

Tayta's Secret Ingredient

AUTHOR

AMAL ABOU-EID

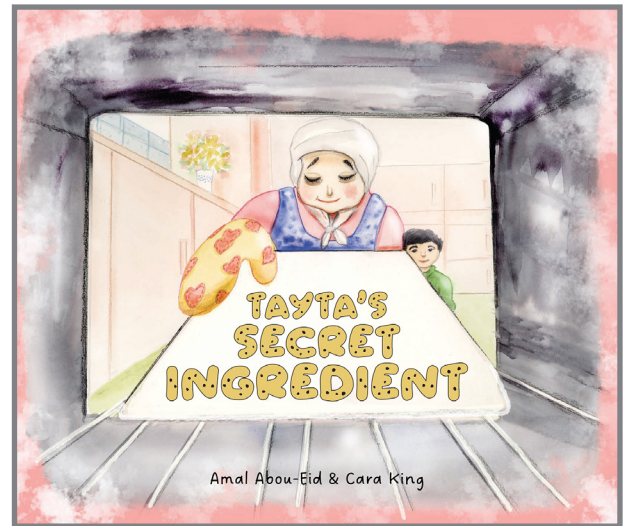
ILLUSTRATOR

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Billy loves Harmony Day. He loves the colours, the clothes and especially the food. This year Tayta is making kaak, a Lebanese treat, for Billy to share with his class but he can't share the recipe because Tayta bakes with a secret ingredient.

Tayta's Secret Ingredient is a heart-warming intergenerational story about everyday life in multicultural Australia, where a curious boy takes centre stage alongside his beloved baking grandmother.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amal Abou-Eid is a passionate educator, mother and author of multiple self-published books. Amal started writing children's books when she realised she couldn't find books for her children with characters and stories that related to their Muslim Lebanese Australian identity. She believes in the power of representation and inclusion in books and writes stories which depict characters and events her family and community can identify with and relate to. She hopes her stories can educate, entertain and empower others to tell their stories, too.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Cara King is a Melbourne-based illustrator and graphic designer. She has illustrated around 10 books since 2016, published both traditionally and for self-publishing authors. Cara enjoys painting in watercolour, scribbling with pencils and dabbles in a bit of digital art too. She has a love of nature, travel and animals and shares her home with her husband, two boys, five chickens, some fish, bees and a toy poodle.

STUDY NOTES

BEFORE READING

- What do you think the secret ingredient might be?
- Do you know what Tayta means?
 - What do you call your grandmother?
- What do you think Tayta will cook with her secret ingredient?
- Do you enjoy baking/cooking? What is your favourite dish to cook?
- Do you make special treats or food for special occasions? What kind of food is it?

AFTER READING

- What is Tayta's secret ingredient? Why can't Billy share it with Ms Bloom?
- Does anyone you know bake with the same ingredient as Tayta?
- What types of cultural food do you enjoy making and eating with your family?
- Do you do anything special to celebrate Harmony Day?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Billy's family is from Lebanon. They wear traditional clothes on special occasions and cook Lebanese food and treats in their home. Do you have cultural clothes at home? When do you wear them?
- Do you cook and bake special cultural foods? Can you name and describe a few?
- Did your family migrate to Australia from another country? Where did they migrate from? What customs and traditions do they still celebrate?
- Get a map of the world and complete the following exercises:
 - Find Lebanon.
 - Then, in groups, find other countries where your grandparents or parents (or you) are from. Work out how far away they are from Australia.
 - What are things that can be different from Australia in those countries? Apart from the clothes and food, as shown in *Tayta's Secret Ingredient*, the weather, the language, the landscape, the houses, the customs and traditions can all be different.
 - Draw an image of yourself (or someone you know) in another country, wearing traditional clothes.
- Try baking your own batch of Kaak using this recipe from Hadia's Website: <<https://hadiaslebanesecuisine.com/newsite/recipe-items/lebanese-sweet-kaak/>>