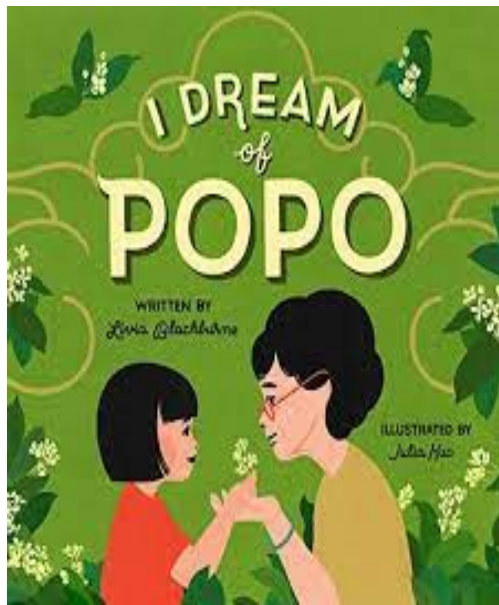


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Review of *I Dream of Popo*
Written by Livia Blackburne
Illustrated by Julia Kuo

Adult/Educator Reviewer: Yang Wang, University of South Carolina
Student Reviewers: CoCo Li 李师杨, 3rd Grade



Blackburne, L., & Kuo, J. (2021). *I Dream of Popo*. Amsterdam University Press

ISBN: 9781250249319

Adult Review:

This book is a fictional story about a Taiwanese girl's relationship with her Popo (grandma) before and after the girl's family moved to the U.S. The girl experienced cultural shock when they just moved to San Diego, as she struggled with the new food, English language, and school. She talked to her Popo via a video conferencing app and shared her new life in America. When she finally had a chance to visit her Popo in Taiwan, she experienced another cultural shock as she could not speak much Chinese language to her Popo; however, she still loved Popo and her dumplings. After the girl returned to America, she continued to video chat with her Popo even when her Popo was really sick. The girl dreamed of hugging her Popo and her Popo talking in English to her.

My family relates to this story, as my daughter, who was born in the U.S. talks to her grandma (my mother) living in Mainland China through a video conferencing app almost every day. My family visited our relatives in Mainland China three times after my daughter was born. The main character's experience of visiting Taiwan and her close relationship with her Popo is relatable to my daughter.

The author and the illustrators are both Taiwanese Americans and they embedded their real-life experiences in this book. The readers can visit the [author's webpage](#) and the [illustrator's site](#) to learn more about how they created this book, their interviews, activity kits, and other resources. This book won the 2022 American Library Association Notable Children's Books.

This book provides a voice for the marginalized group of first-generation and second-generation immigrants, especially Asian. It will foster discussion among students about their connection with their homelands, adjustment to new life in a new place, and their transgenerational relationships. This book would appeal to many first-generation immigrants, second-generation Chinese Americans, and other

immigrants who share similar experiences of moving to America and connecting to their relatives in their homelands. The bilingual glossary in the illustration and at the end would encourage the reader to learn Chinese as a heritage language or an additional language.

However, not all Chinese American children or immigrant children share the same experiences and family relationships so they may respond differently to the book. Popo is used for grandma from the mother's side in Taiwan and some southern areas in Mainland China. Waipo and Laolao are widely used in Mainland China and Nainai is used for grandma from the father's side. Additionally, complex Chinese is used in this book and in Taiwan, while simplified Chinese is used in Mainland China. This book is a good read featuring the transgenerational and transnational relationship.

Student Review:

I Dream of Popo is written by Livia Blackburne and illustrated by Julia Kuo. It is about a girl living with her family (including Popo) in Taiwan. But then the girl and her parents move to San Diego, in the U.S., far away from Taiwan. It feels like a new world. She meets new friends there, learns new words in English, and calls her Popo every week. When she flies back to Taiwan, her Popo makes her favorite food, dumplings! Soon Popo packs some dumplings for the girl, and she goes back to her American home. The girl dreams about Popo, and never forgets about her. My favorite part is the video chat pictures because I video chat with my grandma almost every day. I would recommend this book to people who speak Mandarin so they would understand the language that she and her Popo use to communicate with each other. For those who do not know Mandarin, there is a glossary at the end. I would also recommend this book to children who live far apart from their grandparents and still keep in touch with them.

Also, see illustration below:

Food:



Video chat:



李杨
by Loco
Li