



***Last Stop
on Market Street***
by Matt de la Peña

Recommended Ages:
5-11

Summary: Every Sunday, CJ and his grandma ride a bus across town to volunteer at a soup kitchen. Over the course of their journey, Nana teaches her grandson to appreciate not only what he has but also the world around him.

Discussion Questions: Before reading, open up the book and show the entire cover. Talk about the people on the bus. Make predictions about the characters (age, where they are going, what job they have, etc.). Show the students the main character and his grandma. Predict where they are going and what the title of the book might mean.

1. Discuss the simile found in the book, “The outside air smelled like freedom, but also smelled like rain.” Talk about figurative language and discuss other examples they have heard or read.
2. What is transportation? How do people use the city bus to get around? If they have ever been on a city bus, what was it like?
3. CJ is full of questions throughout the story. How does his grandmother respond? What is Nana’s attitude toward life? What is she trying to teach CJ?
4. Discuss each character on the bus. The illustrator made sure each one had two distinctive details about them. What are they?
5. How is your neighborhood like CJ’s? How is living in a big city different than living in a small town or the country?
6. What are some ways readers could “give back” like CJ?

Activities:

- Copy the shapes on the endpapers of the book. Cut the shapes out. Have the readers look carefully at the pictures on each page and raise their hand when they spot the shape they are holding.
- Look at the illustrations. Christian Robinson uses a combination of acrylic paint and collage in his work. Explain that collage is an art process in which an artist attached pieces of different materials (paper, cloth, wood, etc.) to a flat surface. Use a variety of materials (construction paper, newspaper, tissue paper, wallpaper, etc.) to create a collage.

Book Club for Kids

- Write down the many “active” verbs that help to build a picture of what is happening in the book. Take turns acting out the verbs while others try to guess which verb they are trying to do.
- CJ says Nana finds beauty where he never thought to look. List beautiful things and draw pictures of them.

Adapted from Milwaukee Public Library.



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