her mom dropped her off at school?
- 3) Stella asks herself, “Could this day get any worse?” However, several good things happened to her during this day. Rewrite the chapter, focusing on the positive things that happened instead of the negative things.

Observe

- 1) Jenny helps Stella think of and practice different strategies for dealing with Jessica. List the strategies Jenny suggests and how each one is supposed to help.
- 2) When Stella and Stanley enter the school at the same time, she goes into the office to hide. List the ways Stella has hidden from others throughout the book.
- 3) During the kickball game, Stella wishes she had “magic words” that would make the class stop teasing her. Use a T-chart to list at least three different things Stella could say to the class, Coach Smith, or Jessica, and the effect each statement would have.

Understand

- 1) When Stella misses the kickball, her classmates begin to tease her with “Stella stares!” How could you help someone who is being teased or bullied?
- 2) Stella and Jenny think of questions Stella can ask to learn about another person. What are some questions you might use to start a conversation with someone you don’t know well?

Reading: Chapter 8

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Why does Stella's family go to Fantastic Time Machine, even though it's not a special occasion?
- 2) What makes the Fantastic Time Machine more than just a regular restaurant?
- 3) Why do Stella and her family leave the Fantastic Time Machine?
- 4) Why doesn't Stella tell her mom that Jessica was being mean to her at the Fantastic Time Machine?
- 5) What does Stella think Jessica may be right about?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella's favorite personality at the Fantastic Time Machine is Einstein, and her mom's is Elvis. Pick one of these men and find out what made him famous.
- 2) A Shirley Temple is a drink named after someone famous. Research to find out who Shirley Temple was and why a drink was named after her.
- 3) Stella once pretended to camp like they did in *Little House in the Big Woods*, a novel by Laura Ingalls Wilder. How was life different for young people during the 1870s when Wilder was growing up?

Imagine

- 1) Design your own themed restaurant. Be sure to think about the food, decorations, and entertainment.
- 2) Invent a drink named after someone famous. Explain why you picked that person, what ingredients would be in the drink, and how it would be served.
- 3) After Jenny falls asleep, Stella stays awake trying to think up the perfect comeback to Jessica's teasing. What would you say to Jessica if you were Stella?

Observe

- 1) Stella describes the Fantastic Time Machine as "nothing from the outside, but... amazing on the inside." Using a T-chart, compare how those same words might describe Stella.
- 2) Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast how dancing at the Fantastic Time Machine is similar to and different from dancing at home.
- 3) Of Jenny's mom, Stella says, "Ms. Le is strong like my mom. She takes care of Jenny all by herself, too." Why does Stella think of these two women as strong?

Understand

- 1) Stella lies to her mom and Jenny about how she feels. Why do some people lie about how they feel? Is there ever a good reason to lie to someone?
- 2) Stella loves to dance and sing when she feels safe. What do you like to do when you are sure no one will make fun of you?

Reading: Chapter 9

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Why do Stella's relatives from Mexico City want to visit at Thanksgiving, an American holiday?
- 2) Where does Stella's family buy Latin American foods for the relatives' visit?
- 3) How does Stella feel about her *abuelo*, her mother's father?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella's relatives are coming from Mexico City, Mexico to Chicago, Illinois. Research how many miles separate these cities, how much it costs to fly between them, and how long the trip takes.
- 2) America is home to people from many different countries and heritages. Research to find out what specialty markets are near where you live, what kinds of food they offer, and from which countries those foods come.

Imagine

- 1) Stella doesn't feel like she fits in at school or in Mexico City. Imagine a place where Stella would fit in and explain why it is perfect for Stella.
- 2) Stella's family from Mexico City loves it when her mom makes American food. If you were going to make an American food for someone from a different country, what food would you make and why?

Observe

- 1) Use a T-chart to show how a Mexican quesadilla is different from a Salvadoran quesadilla.
- 2) List the different places Stella's *abuela* can cook dishes from, and explain what that reveals about Stella's ancestry.
- 3) When Stella hears people speaking Spanish in the market, she says it "feels like a warm blanket." What does she mean by this? List other things she could have named that would create the same feeling as a warm blanket.

Understand

- 1) Stella and her relatives from Mexico don't speak each other's languages well. How would it feel to have family with whom you couldn't talk and share? What are some ways you could solve this problem?
- 2) Stella keeps many worries to herself, which makes her miserable. When is it helpful to share your concerns with another person?

Reading: Chapter 10

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Stella hopes to be like her Tía Margarita when she grows up. Why?
- 2) Stella sets the table for Thanksgiving because she has an “artistic eye.” What does that mean?
- 3) Before they arrive, Stella thinks about hiding from her relatives like she hides at school. Why?
- 4) Stella notices how happy her mom looks when she’s singing with Stella’s *abuelo*. Why is she so happy?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella’s favorite song her *abuelo* plays is “*El Corrido de Chihuahua*.” Research *corridos*. Why are they important in Mexican culture?
- 2) Stella and Nick wait at home while their relatives go through customs. Research to learn about the customs process. What do you have to do when going through customs?

Imagine

- 1) Stella describes how much her family loves each other, how nice that is, and how much easier life is with relatives around. If the relatives enjoy each other so much, why might Stella’s family stay in America?
- 2) Stella wishes her family had never left Mexico. How would her life be different if they had stayed? Retell a scene from the book, using Mexico City as the setting instead of Chicago.

Observe

- 1) Stella wishes they had never left Mexico. Using a Venn diagram, map out what life would be like in Mexico, what it is like in America, and what would be the same no matter where Stella lived.
- 2) When Stella greets her *abeulo*, he says a lot with his body language. Using a T-chart, make a list of things Abuelo says and does when he first sees Stella on the left, and what they reveal or how they make Stella feel on the right side.
- 3) Stella's brother "beams" when he greets Juanis. In earlier chapters, Nick usually smirks to show he is happy. Think about the difference between a smirk and a beam, and explain why Nick might beam in this scene.

Understand

- 1) Stella states, "It's hard to want to talk when people aren't even listening to you," because Juanis keeps interrupting her. Pair up with a classmate. One partner should tell a story, but halfway through, the other partner should interrupt and guess the end. Try this several times. How easy is it to have a conversation in this way?
- 2) Stella feels happy that some things, like smiling and laughter, don't need to be translated, because she knows right away what they mean. List other gestures, sounds, or actions that don't need a translation—moments when you know what the person is thinking or feeling without words.

Reading: Chapter 11

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Why does Stella like going to work with her mom?
- 2) What does Stella do while her mom is working?
- 3) What does Stella's mom do for Stella before they leave work?
- 4) What does Stella do when she gets to school on Monday?
- 5) How does Stanley respond when Ms. Bell announces Stella's book?
- 6) Ms. Bell states that the students will have to give a presentation of their animal report. How does Stella feel about this?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) The Metra is a form of public transportation in Chicago. Research where it goes and when was it built. How is public transportation beneficial to a large city?
- 2) Stella's mom works for a radio station. Research a local radio station. Find out what kind of jobs people have there, what special words or radio lingo they use, and what happens behind the scenes.
- 3) Stella reads about anemonefish on the train. Research to discover what other information you can learn about anemonefish.

Imagine

- 1) Stella created a fictional book about pirates. If you were going to write your own book, what topic would you write about? If you have time, write and illustrate your own book. If you're proud of your work, ask your teacher if you can read it aloud to the class.
- 2) The train's slogan is "Metra: The Way to Really Fly!" Create a slogan for things you use or see every day.
- 3) Going to work with her mom is special for Stella, because she gets to spend time alone with someone she loves. If you could create a special outing with someone you care about a lot, who would it be, and how would you choose to spend your time together?

Observe

- 1) Create a list of the steps, in order, that Stella takes to make her book. Begin when she has the idea and end when she shares her story aloud with the class. Then add a word or phrase to describe how Stella feels as she works on each step.
- 2) Stella feels confident that she can do a good job on the presentation until she looks at Stanley and Jessica. Why does she change her mind? Support your thinking with examples from the text.

Understand

- 1) Stella pretends a lot during this chapter. Why might someone pretend, and what effect does pretending have? When is it helpful or good to pretend, and when might it cause problems?
- 2) When Stella goes to work with her mom, she gets to see a part of her mom's world that is usually private. What part of your world do you usually keep private, and who would you share it with if you could?

Reading: Chapters 12-13

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) What does Stella's family do on New Year's Day? Where?
- 2) Why didn't Stella's mom celebrate Three Kings Day with her children?
- 3) What Christmas presents did Stella's dad send for her and Nick?
- 4) Why does Stella eat with Lauren? How does she get to know her?
- 5) What "genius" idea does Nick have about Stella's presentation?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella's family goes to Wisconsin Dells on New Year's Day. Where is Wisconsin Dells, and why does it attract people?
- 2) Nick tells Stella about legal aliens. Research legal aliens who have contributed to America.
- 3) Nick teases Stella about Bigfoot. She's pretty sure he doesn't exist, though many people have told stories about him. Learn about Bigfoot, then reimagine the snowshoeing scene with Bigfoot as a real character.
- 4) In Mexico, Three Kings Day is more important than Christmas. What does this holiday honor, when is it, and how is it celebrated?

Imagine

- 1) Describe all the lives Stella touches, then identify the lives you touch by being in the world. Draw a web to show these connections.

- 2) Stella dislikes the socks and gloves her dad gives her for Christmas. Design a Christmas do-over for Stella and her dad. What could Stella's dad do that she would like better than socks and gloves?

Observe

- 1) Stella's dad says, "You know I'd do anything for you guys," but Stella and Nick don't seem to believe it. Using a T-chart, list the things Stella's dad has done, and compare it to all of the things Stella and Nick wish he had done or would do. How is her dad doing at meeting their needs?
- 2) Stella stays quiet when Jessica teases her at indoor recess, but she reacts when Bridget says, "Maybe she's stupid." Why does she stand up for herself at this point?
- 3) Nick and Stella have a very special relationship. Sometimes Nick acts like a pest, and other times, he is sweet. Using a T-chart, find examples of both throughout the book. How does Nick treat Stella most of the time?
- 4) Nick gives Stella several examples of how being an alien is a positive thing. List his reasons, then rank them in order from the most effective argument to the least effective argument.

Understand

- 1) Stella's mom doesn't celebrate Three Kings Day in America because she wants Stella and Nick to fit in. Why might people think that hiding part of who they are will help them fit in? Does it work?
- 2) Stella states that being in the gym with people crowded together feels lonelier than being out at recess alone. Have you ever felt lonely even when there were people around you? Why might a big crowd make you feel even more lonely?

Reading: Chapters 14-15

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Why does Anna sit with Stella and Jenny at lunch?
- 2) Why is Stanley embarrassed at the Valentine's Day party, and how can Stella tell he feels this way?
- 3) What is Stella's real name, and what does her mom say it means?
- 4) How does Pancho react to Stella's spelling bee poster?
- 5) After Stella spells her first word correctly, she grows excited for the next round. Why does she like the spelling bee so much?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella is most afraid of one sea creature: the great white shark. Research this fish, then use what you learn to create an informational essay, book, presentation, or other item.
- 2) The Scripps National Spelling Bee takes place every year, with students under the age of fifteen participating for the championship. These talented students have lots of strategies for improving their spelling. Research the event, the people behind it, and the tools the contestants use to help them be successful.

Imagine

- 1) Pretend you are making Valentine's Day cards for the students at Stella's school. Instead of writing about Valentine's Day, write a line or two of advice. What would you write for Stanley, Jessica, Jenny, Stella, Lauren, and Anna?

- 2) Stella's teacher asks her to make a poster for the third grade spelling bee. How would you advertise a spelling bee so that people will notice it, know some of the important information about it, and want to attend it?

Observe

- 1) A turning point is an important moment when something starts to change. What was the turning point when Stella started to feel brave? Back up your answer with examples from the book.
- 2) Driving home from the Valentine's Day party, Stella's mom can tell that Stella is upset. Where else in the book has Stella's mom been able to tell that Stella is upset about something?
- 3) Stella begins to realize that hiding from problems is not as effective as facing them. How has she changed from the beginning of the book to now?
- 4) When Stella walks up to the stage, her "legs feel wobbly like *flan*." This is a simile, because it compares two things using *like* or *as*. Look up *flan*, then think about American foods that would be just as "wobbly." Write three new similes with the sentence starter, "Stella's legs felt wobbly like _____."

Understand

- 1) While Stella eats lunch with Jenny and Lauren, Jessica comes over and tries to bully her. Stella chooses to ignore her. When is it best to ignore someone, and when is it a good idea to do something more active?
- 2) Stella's mom holds her hand, which makes Stella feel safe. What other things can people say or do to comfort one another during a difficult time?

Reading: Chapters 16-17

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How does Stella's family celebrate her performance at the third grade spelling bee?
- 2) Stella tells Pancho a secret after her visit to the library. What does she tell him?
- 3) Why is Stella's dad in town?
- 4) What does Stella's dad teach her on their visit?
- 5) When Stella and Nick come home, what is their mom doing?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella explains that a starfish can regrow a lost arm. This is called regeneration. What other animals can regenerate, and how do they do it?
- 2) Stella's mom tells her that Frida Kahlo has the strength of a starfish. Research to find out more about this artist.
- 3) Stella loves going to the library. With all of its books, speakers, and contests, it's a treat for her to go there. Learn more about your community library. What programs does it offer, and how can you take advantage of its services?

Imagine

- 1) Stella thinks her dad isn't all bad, he just doesn't know any better. Write Stella's dad a friendly letter, giving him advice about how to be a better dad to Stella and Nick.
- 2) Stella won third place for illustrating a scene from her favorite book. If you were to illustrate your favorite scene from a book, which scene would you pick, and what details would make it easy or hard to illustrate? After thinking about these questions, try illustrating the scene.

Observe

- 1) Stella and her father have similar childhoods. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast their childhoods. Does one of them appear to have more positive things going for them, or are they equal?
- 2) Stella believes she is a starfish. Describe as many examples as you can of times when Stella has regenerated after losing a part of herself.
- 3) What details from the book show how Stella connects with the author at the library?

Understand

- 1) Stella mentions *The Wizard of Oz*, the tale of a girl who feels like she doesn't belong and runs away from home. In the end, she finds out that home is the one place she does belong. Where do you belong? Where do you feel safe and loved? If you haven't found that spot yet, what place would you create for yourself if you could?
- 2) Frida Kahlo, the author at the library, and Stella are all starfish. Who in your life is a starfish, and what makes them that way?

Reading: Chapter 18

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Stella gives her brother a card with a sea dragon on it. Why did she choose the sea dragon?
- 2) What are the four presents Stella gets for her birthday?
- 3) Stella decides that Stanley may not always be the best at everything after all. What makes her believe this?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Some people believe that when you blow out the candles on your birthday cake in one breath, your wish will come true. Research to find other superstitions or beliefs about wish making.
- 2) Stella says Nick is like a sea dragon. Research the sea dragon. What does it look like? Where does it live?

Imagine

- 1) At dinner, Stella gets a fortune cookie. Pretend that you are writing the fortunes for the cookies. What would be a good fortune for Stella? Nick? Their mom?
- 2) On Stella's birthday, her mom tells her she gets to make the rules. If you were going to create a list of rules for the day, what would they be?
- 3) Pretend you are Stella and compose a letter to Nick, telling him how you feel about him deep in your heart.

Observe

- 1) As Stella learns how to ride a bike, she goes through different stages of comfort with the process. Create a timeline about her feelings during this new experience, from beginning to end.
- 2) Stella has grown a lot over the course of the book. Compare Stella from the beginning of the book to Stella now, on her ninth birthday. How would she have responded differently to learning to ride a bike if she got it at the beginning of the book instead of now?
- 3) Think about the gifts Stella's mother gives her for her birthday and the presents her father gave her at Christmas and on his visit. Compare and contrast Stella's mom and dad using a Venn diagram. How are they similar and how are they different?

Understand

- 1) Stella says that her dad was supposed to teach her how to ride a bike, but Nick did instead. Has there ever been a time when someone has stepped in to help you even though the job was meant for someone else?
- 2) For Stella's birthday, she gives Nick a present and card for being such a good brother. Some people choose to celebrate others on their birthday by asking for donations instead of presents or doing other generous things. Why might someone do this? If you were going to celebrate someone or something else on your birthday, who or what would it be?
- 3) Stella's mom says that "Everyone falls at some point." What does she mean by this, and when have you fallen in your own life? Were you able to get back up?

Reading: Chapter 19

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) Stella hopes to accomplish two things on her trip to Shedd Aquarium. What are they?
- 2) Who does Stella see at the aquarium, and how does she respond?
- 3) When Stella's mom asks what's wrong, how does she know that her mom is serious?
- 4) When do Stanley and Stella finally talk?
- 5) Why did Stanley think Stella was hiding from him?
- 6) What idea does Stella get for her presentation, and who suggests it?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) How do places like Shedd Aquarium care for the creatures they have on exhibit? What steps do they take to ensure the creatures' health and safety?
- 2) Stella states that the sea turtles look like they're doing tai chi. What is tai chi? Where did it begin, how is it done, and why are people doing it in parks where Stella lives?

Imagine

- 1) Stella comes up with lots of creative descriptions of the different sea creatures she sees: the sea turtles look like they're doing tai chi and the sea otters look like Olympic gymnasts. Pick at least three other animals, not necessarily in the sea, and describe them in a unique way.

- 2) How would Stella's visit to the aquarium have been different had Stanley not been there on the same day?

Observe

- 1) Stanley introduces Stella to his father by sharing her strengths as he sees them. Compare Stanley's description of Stella to Stella's descriptions of Stanley. How do they see each other versus how they see themselves?
- 2) Stella and Stanley have a lot in common. List how they are similar, then review your list. Do you think Stella would have acted differently toward Stanley if she had known how much they had in common?
- 3) Stella loves the book she got, but the day's end was "probably the best present of all." What does she mean by this, and how will her time at school change because of this "present"?
- 4) When Stella talks to Stanley in the gift shop, she begins to realize that it's easy, just like talking to Jenny, Anna, or Nick. How is this similar to what she learned from the spelling bee and riding a bike?
- 5) Stella knows that her mom can tell she's lying just by looking at her. Which of Stella's behaviors might make her mom think Stella is lying?

Understand

- 1) Stella receives a lot of advice over the course of the book. What is some of the best advice you ever received, and how did it help you?
- 2) Stella's best present on her birthday wasn't something you could buy in a store. What is the best non-store present you have ever received, or what non-store present would you like to receive and why?

Reading: Chapter 20-Author's Note

Ask

Use evidence or quotations from the text to answer the following questions.

- 1) How does Stella feel on the morning of her presentation?
- 2) What news does Ms. Thompson have for Stella and her mom?
- 3) How can Stella tell her presentation is going well?
- 4) Stella's summer officially begins when her family does what?
- 5) Stella comes home and plays with Stanley and Jenny. What do they do together?

Explore

Use the resources your teacher provides to investigate the following items.

- 1) Stella and her family pretend to be spies on the way to get ice cream. Research to learn more about spies.
- 2) During his presentation, Stanley hands out a fact sheet on monkeys. Research monkeys to discover the information Stanley might have shared with his classmates.

Imagine

- 1) Stella's mom asks what flavor of ice cream she looks like. Think about the characters in the book, and decide what flavor of ice cream each one would resemble.
- 2) If it is true that "you are stronger than you realize" and that you can accomplish anything you put your mind to, what would you try, if you knew it was impossible for you to fail?

Observe

- 1) In the Author's Note section, the author shares the things that she has in common with her character, Stella. Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between them.
- 2) Stella feels a bit like a sea otter now, because she has people to protect her: Nick, Jenny, her mom, and her family in Mexico. However, these people were all in her life at the beginning of the book. If the people who protect her haven't changed, why does Stella feel different? Look through the book for evidence to support your answer.
- 3) Stella changes dramatically from the beginning of the book to the end. List the ways she has changed, then decide if these changes are mostly positive or mostly negative.

Understand

- 1) Angela Dominguez, the author of *Stella Díaz Has Something to Say*, said that it was hard for her to be different and misunderstood at times. When have you felt out of place, like you didn't fit in, or that people didn't understand you?
- 2) Stella has lots of people who protect her now. Think about your own life. Who would be in your sea otter family? Who protects you?
- 3) If you were going to change one thing in your life after reading this book, what would it be and why?
- 4) Angela Dominguez says she wrote this book to help people find the starfish within them. How are you like a starfish?

Dear Family Member,

Your child has been assigned a Fluency Performance Passage in conjunction with the texts we are studying in class. This passage will be introduced in class, and students will spend several lessons practicing reading this passage aloud. On the fifth day, students will perform a reading of this passage. We follow this routine because repeated readings of text help build reading fluency, which includes automatic word recognition, expression, accuracy, and speed. Additionally, over one hundred studies have shown that deep reading, in which students spend time reading and rereading a single text, has a dramatic impact on reading comprehension. In fact, it is such an important impact that it helps students better comprehend the passage they have practiced as well as passages they will read in the future.

As part of our in-class practice, students study and discuss this passage. I will demonstrate different ways of reading it aloud, and students will analyze what makes a good reading. They will also practice reading this passage aloud in various ways.

You can assist your child by asking him or her to read the passage aloud at home. Even if your child remembers some or all of the words, remind him or her to read the passage rather than recite it from memory. Children may practice by reading to family members, caregivers, or even the family pet. Please log each reading your child completes in the Happy Hearers Log, which accompanies this letter.

Thank you for your help!

Happy Hearers Log

An important way to prepare for your Fluency Passage Performance is to practice reading the passage to others. They may be your parents, your siblings, another family member or friend, or even the family pet. Whoever they are, they're sure to be a Happy Hearer when they get to listen to you read your passage!

Each time you practice reading your Fluency Passage to a listener at home, record it in the Happy Hearers Log.

Day of the reading	Name of the Happy Hearer	Notes

Core Knowledge Language Arts Amplify.

Senior Vice President and General Manager, ELA

Alexandra Clarke

Vice President, Elementary Literacy Instruction

Susan Lambert

Editorial

Elizabeth Wade, PhD, Managing Curriculum Developer

Patricia Erno, Managing Curriculum Developer

Kristen Kirchner, Content Writer

Amber McWilliams, Product Manager

Christina Cox, Copy Editor

Project Management

Jennifer Skelley, Director, K-8 ELA Print Production and Operations

Leslie Johnson, Associate Director

Zara Chaudhury, Associate Project Manager

Design and Production

Erin O'Donnell, Art Director

Contributors

Bill Cheng

Ken Harney

Molly Hensley

David Herubin

Ian Horst

Sara Hunt

James Mendez-Hodes

Christopher Miller

Tory Novikova

Sheri Pineault

Diana Projansky

Todd Rawson

Julia Sverchuk

Elizabeth Thiers

Jeanne Thornton

Amanda Tolentino