

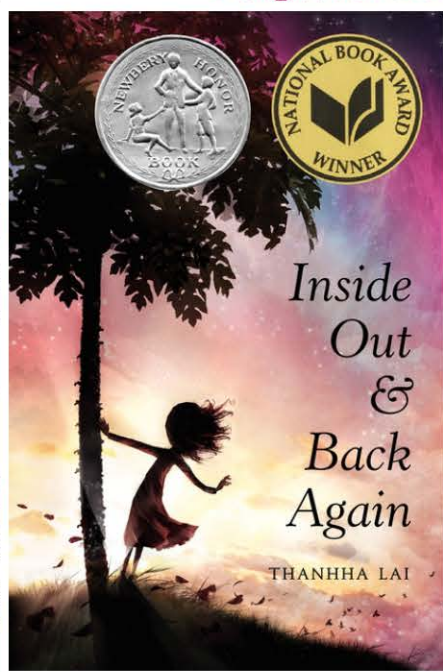
# Reading <sup>with</sup> Relevance

Building INDEPENDENT READERS and THINKERS

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

## *Inside Out & Back Again*

A novel by Thanhha Lai



Recommended for:  
Grade Levels  
4th-5th

# A tool to inspire change

This literacy curriculum is constructed around a content-rich novel that builds students' literacy skills and supports their character development and self-confidence. Students are motivated to read because they relate to the strong, diverse, and resilient characters featured in our selected novels and because each session gives them the opportunity to connect what they've read to their own lives.

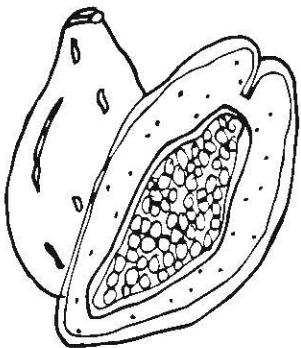
Developed, field-tested, and refined in our own tutoring and mentoring programs, this Common Core Standards curriculum has inspired persistently low-performing students to engage with literature, make meaning in their lives, and improve their English language arts skills. Now, *Reading with Relevance* is available to help you dig deep into the social, emotional, and academic needs of your students, whether in your classroom, after-school program, or youth development agency!

## This teacher's guide includes:

- A facilitator's guide with tips and resources for implementing the curriculum.
- A map of Common Core Standards addressed through this program.
- Twelve individual lesson plans, including vocabulary, discussion questions, journal prompts, extension activities, and all handouts.
- Two assessments to monitor student progress throughout the program.
- Regular checkpoints to help teachers assess their students' progress on ELA standards.
- A culminating essay-writing unit.
- An appendix with additional teaching resources and activities to continue exploring this novel.

## Why *Inside Out & Back Again*

*Inside Out & Back Again* is the story of Ha, a ten-year old girl who leaves war-torn Vietnam and immigrates to the United States. We chose this novel for its thoughtful exploration of some important social and emotional themes: culture, war, bravery, friendship, bullying, loss, and resilience. Students will find themselves relating to and being inspired by Ha's experiences; this curriculum will help students build connections between Ha's story and their own.





# Session 7

pages 136-157

## Vocabulary

**agreeable** (pg. 138): adj., ready to agree

**glides** (pg. 139): v., moves smoothly over

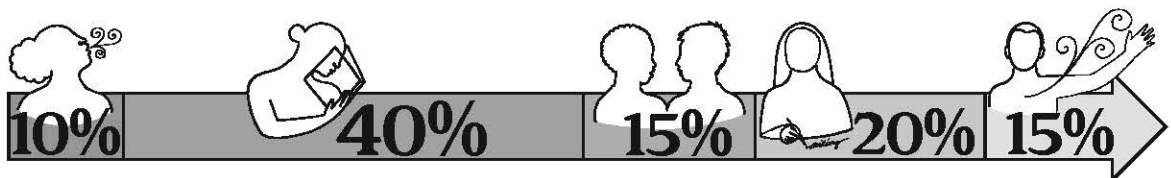
**lacquer** (pg. 142): n., a protective coating that goes over an object

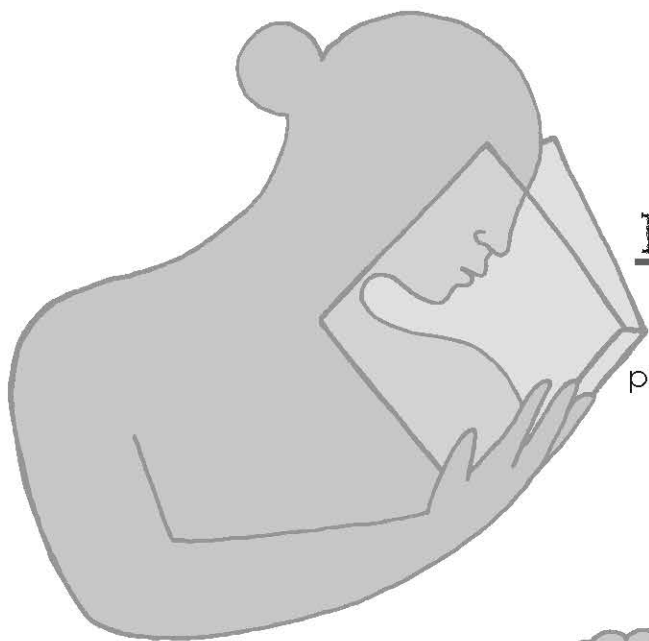
## Today's Themes

Today's main themes are **identity** and **bullying**. For the first time in her life, Ha is surrounded at school by people who look completely different from her and speak a different language. She notices in the cafeteria that the white kids all sit together and the black kids all sit together, and there doesn't seem to be room in the cafeteria for her. This begins Ha's journey of trying to figure out where she fits in her new American home. Ask your students to reflect on how it might feel to be left out or not belong somewhere. If any of your students are immigrants, this might be a good chance to give them the opportunity to talk about their experiences. We're also introduced to Pink Boy, Ha's bully, in this section. Ha wants to respond to Pink Boy's teasing by learning how to fight. You can explore with your students some of the different ways Ha might handle the situation.

## Session 6 Recap

Ha and her family go with the cowboy to Alabama. At first, they live in his house with his wife, who doesn't seem to be happy about taking in refugees. Ha starts to learn English and figures out that it's a very difficult language. She's also starting to try new American customs and foods, like fried chicken. Soon the cowboy finds Ha's family a house where they can stay. Ha struggles to adjust to her new surroundings but says she's trying.





## During Reading

**diacritical mark** (pg. 140): an accent that shows how a letter should be pronounced



## Discussion Questions

- Ha says in the beginning of the section that everyone must leave the house during the day. What is everyone in the family doing?
- How do you think Ha felt when she first met Miss Scott?
- How does Ha respond to Pink Boy's teasing? What does she want to do?
- What are some ways you think Ha can handle being bullied? What would you do in her situation?
- What does Brother Vu agree to do to help Ha?
- Why does Ha feel dumb in Miss Scott's class? How do you think you would feel in that situation?

# Journal Prompt

## IDENTITY

- Ha is the only one who looks like her at school, and she feels out of place.

### Have you ever felt like you didn't fit in?

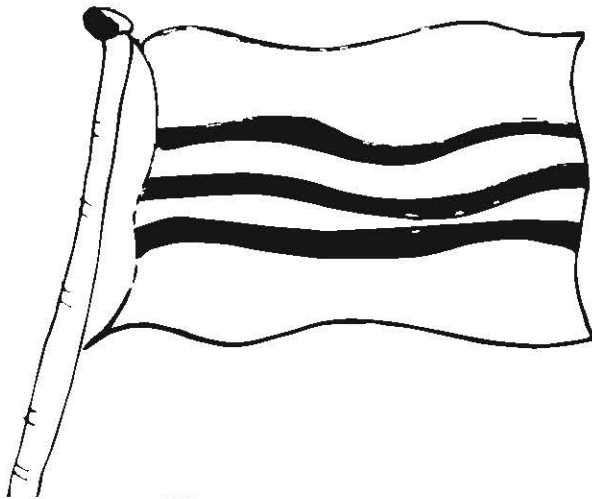
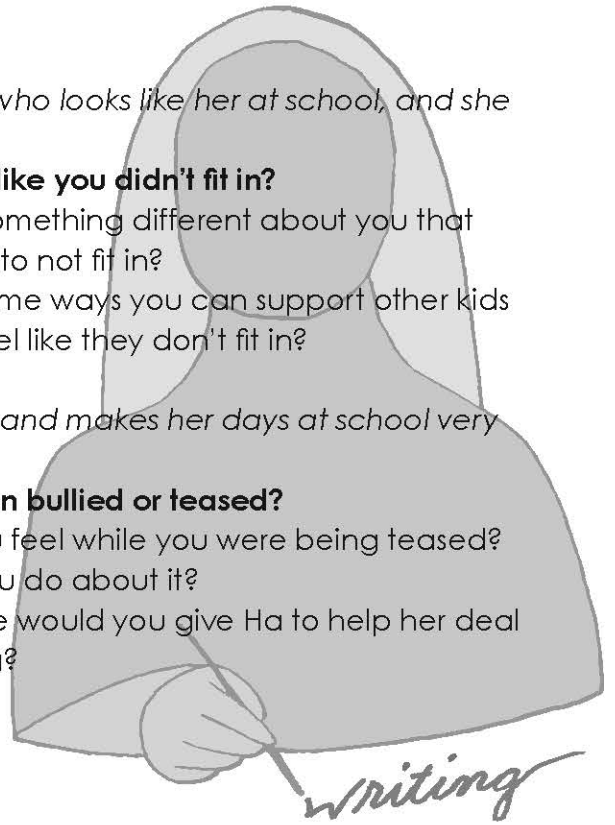
- » Was there something different about you that caused you to not fit in?
- » What are some ways you can support other kids who may feel like they don't fit in?

## BULLYING

- Pink Boy teases Ha and makes her days at school very difficult.

### Have you ever been bullied or teased?

- » How did you feel while you were being teased?
- » What did you do about it?
- » What advice would you give Ha to help her deal with bullying?



## Extension Activity

In the book, Ha talks about being teased at school. Remind students that school should be a place where people feel safe and not where they're afraid to be picked on or abused! Have students work in groups or individually to answer the questions on the "Safe Community Campaign" handout. Next, it is the job of each team/individual to design a poster (on a separate piece of paper) that advertises the importance of a safe school community. This poster should encourage students to treat each other with kindness and respect and to build a positive school culture.

### Materials:

- » Safe Community Campaign Handout
- » Blank pieces of paper
- » Colored pencils, crayons, or markers

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## DESCRIBE A SAFE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

How would you describe a "Safe School Community?" What does this look and feel like?

## IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY

Why is it important to feel safe when you are at school?



## DOING YOUR PART

What can students do to promote a safe school environment? What can teachers and administrators do?

- A **message** to encourage Safe Communities/Anti-Bullying
- **Images** to catch the viewers' attention
- **Positive Language**

In the book, Ha talks about being teased at school. School should be a place where people feel safe and not where they're afraid to be picked on or abused! **First**, respond to the questions above about safe school communities. **Next**, using a blank piece of paper, design a poster for the "Safe Community Campaign." The goal of the campaign is to create images and messages that contribute to a positive school culture.

## Safe Community Campaign

# Appendix

## *Additional Activities*

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# About Us

## MOVING FORWARD<sup>™</sup>

### I N S T I T U T E

#### Get to Know MFI

**Moving Forward Institute** is a nonprofit publisher of social justice educational materials. The organization was created by the founders and staff of Moving Forward Education, a multi-generational tutoring and mentoring organization aimed at fostering academic and emotional success for underserved students in California. Since our founding in 2003, MFE has provided tutoring and mentoring services to thousands of students and has trained hundreds of young adults to enter careers in the educational field. This reading curriculum was developed by our leadership team and its advisory group, including credentialed teachers and college professors. This program has been successfully facilitated throughout California by achieving powerful and measurable results for students and schools. To learn more about our organization, or our research and data, please contact us today.

#### Our Purpose

*At Moving Forward Institute, we know that students can be successful learners when their social and emotional needs are met.*

*We empower educators to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of their students by using culturally-relevant and gender-responsive reading curricula.*

#### Training and Professional Development Services

*While lesson plans are designed to be easily facilitated by classroom teachers and after-school staff alike, our in-person training and professional development services will ensure fully effective implementation of the literacy curricula.*

*Additionally, we offer technical support, classroom observation, and program evaluation services to help your program be successful. Contact us for more information about these services!*

#### Contact Us

*Contact us today to learn more about how the Moving Forward Institute can support your students and staff!*

**Online:** [www.movingforwardinstitute.org](http://www.movingforwardinstitute.org)  
**By Email:** [info@movingforwardinstitute.org](mailto:info@movingforwardinstitute.org)  
**By Phone:** 510-658-4475  
**By Mail:** 1425 Park Ave  
Emeryville, CA 94608

#### If your students liked *Inside Out & Back Again* . . .

*...they might love some of our other book selections! We suggest that you check out *Riding Freedom*, *Any Small Goodness*, or *One Crazy Summer*. Please visit our website today to browse our full selection of socially and emotionally rich novel-based curricula!*