Review of *Watercress* Written by Andrea Wang & Illustrated by Jason Chin

**Adult/Educator Reviewer:** Dr. Yang Wang  
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**Child/Student Reviewer:** CoCo Li, Grade 2

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Adult Review: Dr. Yang Wang

A family of a young girl, her big brother, father, and mother in Ohio makes a new memory of picking watercress from aside of the road and cooking it in a cold salad. The little girl hesitates to pick up watercress with her family and to eat it on her plate until her mother shares that her family thrived through the great famine in China and even lost a beloved family member. Then the girl starts appreciating watercress on the dinner table and understanding her mother’s memories of home.

I knew the author Andrea Wang from her previously published picturebooks of The Nian Monster and Magic Ramen. She often includes her own experiences and culture as a Chinese American in her books. As a Chinese immigrant who raises a Chinese American girl, I always look for authentic literature books featuring Chinese American children’s life to read with my daughter. These books help Chinese American children connect with their heritage and build their cultural identities. They also help other children cultivate intercultural awareness. Watercress is an autobiographical story and Andrea provides an educator’s guide on her website https://andreaywang.com/books/picture-books/watercress/

The book of Watercress won multiple awards such as Caldecott Medal Winner, Newbery Honor Award, Asian/Pacific Islander Award for Literature and so on.

Not all Chinese American children share the same family backgrounds and histories. The Chinese immigrants who did not experience the great famine may not relate closely to the story. Watercress, as a vegetable, is more popular vegetable in the South of China; therefore, children and families from other areas of China may not have it on their dining table. The second and third generation of Chinese American may respond differently to the book.

Student Review: CoCo Li

Watercress is by Andrew Wang and Jason Chin. In the book, a girl helps her family gather watercress and that night on the table there is all the watercress. The girl does not want to eat it, so her mom shows her a photo and shares a story. Then the girl tried the watercress. She and her family eat together and make a new memory of watercress. The girl learns to be thankful of the food they have. I would recommend this book to people who don’t respect the food they have. The book was important because it tells an important lesson to respect the food and to eat what you have. I love that it tells a lesson.