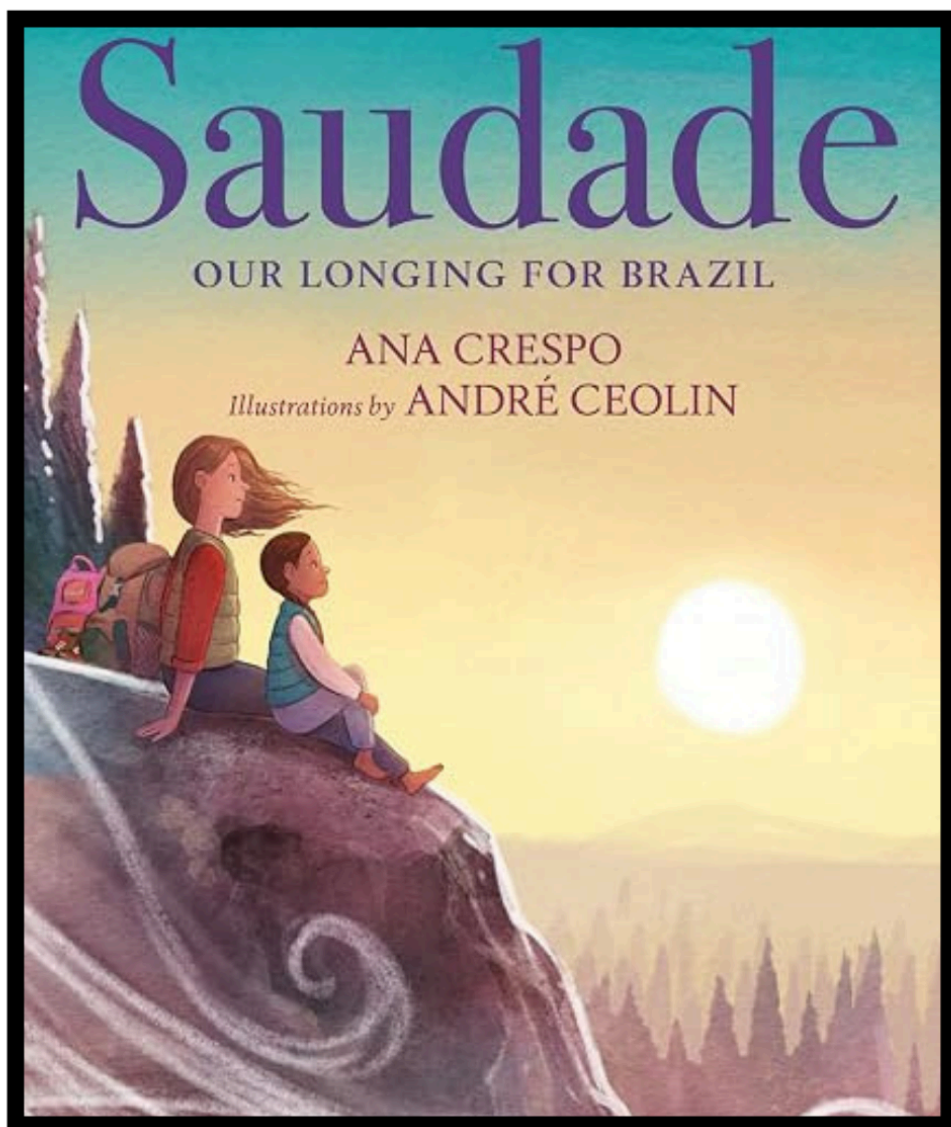


Américas Book Award

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



PRODUCED BY THE CONSORTIUM FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

PROGRAMS

WRITTEN BY KRISTINE WITKO



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This educator's guide was written to support using *Saudade: Our Longing for Brazil* in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. Produced by the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) at the University of Arizona on behalf of the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP) and the Américas Award, it was written in 2025 by Kristine Witko, Curriculum Consultant, with support from Katrina Dillon, Assistant Director of Outreach at CLAS.

ABOUT THE AMÉRICAS AWARD

CLASP founded the Américas Award in 1993 to encourage and commend authors, illustrators, and publishers who produce quality children's and young adult books that portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinx communities in the United States, and to provide teachers with recommendations for classroom use. CLASP offers up to two annual book awards, together with a list of honor books and commended titles. For more information concerning the Américas Award, including additional classroom resources, please visit the [CLASP website](#).

The awards are administered by the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP) and coordinated by both Tulane University's Stone Center for Latin American Studies and the University of Arizona's Center for Latin American Studies. Generous support is also provided by Florida International University, Michigan State University, Stanford University, University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Los Angeles, UNC-Duke Consortium in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Florida, University of Michigan, University of New Mexico, University of Texas at Austin, University of Utah, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Vanderbilt University.

ABOUT CLASP

CLASP's mission is to promote all facets of Latin American studies throughout the world. Its broad range of activities include the encouragement of research activities, funding of professional workshops, advancement of citizen outreach activities, and development of teaching aids for the classroom.



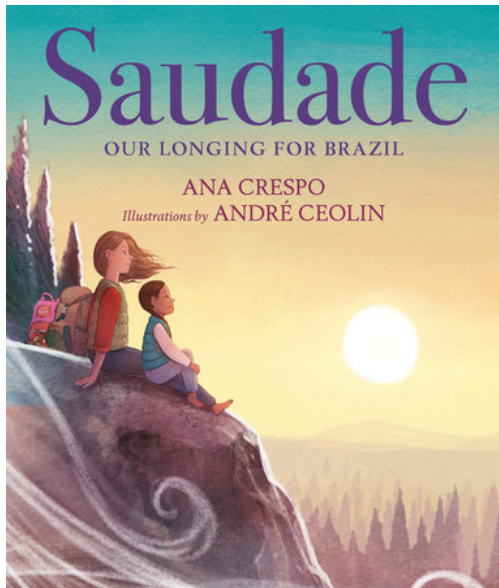
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An Educator's Guide to *Saudade: Our Longing for Brazil* by Ana Crespo

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OVERVIEW

Saudade: Our Longing for Brazil

Written by Ana Crespo

Illustrated by André Ceolin

Published 2024 by Neal Porter Books

ISBN: 9780823452293

THEMES

Family, Identity, Culture, Immigration, Place, Emotions and Feelings

SYNOPSIS

If your heart has ever ached for a place or a person, a smell or a taste, then you've felt saudade. A Portuguese and Galician word with no direct translation to English, saudade is a salty breeze when you're miles from the ocean; the smell of Mamãe's perfume; memories of playing with loved ones who are now stuck in the square of a video call.

Hiking in the hills, a little girl and her mother share the memories that fill them with saudade. Like the blisters left by well-worn walking shoes, looking back can hurt—but the good memories are always worth it.

Inspired by author Ana Crespo's own experience as a Brazilian immigrant and accompanied by André Ceolin's vivid, dreamy illustrations, *Saudade* is a bittersweet look at a universal human sensation.

READING LEVEL

Grades P-3 / Ages 4-8



REVIEWS

★ "This is an excellent choice for all ages and will undoubtedly lead readers to reflect on their own lives and think of what makes them feel saudade. Highly recommended for all picture book collections." – starred, *School Library Journal*

★ "A poignant exploration of longing and connection." – *Kirkus Reviews*

★ "This makes an excellent fit into SEL lessons, expanding emotional vocabulary and exploring the way languages can broaden and enrich our inner lives." – *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

AWARDS

- Américas Award, Commended title, 2025
- A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection
- An NCSS-CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Book



APPLICABLE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

K-12 READING

Key Ideas and Details

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.



K-12 WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: ANA CRESPO

Ana Crespo is happiest when surrounded by nature. So Ana spends her summers traveling around the United States, visiting national parks and exploring some of the most beautiful places in America. She always returns from her trips full of ideas for new stories. Her previous titles include *Hello, Tree*; *Lia & Luis: Who Has More?*; *The Sock Thief: A Soccer Story*; and the *My Emotions and Me* series. Originally from Brazil, Ana lives in the beautiful Rocky Mountain Region, where she enjoys the mountains but misses the ocean. Visit Ana Crespo at AnaCrespoBooks.com.



IN HER WORDS: THE AUTHOR'S NOTE

Taken from AnaCrespoBooks.com:

"I was born in Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil. I don't remember reading much as a child. The few memorable books from my childhood were picture books. One of my favorite ones was *Chapeuzinho Amarelo*, by Chico Buarque, illustrated by Ziraldo. It told the story of a little girl who was afraid of everything. I still love the way she loses her fear, with a smart play of words.

In 2000, after studying journalism, I moved to the United States to pursue a Master of Education. College hadn't turned me into a reader and neither did graduate school. It was my daughter who turned me into a reader.

When she was a toddler, one of our favorite activities was going to the library. We spent hours there. We attended baby story times. We read books. We played with the toys. As I read to her, and learned new English words from board books, I developed an appreciation for books. That appreciation turned into love.

Suddenly, a whole new world opened up. Classics, such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, so familiar to an American child, were completely new to me. I devoured picture books. Like a child, I eventually upgraded to chapter books, middle grade, YA, and adult, but PB and MG are still my favorites.

As much as I loved the library, there was one thing that always bothered me: I never once found a book by a Brazilian author or featuring Brazilian characters. I relied on family members to send me Brazilian stories, so my daughter could see herself and the culture she came from on the pages of books.



An Educator's Guide to *Saudade: Our Longing for Brazil* by Ana Crespo

Many years later, after working as an Academic Advisor and after having another baby, I started looking for something I could do from home. For a while, I worked as a translator, but translators work with someone else's words and don't have much room for creativity. So, I decided to give writing for children a try..."



CLASSROOM RELEVANCE AND APPLICATIONS

How do you describe a word that has no translation? In *Saudade: Our Longing for Brazil*, Ana Crespo teaches us about the word *saudade*, and in doing so, she highlights the universal experience of immigrants living abroad, who feel the joy of memory and the ache of longing at the same time.

In the story, a young Brazilian-American girl is on a hike with her mother, who suddenly remembers and misses Brazil. Her mother then tries to describe the concept of *saudade* to her. Since it is a Portuguese word that has no English translation, it is best explained through examples. *Saudade* is smelling your mother's perfume or feeling an ocean breeze miles away from the sea. *Saudade* is a longing for something that you cannot have. The girl thinks of her cousins in Brazil, her grandparents smiling through computer screens and photographs. Through the story, children can understand—or empathize with—the experience of being a second-generation immigrant, with one foot in one country, another foot in another country. Although this is a children's book, people of all ages can connect with it and appreciate its message.

For these reasons, *Saudade* would pair well with other stories that tell of the immigrant experience. Crespo's story highlights how home isn't just where we happen to live *now*; it's where our loved ones are. Home may not always be a physical space but rather a feeling. This emotion-rich book lends itself well to personal writing in which students share their own feelings about the word *home* and other words that are layered with meaning.

In addition, this book allows for conversations about the importance of place. How do we define *home*? How can collective memory and shared histories help us to feel connected to our roots? What does it mean to belong to a place that is separated from us by physical distance or time?

Through a discussion of the book, students can reflect on how concepts like identity and belonging are shaped by memory. For immigrants and the children of immigrants in particular, this book gives language to feelings that may have been difficult to name—while also showing that others share the same bittersweet feelings of longing, nostalgia, and connection.

LESSON PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

In addition to this guide, there are a number of other high-quality resources available to support educators in using this book. These have been linked below.

- [Educator's guide for *Saudade*](#) from [Holiday House](#)
- [“Searching for home” book list](#) from [TeachingBooks](#)



PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Before reading the book with students, you may want to introduce some of the important themes, activate any prior knowledge, and generate interest and anticipation through the following activities and/or discussion questions.

VOCABULARY

saudade

mamãe

rhythm

pão de queijo

longing

mico

jabuticaba

catching jacaré

ACTIVITY 1: PICTURE WALK

Pique students' interest, activate prior knowledge, and introduce the book through a picture walk.

PROCESS:

1. Show students the front and back cover of the book. Ask them to predict what they think the book will be about. Then, slowly flip through the pages of the book without reading any of the words. As students ask questions about each picture they see, guide them to make inferences based upon their observations. Focus on who, what, when, where, why and how questions such as: "What is happening here?" "What will happen next?" "Who do you think this is?" "How does he feel? What makes you say that?"
2. Once students have read the book, return to their thoughts and predictions, comparing them to the actual events of the book.

ACTIVITY 2: OBSERVATION CHARTS

Observation charts offer one way for students to pique their interest about a book they will begin to read. As students will be analyzing illustrations from the book, it is helpful to select pages in advance that may spark some interesting conversations. Examples include the following:

- pages 2-3 (the little girl hikes with her mother)
- pages 3-4 (the mother feels the wind and closes her eyes)



- pages 10-11 (a family gathers around to play music)
- pages 16-17 (the cousins play in a waterfall)
- pages 20-21 (the girl brings a photograph of her grandparents)
- pages 24-25 (the grandparents wave from a computer screen)

PROCESS:

1. Explain to students that they will work in small groups, rotating around the room to view and discuss each illustration. One person per group will be the recorder. When looking at an illustration, students will spend at least one minute silently reflecting on the following questions: “What do you see?” “What do you think is happening?” “How does this illustration make you feel?” Then, students will discuss their thoughts in the small group. The recorder will write down their reflections and answers to the questions on the observation chart. Sticky notes can also be used to record the group’s thoughts. Set a timer, and when time is up, the teacher will give the signal to transition to the next station.
2. Divide students into small groups. Place an illustration and marker at various stations in the classroom. After guiding each group to their initial station, begin the activity. Continue rotating groups through the illustrations until each group has seen them all.
3. Hang up all of the observation charts with students’ comments. As a whole group, discuss each image, giving students time to share and respond to what they posted. Keep the charts posted throughout the reading and discussion of *Saudade*. Allow students to revisit the charts as they think more about what the illustrations represent.

ACTIVITY 3: MEMORY SHARE

This activity will enable students to identify their own memories that evoke a sense of saudade.

PROCESS:

1. Explain to students that soon, they will begin reading a book about memory. Before they begin reading, they can reflect on their own important memories, including the places and people they love, to better understand the concept of saudade.
2. Ask students to begin with a brainstorming activity. On a piece of paper, they can put, “People,” “Places,” and “Memories” in three circles (spread out across the paper). The first activity will start with the category of People. The teacher will set a timer and give students a minimum of 60 seconds to create a web naming important people in their lives. Next, students can jot down ideas in the Places category. Before creating a web for the Memories category, students can take a moment to think: *What are some memories that are important to me? Do I have any memories with these people in these places?*



3. When students have finished, they can do a think-pair-share to discuss the answers they feel comfortable sharing.
4. To prepare for the second half of the activity, tell students that for the next few days, they can begin collecting photographs and artifacts that relate to their memories.
5. Next, students can present 3-5 artifacts to the class. If they bring a photograph, they can answer questions like, “Who is in the picture?” “Where is this picture taken?” “Why is it important to you?”
6. Explain that this activity will enable them to see how memories can be bittersweet, both happy and sad, helping them to better understand saudade.

ACTIVITY 4: MEANING OF WORDS

Saudade isn't the only word that holds special meaning; in this activity, students can analyze other emotionally-rich words that may have different definitions.

PROCESS:

1. Ask students: Can you think of a word that evokes a strong feeling in you?
2. Give an example if students do not immediately come up with their own words. Examples may include words like home, goodbye, friend. List them on the board.
3. Pick one to two words and ask students: 1) How would you define this word? 2) What feelings come up when you think of this word?
4. Divide students into groups. Ask them to choose one word and come up with as many definitions as they can. Ask them to describe all of the feeling words that come to mind.
5. Once students have finished their groupwork, ask them to present their findings to the class. Other students can chime in and add additional definitions or feelings that may not have been included in the group's original discussion.
6. Ask students: What have we learned from this exercise? Do you think we've fully defined these words, or do you think something is still missing?
7. Note that as the class reads *Saudade*, they can keep this discussion in mind as the little girl wrangles with the meaning of this word.

GUIDED READING QUESTIONS

BEFORE READING

1. Do you think this is a fiction or nonfiction text? What makes you think that?
2. This book is a work of fiction, meaning it will tell us a story with characters. Let's look at the front cover. What do you think will happen in this story?



3. This is a book

DURING READING

Transferable Questions

1. (Every few pages) What is happening?
2. Who are the characters? What do we know about them?
3. How does the character feel? How do you know?
4. What lessons can we learn from this book?

Text-Based Questions

1. At the beginning of the book, what makes Mamãe miss Brazil?
2. When Mamãe says that saudade is “what she feels when she smells her mother’s perfume,” what do you think that means?
3. What are some other examples that Mamãe gives to explain saudade?
4. What is the definition of saudade?
5. Midway through the book, the little girl seems to understand saudade. What are some moments or memories that make her feel saudade?
6. How does the little girl feel on Grandparents Day at school? Why?
7. Turn to pages 22-23, when the character says she wishes she were “catching jacaré” with her own family. Looking at the picture, what do you think that phrase means?
8. On the last page, it says, “No matter how much it hurts, the memories are always worth it.” What do you think that means?

AFTER READING

1. Have you read any other books about the immigrant experience? How were they similar or different?
2. Have you read other books by the same author or illustrator? What were those books about and was this one similar or different?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

Saudade has many themes that can be connected with other works of literature, such as family, identity, culture, immigration, place, and emotions. As with any lesson, it’s important to consider the needs of your students and plan these post-reading activities accordingly. With this in mind, we’ve provided a variety of extension activity ideas and resources below that can be used in conjunction with the book.



APPROACH 1: LITERACY CONNECTIONS

To expand the literacy connections made when using *Saudade*, consider including the readings discussed below.

“The Perfect Place”

Just like *Saudade*, this book also reflects on the importance of place. *The Perfect Place*, written by Matt de la Peña, describes the story of Lucas, a boy whose life at home is not perfect: sometimes the electricity goes out or his dad's truck breaks down. His neighborhood is imperfect, too: he lives near a dumpster, and some of the streetlights are broken on his avenue. One night after he falls asleep, he wakes to see a brilliant bright light shining in his window. He follows it to find a land where everything is perfect. While at first he is elated, he is dismayed to see a little boy ostracized and sent out of the community for spilling his cup, leaving an imperfect stain. Lucas realizes that while his neighborhood may be imperfect, it is comfortable, filled with love and life. It is his *home*.

Process:

1. Begin by asking students open-ended questions, such as, “What does the word *home* mean to you? Would you describe your home as a perfect or an imperfect place? Why?”
2. Explain, “Today, we will read a fiction book called *The Perfect Place* by Matt de la Peña. Look at the cover. What do you notice? What do you think this story will be about?”
3. State, “As we read today, we'll meet our main character, Lucas, and his family. While we read, we'll pay attention to Lucas's point of view. A character's point of view is what they *think* or *feel* about something. We can figure out a character's point of view by noticing what they say, think, and do.”
4. Read the book. Occasionally stop to ask comprehension questions: “Who are our characters? What do we know about them?” “Where does the story take place?” “What is happening here?” “What will happen next? Why?” “How does this character feel?” “How do you think the story will end?”
5. Upon finishing the book, ask students to turn to a partner and re-tell the key parts of the story. Then ask them: “What was Lucas's point of view about home at the beginning of the story? Did his point of view stay the same, or did it change by the end? Why?”
6. The teacher can extend the conversation by asking, “What lesson did Lucas learn at the end?”
7. Make the connection to *Saudade*: “How are these two books similar? How are they different? What do they teach us about home?”
8. As a post-reading activity, teachers can choose from a range of choices. Students can illustrate a map of their own neighborhood, compiling the information into a brief presentation that can be shared with their classmates. Alternatively, they can do a photography project, taking several days to snap photographs of important places in their neighborhood. They can create a mini gallery on a postboard of these photographs, making sure to describe each one in a blurb.



“Islandborn”

Islandborn, written by Junot Díaz, is about a little girl named Lola who gets a school assignment to write about her first country. However, she had left when she was a baby and could not remember the island. She begins to ask people from her family and her neighborhood what they remember about the island, and their memories become even more vivid with her imagination. At the end, Lola realizes that even if she does not remember the island herself, the island is still in her: she *is* the island. This story connects to *Saudade* because readers can discuss the importance of memory, identity, immigration, and heritage.

Process:

1. Ask students several open-ended questions, such as, “Where do you come from? Is this place an important place to you, and if so, why? How would you feel if you did not remember this place?” Give students time to turn and talk and choose some to share with the class.
2. Explain, “Today, we will read a fiction book called *Islandborn* by Junot Díaz. Look at the cover. What do you notice? What do you think this story will be about?”
3. Explain, “In many fiction books, the character learns a lesson by the end. A lesson is something we learn about life. As we read, we will think to ourselves: What lesson does Lola learn?”
4. Read the book. Occasionally stop to ask comprehension questions: “Who are our characters? What do we know about them?” “What is happening here?” “How does this character feel?” “How do you think the story will end?”
5. Pause to think aloud about moments in the book that may provide a hint about the upcoming lesson. For example, “I’m noticing Lola feels sad that she cannot remember where she is from. I am going to remember that. Big feelings can help us to figure out the lesson at the end.”
6. Upon finishing the book, ask students to turn to a partner and re-tell the key parts of the story. Then ask them: “How did Lola feel at the beginning of the story? Why?” Then ask, “How did Lola feel at the end of the story? Why?” Finally, say, “As readers, we’ve noticed that Lola’s feelings changed from beginning to end. Why does she feel so happy at the end? What lesson did she learn?” After students discuss their responses, say, “Lola isn’t the only one who can learn a lesson from this story. Fiction books can teach us about life, too. What is a lesson that WE can learn?” Allow students to turn and talk or share out whole group.
7. Make the connection to *Saudade*: “Both Lola in *Islandborn* and the narrator in *Saudade* learn a lesson at the end. How are these lessons similar? How are they different?”
8. Students can engage in a variety of activities related to memory, home, and heritage.



APPROACH 2: CREATE A MEMORY TREE

This activity adds a twist to the traditional family tree activity. Each branch can represent someone important to them, and the leaves for the corresponding branch can include a memory, a place, or a shared tradition.

Process:

1. Say to students, “The book *Saudade* taught us that memories can be tied to people and places. It can even be tied to things that activate our senses, like the smell of the ocean air or the sound of laughter. Today, we will be creating a new kind of family tree that allows us to include some of those important memories.”
2. Begin by modeling for students how to create the tree. The teacher can draw the base of the tree then a branch, labeling it the name of an important person. Emphasize that this person does not need to be a family member; it can be someone who is very close to them. Add one or more leaves that include a special memory. An example could be, “Traveling to New York City” or “Making tamales for Christmas.”
3. Give students the opportunity to design and illustrate their memory trees. Once they finish, they can present to the class or to a partner.
4. Explain that just like in the book *Saudade*, memories and traditions can make us feel connected to people, even when they are far away.

APPROACH 3: FAMILY INTERVIEW

Saudade depicts a mother sharing memories with her daughter and highlights the importance of extended family, such as grandparents and cousins. A family interview activity would allow students to connect with their family members, learn about the places and things that are important to them, and teach their classmates what they learned.

Process:

1. Tell students, “In the story, the narrator learns more about her mother’s memories and the moments that are important to her. Now, you have a chance to learn more about someone in your family.”
2. Ask students to choose someone in their family who they would like to learn more about.
3. In class, students will take 10-15 minutes to develop interview questions for this family member.
4. Students will go home and record their interviews with family members.
5. Afterward, students can create a visual presentation of their interview. Options include a poster or a PowerPoint presentation. They can share key findings from their interviews with the class.



APPROACH 4: INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

This book may introduce some students about Brazil and its culture. This activity gives students the chance to learn more about the concept of saudade while learning about the country's cultural and historical context.

Process:

1. Tell students, “We know that *Saudade* is a book about the experience of Brazilian immigrants living in another land. The word ‘saudade’ has a special meaning in Portuguese. Today, we’re going to investigate the history of how that word came about. By doing so, we will learn more about the cultural and historical context of Brazil!”
2. Deliver a brief mini-lesson on Brazil. Locate the country on a map, discuss the language that is spoken there, and describe the colonization of Brazil by Portugal.
3. Supplement this discussion with media such as short videos, images, or articles that describe the meaning of the word saudade and its roots in Portuguese and Brazilian culture. Some examples are linked below
 - a. [Saudade: Luisa-Paixão](#) - A blog describing the origins of saudade. Includes images, various examples of how to use this word in context, and a detailed description of Fado, a Portuguese musical genre that strongly conveys saudade.
 - b. [Saudade: An Untranslatable, Undeniably Potent Word](#) - This NPR article from 2015 defines saudade and connects it to music. A series of songs are listed that convey the sense of saudade through their lyrics.
4. Break students into groups to research a specific aspect of Brazilian culture. Examples include music, food, celebrations, artwork, or family traditions.
5. Each group will create a presentation with a corresponding visual (such as a poster, PowerPoint, infographic, etc.) summarizing what they have discussed and connecting it to the concept of saudade.



MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

To complement and enhance teaching about *Saudade*, we've compiled the following selective multimedia resources that are available at no cost online.

INTERVIEWS WITH ANA CRESPO

- Listen “[SAUDADE Author Ana Crespo and DESERT SONG Author Laekan Zea Kemp in conversation with Holiday House Editor Alex Aceves](#)”

In this podcast, the hosts and Crespo discuss collaborating with illustrators to depict abstract concepts (such as the power of language), Portuguese words without translation, and the deeper meaning of the word *saudade*. Although this podcast describes *Saudade* alongside the book *Desert Song*, the overlapping themes make for an interesting comparison. From the beginning of the podcast until about 2:30, the hosts provide a summary of the two texts. Beginning around 2:30, both authors answer questions. At approximately 4:45, Crespo provides an analysis of her book, with one memorable quote as follows: “*Saudade* is felt in the present, but it lives in the past.” For this reason, she found it important (even necessary) to switch between the past and the present in her book. This podcast can provide more insight about the book and allow for a rich class discussion.

- Read “[Agent Interview: Ana Crespo, Author, Agent, Booklover](#)”

Although this interview was published before Crespo wrote *Saudade*, it still contains many details about the influence of her Brazilian identity on her writing, other important aspects of her identity, the inspiration for her stories, and the importance of representation. Crespo also describes her role as both a writer and an agent, including her process of providing feedback to authors. Students can use this article to discuss how an author's identity impacts the stories they choose to write and the experiences they describe. They can also learn more about careers in the publishing industry.



COMPLEMENTARY LITERATURE

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Titles marked with * are Americas Award recognized titles.

**A Festa for Luana* by Joana Pastro and illustrated by Duda Oliva. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2025.

A young Brazilian American girl navigates the concept of belonging when she celebrates the Brazilian Festa Junina festival with her family in this remarkable picture book about embracing all aspects of one's identity. *Pretty little details can help...tell the story of who I am.* Luana has been counting down the days until she can visit her grandparents in Brazil. She's just in time for Festa Junina, a vibrant celebration where people dance, eat, and dress up in all sorts of colors! But Luana feels...different. Her clothes are too plain, and her cousins comment on her American accent. She doesn't feel Brazilian. Luckily, with a little help from her family and a new tradition, Luana learns that every part of her story is important, and she belongs after all!

Alma and How She Got Her Name by Juana Martinez-Neal. Candlewick, 2018.

If you ask her, Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela has way too many names: six! How did such a small person wind up with such a large name? Alma turns to Daddy for an answer and learns of Sofia, the grandmother who loved books and flowers; Esperanza, the great-grandmother who longed to travel; José, the grandfather who was an artist; and other namesakes, too. As she hears the story of her name, Alma starts to think it might be a perfect fit after all—and realizes that she will one day have her own story to tell. In her 2019 Caldecott Honor Book, Juana Martinez-Neal opens a treasure box of discovery for children who may be curious about their own origin stories or names.

**Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales. Neal Porter Books, 2018.

Dreamers is a celebration of making your home with the things you always carry: your resilience, your dreams, your hopes and history. It's the story of finding your way in a new place, of navigating an unfamiliar world and finding the best parts of it. In dark times, it's a promise that you can make better tomorrows. This lovingly-illustrated picture book memoir looks at the myriad gifts migrantes bring with them when they leave their homes. It's a story about family. And it's a story to remind us that we are all dreamers, bringing our own strengths wherever we roam. Beautiful and powerful at any time but given particular urgency as the status of our own Dreamers becomes uncertain, this is a story that is both topical and timeless. The lyrical text is complemented by sumptuously detailed illustrations, rich in symbolism. Also included are a brief autobiographical essay about Yuyi's own experience, a list of



books that inspired her (and still do), and a description of the beautiful images, textures, and mementos she used to create this book. A parallel Spanish-language edition, *Soñadores*, is also available.

Game of Freedom by Duncan Fonatiuh. Mestre Bimba and the Art of Capoeira. Harry N. Abrams, 2023.

A meia lua whooshed in the air. The strike was evaded and followed with an aiú. Two young men were playing capoeira in the middle of the roda. Bimba wanted to play too. Although it is debated when and where capoeira—an art form that blends martial arts, dance, acrobatics, music, and spirituality—originated exactly, one thing is in the early 20th century, Brazil was the only country in the world where capoeira was played, and it was mainly practiced by people of African descent. In 1890, two years after Brazil officially abolished slavery, the game was outlawed. Wealthy, lighter-skinned society feared and looked down on capoeira, seeing it as a game for malandros—what people in power called the poor Black communities they disdained. But in the early 1920s in the city of Salvador, a man called Bimba advocated for capoeira, and those who practiced it, demanding they be treated with dignity and respect.

How the Night Came From the Sea: A Story from Brazil retold by Mary-Joan Gerson and illustrated by Carla Golembe. Joy Street Books, 1994.

A Brazilian story with African roots, this book tells how an ancient African sea goddess brought the gift of night to the land of daylight. This story evokes the beauty, rather than the terror, of the night, and is also about finding peace and hope in a new land.

**Lucas and the Capoeira Circle* by Joana Pastro and illustrated by Douglas Lopes. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2024.

A young boy who loves the Brazilian martial art of capoeira drums up his courage for a moving-up ceremony in this vibrant and inspiring book about never losing one's inner spirit. *Tchik. Tchik. Tchik-Tchik-BOOM!* Lucas loves capoeira, the Brazilian martial art that combines music, dance, and acrobatics. He's been practicing his moves all week for his batizado—his moving-up ceremony—where he'll get his capoeira nickname. But today, Lucas has...the nerves! Scared he'll lose his ginga—his courage and rhythm—in the capoeira circle, Lucas plays his trusty tamborim for comfort. Then he remembers his Papai's powerful words: your ginga lives inside of you. With a little help from his community, Lucas discovers that his courage is never too far away.

**My Papi Has a Motorcycle* by Isabel Quintero and illustrated by Zeke Peña. Kokila, 2019.

When Daisy Ramona zooms around her neighborhood with her papi on his motorcycle, she sees the people and places she's always known. She also sees a community that is rapidly changing around her. But as the sun sets purple-blue-gold behind Daisy Ramona and her papi, she knows that the love she feels will always be there.



**Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale* written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2013.

Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote opens with festive scenes of the Rabbit family preparing for Papá Rabbit's homecoming. Musicians, family and friends gather to welcome home Papá who had traveled north to work in the carrot and lettuce fields, years before. Plates of mole, rice and beans are prepared in anticipation of his arrival and the house is strung with papel picado. When Papá Rabbit doesn't arrive, his son Pancho decides to sneak away in the dark of the night to find him. The reader follows the young rabbit as he travels north with the aid of a sneaky coyote by train, by river, by tunnel, and by desert. Tonatiuh bravely presents the controversial issue of illegal immigration through the lens of a children's fable. Inspired by 14th century Mixtec codices and traditional folklore, the author / illustrator presents the sometimes startling realities of many modern day immigrants in a form which can be appreciated by both young and old alike. (Grades Kindergarten and up)

Classroom Resources: [Educator's Guide for Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale](#) written by Katrina Dillon on behalf of CLASP.

The Best Tailor in Pinbauê by Eymard Toledo. Triangle Square, 2017.

Uncle Flores is the best tailor in the small river town of Pinbauê in Brazil. He used to make beautiful dresses and colorful costumes for the carnival, but nowadays he only makes gray uniforms for the factory workers. The houses are covered with dust from the factory, the river water is murky, and everything is drab. Edinho, his nephew, comes by every day after school to help cut and iron the cloth and listen to his uncle's stories. The best ones begin with "Once upon a time..." But when the factory tells Uncle Flores they don't need his uniforms anymore, Edinho comes up with an ingenious idea to get his uncle back to work and make everyone in town happier and brighter. Soon Uncle Flores's house is the most popular one in town....In *The Best Tailor in Pinbauê* a small act of beauty in the midst of environmental degradation reminds young readers of their own agency and of the life-affirming strength of family and community.

Young Adult Literature

**Brownstone* by Samuel Teer and illustrated by Mar Julia. Versify, 2024.

Almudena has always wondered about the dad she never met. Now, with her white mother headed on a once-in-a-lifetime trip without her, she's left alone with her Guatemalan father for an entire summer. Xavier seems happy to see her, but he expects her to live in (and help fix up) his old, broken-down brownstone. And all along, she must navigate the language barrier of his rapid-fire Spanish—which she doesn't speak. As Almudena tries to adjust to this new reality, she gets to know the residents of Xavier's Latin American neighborhood. Each member of the community has their own joys and heartbreaks as



well as their own strong opinions on how this young Latina should talk, dress, and behave. Some can't understand why she doesn't know where she comes from. Others think she's "not brown enough" to fit in. But time is running out for Almudena and Xavier to get to know each other, and the key to their connection may ultimately lie in bringing all these different elements together. Fixing a broken building is one thing, but turning these stubborn individuals into a found family might take more than this one summer.

Clap When You Land by Elizabeth Acevedo. Quill Tree Books, 2022.

Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people....In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash. Separated by distance—and Papi's secrets—the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered. And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other.

**Hero's Guide to Summer Vacation* by Pablo Cartaya. Kokila, 2025.

Gonzalo Alberto Sánchez García has never considered himself the hero of his own story. He's an observer, quietly snapshotting landscapes and drawing the creatures he imagines emerging from them. Forced to spend the summer with his estranged grandfather, Alberto William García—the very famous reclusive author—Gonzalo doesn't expect to learn that heroes and monsters are not only the stuff of fantasy. But that's precisely what happens when Gonzalo's CEO mother, Veronica, sends Alberto on tour to promote the final book in his fantasy series for children and Gonzalo must tag along, even though he feels no connection to his grandfather or the books. Together, they embark on a cross-country road trip from Mendocino to Miami in a classic 1968 Oldsmobile Cutlass S convertible named Mathilde. Over the course of ten epic days on the highway, they will slay demons, real and imagined; confront old stories to write new ones; and learn what it truly means to show up for your family.

Salt and Sugar by Rebecca Carvalho. Inkyard Press, 2023.

Trust neither thin-bottomed frying pans nor Molinas. Lari Ramires has always known this to be true. In Olinda, Brazil, her family's bakery, Salt, has been at war with the Molinas' bakery across the street, Sugar, for generations. But Lari's world turns upside down when her beloved grandmother passes away. On top of that, a big supermarket chain has moved to town, forcing many of the small businesses to close. Determined to protect her home, Lari does the unthinkable—she works together with Pedro Molina to save both of their bakeries. Lari realizes she might not know Pedro as well as she



thought—and she maybe even likes what she learns—but the question remains: Can a Ramires and a Molina truly trust one another?

**Speak Up, Santiago!* by Julio Anta and illustrated by Gabi Mendez. Random House Graphic, 2025.

Santi is excited to spend the summer in Hillside Valley, meeting the local kids, eating his Abuela's delicious food, exploring! There's just one problem—Santi doesn't speak Spanish that well and it feels like everyone he meets in Hillside does. There's Sol (she's a soccer player who really loves books), Willie, (the artist), Alejandro (Santi's unofficial tour guide!), and Nico (Alejandro's brother and blue belt in karate). In between all of their adventures in Hillside, Santi can't help but worry about his Spanish—what if he can't keep up?! Does that mean he's not Colombian enough? Will Santi find his confidence and his voice? Or will his worries cost him his new friendships...and the chance to play in Hillside's summer soccer tournament?!

The Deep Blue Between by Ayesha Harruna Attah. Carolrhoda Lab, 2022.

Twin sisters Hassana and Husseina have always shared their lives. But after a raid on their village in 1892, the twins are torn apart. Taken in different directions, far from their home in rural West Africa, each sister finds freedom and a new start. Hassana settles in the city of Accra, where she throws herself into working for political and social change. Husseina travels to Salvador, Brazil, where she becomes immersed in faith, worshipping spirits that bridge the motherland and the new world. Separated by an ocean, they forge new families, ward off dangers, and begin to truly know themselves. As the twins pursue their separate paths, they remain connected through their shared dreams. But will they ever manage to find each other again?