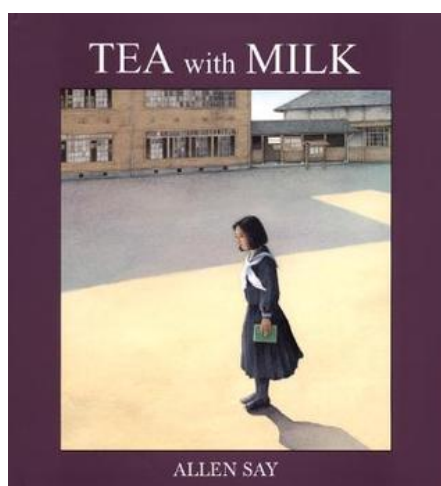




Tea with Milk

Allen Say

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After growing up near San Francisco, a young Japanese woman returns with her parents to their native Japan, but she feels foreign and out of place.

Tea with Milk Details

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Author : Allen Say

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From Reader Review Tea with Milk for online ebook

Tisha says

Tea with milk highlights the struggle of a young girl who moves from San Francisco to Japan with her family. Being raised up in a place like San Francisco, it becomes really difficult for her to get accustomed with the norms of traditional Japan and out of frustration she leaves her parents' home and moves to Osaka, which was quite comparable to the place she had always cherished!

With the story, the pages are also decorated with some jaw-dropping watercolor works and I loved the paintings more than the story! Just adding a few of them below.

Dolly says

As I was reading this story, it seemed so familiar, as if I had read it before. Perhaps I have; my memory is not perfect. But what I think triggered the memory was the fact that I had also read *Grandfather's Journey*, which is a nice companion to this book. The illustrations are wonderful and I love that Allen Say put so much of his family's history into his stories. The story was filled with mixed emotions and conflicting desires, which is pretty complex for a children's picture book. I love that May was determined to be independent and work outside of the home and refused to marry until she was ready. This was mostly a product of her American upbringing and was considered scandalous and shameful in Japanese society at that time. And I can appreciate that she was able to prove her worth on her own and adopt some of Japanese culture, even if it felt strange and uncomfortable at first. Finally, it's heartwarming to see that she was able to find true love with someone who felt like he was as much of an outsider as she was.

Alondra Carter says

The book is a realistic fiction written and illustrated by Allen Say. Its beautiful illustrations depict the story accurately and do a wonderful job of capturing Japanese culture. It is about a Japanese girl living in America who although she is familiar with aspects of her culture, she has really adapted to the American culture as well and has made friends in America. However her parents move back to Japan, and she had to go back to Japan with them. While there she misses her American friends and her life in America, and originally feels out of place in Japan. However, as time goes on she begins to find her own way in Osaka. Most of the time books focus on the feelings of people who come to America from another country, and adapt to American ways, so I found it interesting to see a book talking about a person going to another country and adapting to their new environment there. I believe the book promotes appreciation of culture, because by going back to the country where her culture originates from, she grew to appreciate her culture more and accept both her American and Japanese culture. The book also does a great way of displaying Japanese culture. I feel kids such as 3rd grade and up would appreciate the book more than the younger kids since it has larger harder to grasp concepts in it. If read in 2nd grade or younger it would require further breaking down and explaining.

Esther says

Published in 1999 by Houghton Mifflin/Walter Lorraine Books
Interest Level: 5th-8th Grade

The story of Allen Say's mother is a compelling, heartfelt story about immigration, culture-clashes, assimilation, and the meaning of "home". Through the depictions of May otherwise known as Masako and her cross-cultural experiences, the reader is transported to another time period and culture where being an independent woman was a much more difficult task than imagined. Contrasting with Say's "Grandfather's Journey", the style of illustrations is not photograph-like and portrays the action and hardships of May's life minutely and intuitively. There are illustrations that are full of action and those that are stills, like the cover, which ultimately convey the contemplative and dynamic portions of the story. Although short and precise, the story and illustrations convey a profound search for belonging and identity. Personally, I thought that this struggle and story were extremely understandable and thought-provoking. Overall, an interesting, dynamic story that brings the reader to a thought-provoking ending that questions the idea of what constitutes a home and how an identity can be formed.

Audrey Smith says

Allen Say retells his mother's childhood and young adulthood, from being an Japanese immigrant in San Francisco, to moving back to Japan and being treated like an American immigrant. This story allows young readers to begin to understand cultural differences, especially some of the struggles females faced in the mid-1900s outside of the United States. I would recommend this book as a mentor text to 4th through 7th grade teachers.

Lynne says

In *Tea with milk*, Allen Say speaks eloquently about the cross cultural conflict between traditional Japanese values and American values.

Using his trademark beautiful watercolor images to support the text, Say tells the story of a young girl, May, who was raised in San Francisco but moves to Japan with her mother and father who are returning home. Young May struggles to find her place in her parents' home and finally makes a friend who is enduring a similar struggle. Say surprises readers with a twist at the end of the plot line ensuring that the words remain with the reader long after.

Shannon Collyer says

Masako was born in California. All of her California friends called her May. One day, May's parents decided they were homesick and wanted to move back to Japan. This was devastating for May, in Japan, she had to wear kimonos, take high school again, and drink her tea with out milk. Her parents tried to console her and even attempted to arrange a marriage to a nice banker for her, but May would have none of it. She missed the hustle and bustle of the city. She finally found what she had been looking for in a city called Osaka. There,

she got a job and met a handsome stranger. The two quickly became friends but soon found out that his job would take him elsewhere. What will become of the friendship? Will May ever get to go back to California? Read this love story to find the answer! The story of May keeps the reader on her toes through out the novel. The descriptive sentences and elaborate pictures allow the reader to experience May's heartbreak and excitement alongside her. This book is a great story of self-discovery and love.

Karli Eller says

What is it like to feel like you do not belong? To stick out? To be ripped from your birthplace and forced to adapt to a new country, a new culture and new people? These questions and more are answered in Allen Say's phenomenal book *Tea with Milk*.

Every year my class has numerous students whose family originated from another country. Now these students will be the experts, being able to explain how it feels to be the new one, adapting to new rules and customs, a new language and way of life. They will be the ones that understand May, her feelings, her fears and her desires.

May is Japanese and yet for all intents and purposes, she is an American. Born and raised in San Francisco, moving to Japan brings quite the culture shock. Flower arranging, calligraphy and afternoon tea become daily staples. How can May adapt and fit in in her new country without losing who she is? Allen Say explores this question in this nonfiction story of his own mother finding herself in the middle of a new world, adjusting to Japanese culture while still keeping remnants of her former life in California. May will grow and adjust and adapt, but she will always take her tea with milk.

Kelli says

Tea With Milk follows a young woman stuck between the Japanese and American cultures of what appears to be the late 1920s. Masako, who prefers her American name May, is reluctantly taken back to Japan by her Japanese born parents. She hates the men her parents arrange for her, she hates the traditional arts she's forced to learn, and she resents having no one to connect with. She runs away to Osaka to work as a lowly elevator operator. However, eventually her talents set her on a path towards happiness.

This is a great take for learning about Japanese culture, but more importantly it's about finding your own happiness. May is resentful of her situation at first, but through hard work and acceptance she makes a place for herself that she can call home. Say's water colors are gorgeous and it's a beautiful way to share how his parents met.

Samantha says

This book was very eye opening for me. Consider feeling like an outsider in a place where people assume you should fit in. This book would help someone feel as though they were not alone in feeling like a cultural outsider. The story and the images balanced each other well. The illustrations held a lot of emotion in their stillness. I also felt that the complex feelings of being an outsider would be accessible to anyone reading this

book. It could help children get a better understanding that people feel outside all over, which could be used for a discussion about doing your best to include people.

Mike says

Allen Say tells the tale of May and American born girl forced to move back to Japan with her parents after she graduated from high school. She immediately faced a cultural backlash when she arrived. Her parents wanted her to become something she was not willing to become. In an attempt to break free May moved to the city of Osaka and began to work at a department store. The story of her finding her independence while fitting into the traditional Japanese culture evolves when she finds love after she settles into her daily work routine in Osaka. Say paints an amazing tale of culture clashing with modern life in *Tea with Milk*.

The illustrations are wonderfully done. The coloring is soft creating the feeling of a past memory. Additionally, the muted color takes down the energy of the book and helps create a more serious feel overall. Worth the read.

LauraW says

I actually read this book before the other Say book I have just reviewed. I like this one, but it didn't fascinate me as much as *Drawing from Memory*. The art work is great, though, and I continue to be surprised at how much I actually like it. It is sort of like the Japanese gardens we visited in Kyoto and Tokyo. I was pretty sure I would find them boring and repetitive, but instead found them surprisingly appealing and engaging.

Teresa says

This is a great book to give to someone you know that is dealing with culture shock after a cross-cultural move.

Tam_ the_ med_ bookie says

How perfect this one is!

I totally loved it especially the realistic and colourful illustrations!

This is a story of a Japanese origin girl named Masaki who had to shift back to Japan after growing up in San Francisco.

The story talks about her trying herself to adapt to the ways of life in Japan as per the instructions of her strict mother.

But life ends beautifully for her unexpectedly?

I really wonder how such a short story can be written and illustrated so perfectly!

Tatiana says

Tea with Milk is an eloquent look at the struggle to live in two worlds. May grew up in America, but her parents always maintained old-world Japanese values. When they decide to move back to their homeland, May finds herself out of place and homesick for America. Her journey to find where she belongs is inspiring and ultimately speaks to perseverance, being true to one's self, and striking a balance between traditional and modern values.

I think one of the reasons this story was so engaging was the use of demand and offer in the illustrations. Early on, May was looking directly out at the readers, creating that connection, and also highlighting her isolation, but as her life takes off, she is interacting with more people and her focus is on them. I also liked that several of the illustrations felt like photographs, which was in line with this being based on the true story of the author's mother.

In the classroom, this would be a lovely multicultural and historical fiction selection. I would use it with upper elementary grades (3-5) because it would make more impact if the students could understand the oppression that May feels by not being able to live by her own choices.
