



ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM  
& EDUCATION CENTER

## *The Name Jar*

By: Yangsook Choi

For grades 3-4

### **Overview:**

Students can hear the story [The Name Jar](#) by Yangsook Choi read aloud on YouTube (approximately 16 minutes), and complete the following activities to further investigate the ideas of identity, culture, and community.

### **Book Synopsis:**

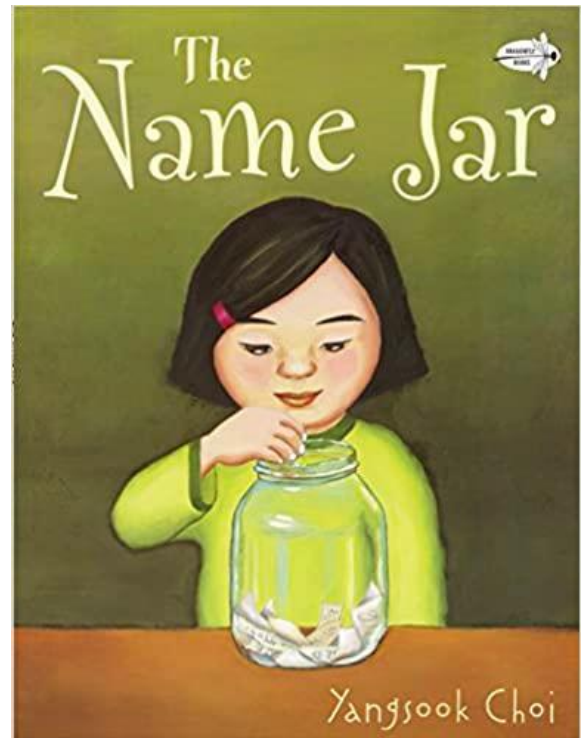
Having just arrived from Korea with her family, Unhei is anxious about making friends at her new school. She is especially nervous about her name, because no one in her class is able to pronounce it. So, she decides to pick a new name. With the help of her classmates, everyone's name goes into a jar. What will Unhei choose? Joey, one of her classmates, decides to steal the name jar, in hopes of convincing Unhei to keep her real name. Through Unhei's story, students can learn that it is important to accept everyone and that we should all be proud of our culture and identity as that makes us special.

## **Classroom Activities**

### **Questions for Discussion:**

These questions can either be used as a group discussion if you are meeting with your class synchronously or you can choose one or more questions for students to answer in a short-written or video response if you are meeting non-synchronously.

1. How do you think Unhei felt when the other kids made fun of her name?
2. Do you think Unhei should keep her name? Why or why not?
3. How do you think Unhei felt when Joey sought to befriend her?
4. Why did Joey steal the name jar?
5. What did you learn from hearing Unhei's story?



### **What is the story behind YOUR name?**

Have students ask their family what their name means. Maybe they were named after a family member or a historical icon, or their name means something special like Unhei's. Maybe it was just their parent's favorite name!

1. Whatever their story is, have students write a brief description of what their name means. If students are unable to ask their family, have students create a meaning for their name themselves and record what they imagine their name means.
2. After writing a brief description of what their names mean, have students write a brief response to why their name is special and what it means to them.
3. Lastly, students can draw a picture using any materials that they have at home to illustrate the significance of their name, their family, who they were named after, etc.
4. To share their pictures and answers, students can use a website like [Padlet](#) to upload a picture of their artwork and type in their written responses.

### **Picture Notes:**

1. Students will summarize the main elements of the story in picture form. As an independent homework assignment, ask students to illustrate and draw one or two main ideas of the story (i.e., friendship, identity, family, community, role models, language). They cannot use ANY words in their drawings, only pictures.
2. Students can post their finished picture notes on a website like [Padlet](#), or any other site you use with your e-classroom. Seeing each other's picture notes will serve as a review for all of the other students by seeing the same story illustrated through multiple perspectives.