

This is a Story

AUTHOR

JOHN SCHU

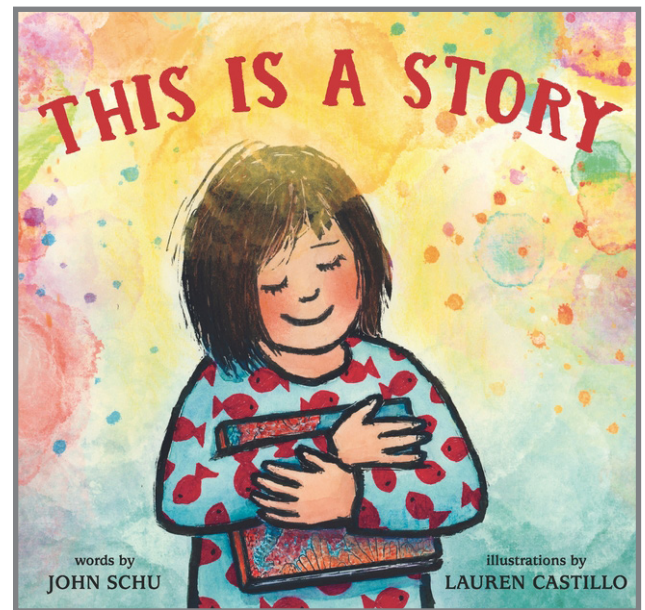
ILLUSTRATOR

LAUREN CASTILLO

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

This is a word on a page.

This is a page in a book.

This is a book on a shelf . . . waiting.

With a seahorse kite in their hand, a child heads out with Dad to the library. On the way they stop at a park, joining lots of people, some of whom are flying kites, too. At the library, a person toting a big pile of books hands over a story on a favourite subject: the seahorse. All around, there are readers poring over books, each with their own questions, ideas to explore, hopes for the future . . . and imaginations ready to spark. With a warm, lyrical text and expressive illustrations, John Schu and Lauren Castillo invite us to imagine the myriad of ways that books can foster connection and understanding—and how they can empower children to transform the world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Schu is the author of the picture book, *This Is a School*, illustrated by Veronica Miller Jamison. He has been the Ambassador of School Libraries for Scholastic Book Fairs, a part-time lecturer at Rutgers University, and a classroom teacher and school librarian. He travels all over the world visiting schools and meeting with students, teachers and administrators as he advocates for the people and things he cares about most: children, books, schools and the libraries—and librarians—that connect them. John Schu lives in Illinois, USA. You can find him at JohnSchu.com and on Instagram and Twitter as @MrSchuReads.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Lauren Castillo is the award-winning illustrator of many books for children, including Kirkus Prize finalist *Imagine* by Juan Felipe Herrera, *Happy Like Soccer* by Maribeth Boelts, and *Yard Sale* by Eve Bunting. She is also the author/illustrator of the Caldecott Honor Book *Nana in the City*. Lauren Castillo dreams and draws in Pennsylvania, USA. You can find her online at laurencastillo.com and on Instagram and Twitter as @studiocastillo.

STUDY NOTES

- View the cover and title of the book and then identify the following:
 - The title

- The author and illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb.
- What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?
- Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attention and give them some idea of what the book is about.
- Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.
- Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?
- Is the book an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?
- Literary techniques allow a writer to convey a deeper meaning in their text. What techniques can you find in this text, eg. metaphor, imagery, alliteration or personification?
 - What deeper meaning can you draw from the text?
- How do the illustrations add to the story? Do you think the illustrator has effectively told his story visually?
- Cover the text in the book and write your own story following the illustrations.
- Choose one of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following:
 - How do the illustrations add to the story?
 - How do you think the people are feeling? What clues might there be in the pictures?
 - Is there a main colour in this spread? How does it make you feel?
 - Do the colours change from spread to spread? Why might that be?
 - Do the pictures take up the whole page, or are they framed?
 - Are any of the words bigger on the page than the others? Why could that be?
- Discuss the medium used by the illustrator (watercolour, ink, acrylic, etc.) Draw or paint a picture in the style of the books illustrations. Do some research on the illustrator. Is this their usual style?