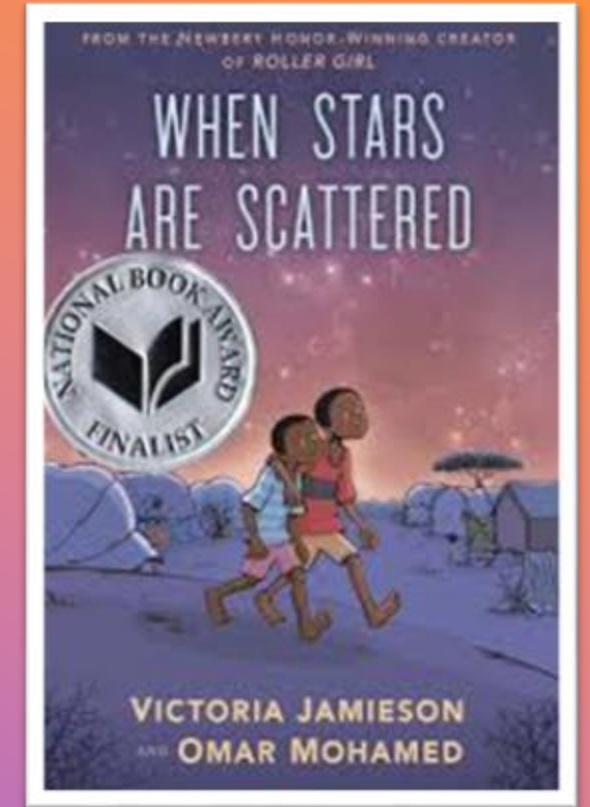


COMMUNITY MATTERS FAMILY BOOK CLUB

Johnson County Library: February 2021



EVEN IF I AM
UNCOMFORTABLE,
I AM STILL SAFE.

WE NEED TO BE BRAVE TO LEAN INTO TOUGH CONVERSATIONS.

Be Gentle with Others & Yourself

we may not always find the right words our first try; what matters is that we are trying.

Accept Feedback with Gratitude

we are here to learn and grow; even good intent can have harmful impact; be open to learning how to do better

Take Turns; Include All

Include All - listen first; be aware everyone is given the chance to participate, especially the slower to speak

Expect Discomfort

these are hard topics and considering them can feel bad; that is okay and prods growth

Assume Good Intent

seek to understand before reacting.

Respect Vulnerability

these are personal topics and people will be sharing difficult things; be sensitive to it

COMMUNITY MATTERS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

YAMILE SAIED MÉNDEZ

Where Are You From?

JAIME KIM

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING
ILLUSTRATOR OF *TAKE HEART, MY CHILD*

JOHNSON COUNTY LIBRARY
SHAWNEE MISSION KS



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Where are you from?
they ask.



Is your mom from here?



Is your dad from there?
they ask.



I'm from here, from today,
same as everyone else, I say.




No, where are you
really from? they insist.

I ask Abuelo because he knows everything.

and like me, he looks like he doesn't belong.






Where am I from?

Abuelo thinks.
His eyes squint, like he's looking
inside his heart for an answer.




You come from the Pampas,

the open, free land, he says.



You're from the gaucho,
brave and strong.

From the brown river that cleanses and feeds the land
that gives us the grain for our bread, the milk from the cows.

A watercolor illustration of a mountain range. The mountains are painted in shades of green and yellow, with white clouds filling the valleys. A large condor is flying across the sky, carrying a small child on its back. The child is wearing a green jacket and glasses. The scene is set against a background of soft, textured clouds.

You're from mountains so high
they tickle Señor Cielo's belly.

where the condor roosts his family
and the jaguar prowls the night.

But you're also from the warm, blue oceans
the copper warriors tried to tame

and the elegant palm trees
stretch their fingers to caress.

You're from hurricanes and dark storms,


and a tiny singing frog that calls the island people
home when the sun goes to sleep.



From this land where our ancestors built a home for all,

even when they were in chains because of the color of their skin.

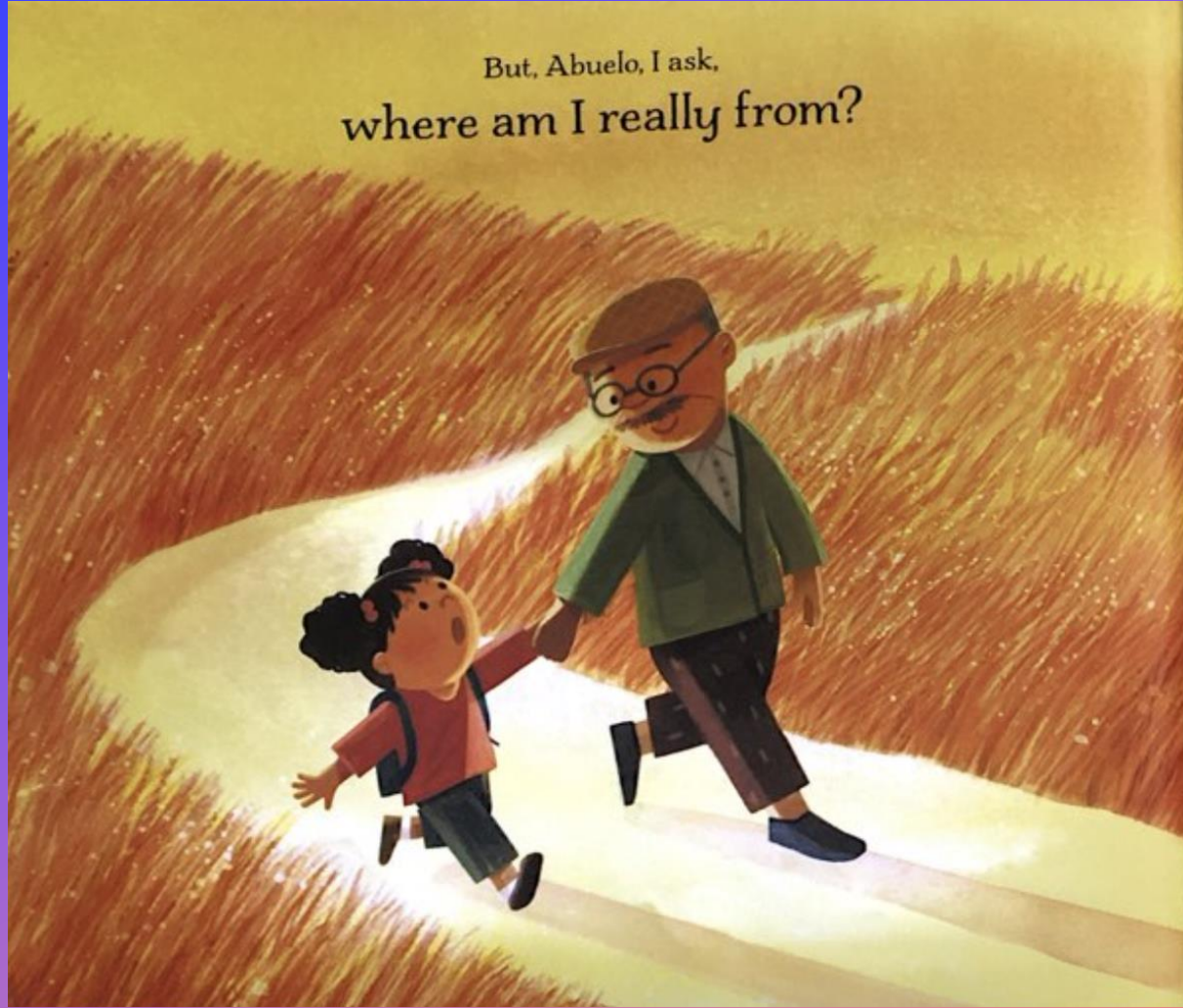




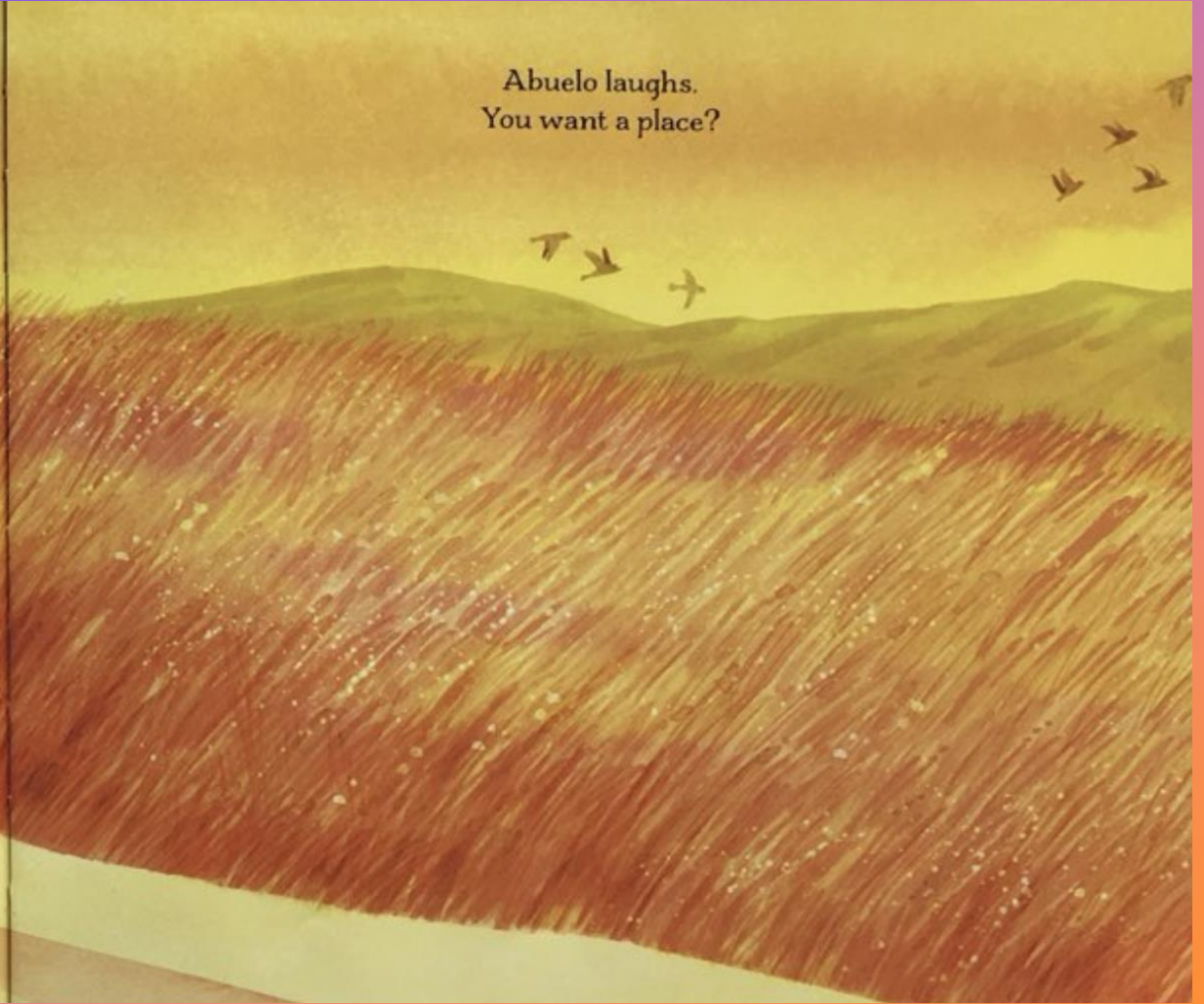
You're from the grandmothers who
search for their grandchildren, waiting,
always waiting in a plaza, their white
handkerchiefs wrapping the sorrow
of their thoughts.

You come from the sunshine that lights
our path in this world and the rain that
washes away our mistakes.

But, Abuelo, I ask,
where am I really from?




Abuelo laughs.
You want a place?



He points to his heart. You're from here,

from my love and the love of all those before us.





*from those who dreamed of you
because of a song sung under the Southern Cross*

*or the words in a book written under
the light of the North Star.*



You?

You are from all of us.



I am.

FEBRUARY

BOOK PICKS

- **Amina's Voice**

by Hena Khan

- **When Stars Are Scattered**

by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson





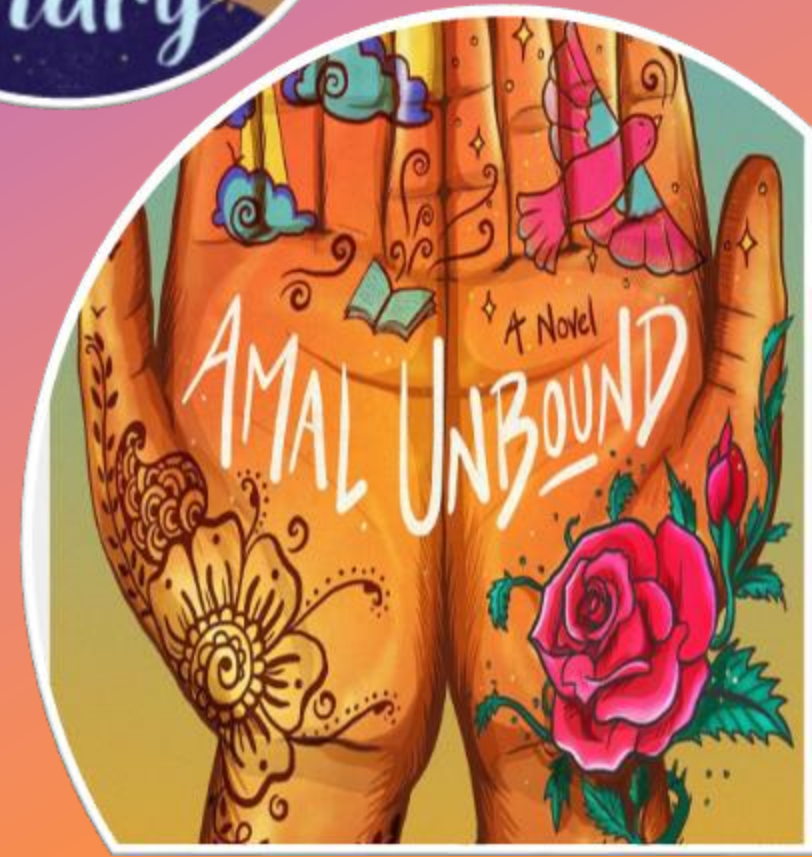
Special
March Author Visit!

ADIB KHORRAM



MARCH BOOK PICKS

- The Night Diary
by Veera Hiranandani
- A Dash of Trouble
by Anna Meriano



Community Matters Family Book Club: Immigrant Experience		
JCL Introduction:	Welcome to Johnson County Library’s Community Matters Family Book Club. This month’s book selections all focus on immigrant experience stories. We are so happy you are joining us for what we know will be a time to connect, challenge, and create understanding together.	
Content Theme & Description:	Activity/Engagement:	
Brave Space	Even if I am uncomfortable I am still safe. We need to be brave enough to lean into tough conversations.	Define brave space: What does your groups brave space look like? What guidelines will you follow?
Book Club Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle with Others and Yourself - we may not always find the right words our first try; what matters is that we are trying; see above • Take Turns; Include All - listen first; be aware everyone is given the chance to participate, especially the slower to speak • Assume Good Intent - seek to understand before reacting Be • Accept Feedback with Gratitude - we are here to learn and grow; even good intent can have harmful impact; be open to learning how to do better • Expect Discomfort - these are hard topics and considering them can feel bad; that is okay and prods growth • Respect Vulnerability - these are personal topics and people will be sharing difficult things; be sensitive to it <p>Which one will you focus on?</p>	
Read Aloud	"Where Are You From" by Yamile Saied Méndez	<p>What does it mean to be family?</p> <p>What cultures and places does your family connect with?</p>
Book Club Ice Breakers : (Two Options)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amina dreams of singing on stage. Omar dreams of being a social worker for the UN and Maryam dreams of being a lawyer to help refuge girls. What kind of dreams do you have of growing up? How would you like to change the world? 	

	<p>2. Omar and Amina have complicated relationships with some of their family members. Omar wants to go to school but does not feel like he can leave Hassan even for a few hours a day. Amina values her Uncle's opinion of her and briefly stops playing music when he disapproves. When have you had a complicated relationship with a family member?</p>	
<p>General Book Discussion Questions</p>	<p>Book 1: "Amina's Voice" by Hena Khan</p> <p>Book 2: "When Stars Are Scattered" by Victoria Jamieson</p> <p>Use these books as a springboard to have conversations about family ancestry, traditions, and change.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What kind of dreams do you have of growing up? 2. How would you like to change the world? 3. There are many family relationships in both titles, which relationships can you see in your life? 4. How are friends also seen as family? 5. What's a time in your life where you have experienced change?
<p>Book 1: "Amina's Voice" by Hena Khan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amina and her brother do not want to enter the Quran competition but their parents insist and they both enjoy participating even though they originally did not want to. Have your parents ever made you participate when you did not want to? How did it go? 2. Amina has a harder time relating to Soojin and Emily because they are both interested in boys and she is not. When have you had trouble relating to friends that have changed and are interested in things you are not interested in? 3. Amina's brother, Mustafa, gets caught spending time with boys that are smoking and Imam Malik thinks he might have been smoking too. Do you think the people we spend time with affect us and what others think of us? Why? 	

4. Amina's mosque often coordinates special interfaith events that are a fun way for the community to bond. Spending time with people from different backgrounds is the best way to learn about each other. How have you spent time with people from different backgrounds than you? If you haven't, what could you do?

5. Many people who immigrate to the United States change their names to American names. Amina's friend Soojin thought about changing her name to Susan. Why do you think this is? Why do you think Amina is uncomfortable with it?

6. Amina's Thaya Jaan comes to visit and her parents make sure everyone puts on their best clothes, they make special food, and they worry about making a good impression. Have you ever had relatives you don't see very often come to visit from far away and live with you? Do you worry about making a good impression during the times they visit?

Selected questions from the back of the book:

7. Describe Amina's feelings about music. What keeps Amina from telling her teacher that she would like to sing a solo? What could Amina do to overcome her fear? Have you ever been afraid to do something you wanted to do? What happened?

8. Why do you think Emily decides to stop being friends with Julie and to start being friends with Soojin and Amina? Why doesn't Amina trust her at first? How would you react if someone who had been mean to you in the past tried to become your friend?

9. Both Amina and Soojin have been teased because of the food they bring to school or the way their food smells. Why do you think people tease or bully kids who are different? If you were in Amina or Soojin's position, how would you respond? If you encounter someone from a different cultural background, how should you respond to them?
10. How does jealousy threaten Soojin and Amina's friendship? What does Amina learn about Soojin, Emily, and herself as a result? Do you think Soojin is a good friend to Amina? Is Amina a good friend to Soojin?
11. In the novel, Amina is trusted with secrets. Do you think she's right to keep Mustafa's secret? Should she have kept Emily's secret? Why is it sometimes hard to keep secrets? Are there ever secrets that you should not keep?
12. Amina's parents and Thaya Jaan disagree about whether or not music is forbidden. In every family, people disagree about the way to raise children and about what types of behavior should be allowed. How does Amina navigate the conflicting viewpoints in her own family? Have you ever had to navigate a similar situation? If so, how did you handle it?
13. Amina's parents are concerned that Thaya Jaan will not be happy when he visits because, as they say, "You know there's some bad feeling in this country toward Muslims, and all this negative talk in the news these days." When Thaya Jaan is in America, what evidence of bad feelings toward Muslims does he witness? What good things about America and acts of kindness does he witness? What does he conclude about life in America?
14. What is vandalism? How did the description of the vandalism of Amina's mosque make you feel? Why do you think someone would do this? Do you think violence solves problems or makes things worse? Why? Explain how this act of violence ends up bringing Amina's community together.

Book 2: [When Stars Are Scattered](#) by Victoria Jamieson

1. When Omar gets an interview and might get to leave the refugee camp his best friend Jeri is so jealous he cannot even talk to Omar. Later when Nimo gets to go to Canada Omar turns his back on her when he finds out. Have you ever wanted something so badly that when a friend got it instead it was difficult to still be friends? How did you work thing out?
2. Sometimes when Omar is sad and missing his Mom he wonders why she left. Even though he knows she was planning to come back and bad things were happening he feels abandoned. How do you think you would have felt?
3. Omar notices boys are free to play after school and relax during lunchtime but girls have to go home to do chores and take care of younger children. How did that make you feel? Why do you think boys and girls have different responsibilities?
4. Omar sometimes thinks about people who have lives different from his and why they get to have food and a comfortable bed and he does not. When reporters come to document life in the refugee camp he wonders if other people watch the news and if they do why they don't help? Why do you think refugee camps exist? Do you think there are better solutions?
5. When Jeri's dad finds out about his dream to become a teacher he makes fun of Jeri. Do you think it is better to dream or give up? Do you think you should listen to people like Jeri's dad who have given up? Why or why not?
6. After talking to his dad Jeri becomes more discouraged. When Omar begins studying with Nimo and Maryam he starts working harder and they start dreaming together. How do you decide which friends you spend time with? How do your friends influence you?
7. Jeri decides to take action. He comes up with a plan to make money. Jeri, Omar, and Hassan sell scoops of orange drink mix out of a large container and charge enough money per scoop that they make a profit. When have you tried to make money by selling something? How did it go?
8. Sometimes when Fatuma is sad she stares off into space and does not talk to anyone. Omar and Hassan know not to bother her when she is sad. What do you do when someone you care about is sad?

	<p>9. In the refugee camp some people are unkind to people with disabilities. Jeri and Omar stand up to Ali when he is mean to Hassan and they tell him to leave. Do you ever notice people being unkind to someone with a disability? How would you handle it?</p> <p>10. Jeri notices that Omar treats Hassan differently because Hassan has a disability. Jeri points out Hassan is good at many things Omar just has not noticed. Omar feels bad that he has overlooked Hassan’s abilities just because he has a disability. Think about how you can see people differently and look at what they can do, instead of what they cannot.--- I think pointing this out could be good, just cant figure out how to ask a question. Might just make it a thinking point/rhetorical.....</p> <p>11. When Omar has his interview he struggles to talk about the terrible day he lost his parents. Sometimes when really bad things happen it is so hard to talk about them it is easier to try to forget or pretend they did not happen. Why is it important to remember hard things and ask for help?</p> <p>12. After the interview Omar waits for a long time. Even though it is hard for Omar not knowing if he will ever get to leave he is determined not to waste any time. He still studies hard, does his best in school and works to have the best life possible every day. What are you grateful for in your life even during tough times?</p>
<p>Next Book Club: March</p>	<p>Seven Special Somethings: A Nowruz Story by Adib Khorram (Special Author Visit during March Book Club) Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed The Night Diary by Veera Hiranandani</p>