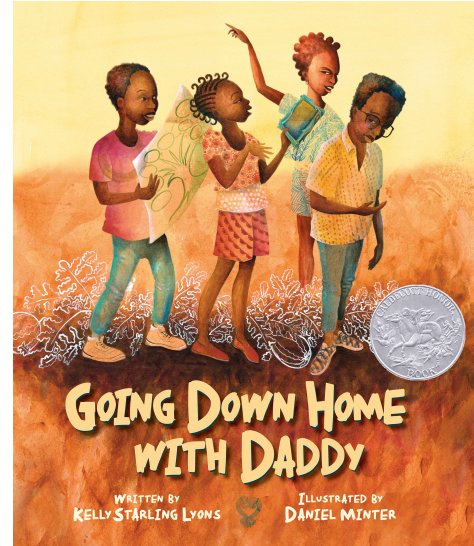


PEACHTREE
TEACHER'S GUIDE
Includes Common Core Standards Correlations

Going Down Home with Daddy

Written by Kelly Starling Lyons
Illustrated by Daniel Minter

HC: 978-1-56145-938-4
Ages 4–8
Lexile • F&P • GRL P; Gr 3



ABOUT THE BOOK

Down home is Granny's house. Down home is where Lil Alan and his parents and sister will join great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Down home is where Lil Alan will hear stories of the ancestors and visit the land that has meant so much to all of them. And down home is where all of the children will find their special way to pay tribute to family history. All the kids have to decide on what tribute to share, but what will Lil Alan do?

THEMES

- Family Traditions
- Remembrance
- Giving
- Family Unity
- Heritage
- Land
- Reunions

SKILLS

- Listening
- Main Idea
- Vocabulary
- Theme
- Symbolism

BEFORE YOU READ

- Show the students the front cover of the book and tell them the title. Then ask the students to predict what the story may be about. Tell students to give reasons to support their predictions.
- Ask students to guess the book's genre. What type of book do they think it is?
- Conduct a picture walk with the students. Ask them to describe the action taking place on each page.
- Explain to students that the story has many strong themes. Ask them what they think some of the themes are. **RL3.9**

AS YOU READ

- Have students identify the problem in the story and predict how Lil Alan will solve it.

AFTER YOU READ

- Ask students to identify the author's purpose. Why do they think she wrote the story? What themes did they notice in the story?

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS

- Name the main character. Give three words that describe this character.

- What does “Going down home” mean to Lil Alan and his family? Do you and your family have a special trip that you take to visit family? If so, where do you go?
- Ask students what the book is about. What is the main idea? Have students give supporting details.
- What is point of view? From whose point of view is the story told? How does point of view affect how a story is told?
- Why is Lil Alan so anxious about what he’s going to share with Granny?
- Setting is very important in the story. Describe the story’s setting. How would the story be different if it took place in the winter? How are the characters and the setting connected?
- Why is the land so important to Lil Alan’s family?
- What are some ways the characters in the story pass on their family history? Do you have any family traditions? If so, what are they?
- In the story, one of Lil Alan’s cousins reads the poem, “Mother to Son” by Langston Hughes: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47559/mother-to-son>. Compare the family in this poem to Lil Alan’s family. How are they alike? How does this poem relate to you and your family?
- Explain to students that symbols are objects that represent or stand for something else. What are the three items Lil Alan presents to his Granny? What does each item symbolize? What item(s) would you choose to represent your family?
- What does Lil Alan mean when he says that he and the other children tried to make the night “stretch on forever”? Describe a time when you tried to do this.
- Describe how the art and text work together to set the mood of the story. **RL K.7 RL 1.7, RL 2.7, RL 3.7**

VOCABULARY

- As a class, discuss the definitions of the following words:
 - anniversary
 - celebration
 - generations
 - reunion
 - dusk
 - jitters
 - tribute

WRITING

- Ask students to summarize the story, making sure to include the beginning, middle, and end. Younger children can dictate the story’s events.

- Have students write about their favorite family memory. For younger students, ask them to draw a picture of their favorite family memory. **W.K.2, W.1.2, W.2.2, W.3.2**
- Have students research one of the plants or vegetables mentioned in the book. Ask students to describe the plant/vegetable. Where does it grow? What are the parts of the plant? Is it edible? Include two facts about the plant/vegetable in the paragraph.
- Write a letter to the author or illustrator of the book. Include questions that you may have about the story and what you think about the story.

SCIENCE

- On pages 3-4, Lil Alan’s shirt is covered in a pattern of ants. Research how ants work together to support their colonies. Why do you think the illustrator made this decision? **NGSS 3-LS2-1**
- Discuss the life cycle of a pea plant using a simple diagram of its life cycle. Discuss and label each stage—seed, sprout, seedling, plant.
- Fill paper or foam cups with potting soil. Demonstrate to students how to plant and nurture a bean seed. Have students label their cups and record their observations over a series of weeks.
- Research one of the fruits or plants mentioned in the book—okra, corn, pecan trees, melons, cotton. Draw a diagram of the life cycle of the plant and write a brief description of that life cycle underneath the diagram.

MATH

- Have students measure and record the growth of their bean plants. Older students should record their data using a bar or line graph.
- Count the number of plants illustrated in white throughout the book. Help students create a bar graph that charts the number of each plant. Which plant occurs the most? The least?
- Granny says “Seventy-five years ago, a farmer and a teacher bought this land.” If the land was bought 75 years ago from today, what year was that?

SOCIAL STUDIES

- During the early 1900s, many African Americans fled the South to the northern United States in a movement called the Great Migration. Like Lil Alan and his family, those who moved away would return to the South to visit family during family reunions. Research the Great Migration. Why did so many African Americans move North? What did they do

when they got there? You can find more information here: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-happened-during-the-great-migration-of-african-americans.html>.

- Use a map of the United States to trace the paths thousands of African Americans took from the southern states to the North.
- Research family reunions. What types of activities do families tend to do during reunions? Why are family reunions important? Plan your own family reunion, listing where you would gather your family, what activities you'd like to do, and what foods you'd like to serve.
- Research the life of the poet Langston Hughes. Try memorizing one of his poems and reciting it to the class. Think about how his poems communicate the theme of home and the importance of memory.
- Discuss the history of slavery in the United States. Why might owning land in the South be significant to families like Lil Alan's?
- Granny mentions that their land was bought 75 years ago. Discuss what was going on in the country during the 1940s.
- Granny mentions Jim Crow. Jim Crow laws were state and local laws that legalized racial segregation in the southern United States and were enforced until 1964. Discuss the time period surrounding Jim Crow laws and the Civil Rights Movement. Why is Granny's remark about fighting Jim Crow important?

ART

- Use art materials to create a family tree. Use the template at <https://freefamilytreetemplates.com/family-tree-with-4-siblings-template/> to get started.
- Show pictures of cotton, okra, watermelons, pecan trees, tomatoes. Then give students art supplies and have them draw their favorite plant. Older students can draw a garden that includes one or more of the plants listed above. Or give children modeling clay and have them sculpt their favorite plant.
- The African American artist, Jacob Lawrence, painted many scenes from African American life, including depictions of the Great Migration. Show students this slide show of his Great Migration series artwork: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4lgvB5cV5E>. Have students create their own painting of an important event in their lives. Have them present their painting and explain it.

- Throughout the story, the illustrator uses Adinkra symbols in the background. Adinkra are symbols that represent concepts and are used in West African cultures. Show students the different Adinkra symbols found on this website: http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra_index.htm. Then have them identify the three recurring symbols found in the book illustrations. Discuss the objects that each symbol shows and the meaning behind the symbols. Then, looking at different spreads in the book, ask the students why the illustrator chose that symbol for those scenes.
- Ask students to create their own symbol similar to Adinkra that represents something important in their lives. Have them explain why they chose the object for their symbol, and what it means to them.

MUSIC

- Lil Alan's father used to play trombone alongside his older brother who played trumpet. Ask students if any of them play an instrument.
- Play the song "His Eye Is on the Sparrow": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H74FBgOZTDw>. You might also show students the lyrics: https://hymnary.org/text/why_should_i_feel_discouraged. Ask students how the song makes them feel. What do they think the song is about? Why did Sis choose to sing this song?
- Lil Alan's family never misses a church service when they visit Granny. Gospel music is an important part of African American church communities. Gospel music originated from spiritual songs that were sung by enslaved people. Some of these spirituals were code songs that freedom seekers sang to help them escape. Play a snippet of the African American spiritual called "Wade in the Water": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmG0Jq55Neo> or "Steal Away" sung by Reverend Pearly Brown: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0J8f_1RYubw. Ask students how the music makes them feel. Why did people sing this song? What might it have meant to an enslaved person running away to freedom?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kelly Starling Lyons is the author of numerous books for young readers, including *One More Dino on the Floor*, *Hope's Gift*, *Ellen's Broom*, and the Jada Jones series.

www.kellystarlinglyons.com

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Daniel Minter is a painter and illustrator, whose work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. He is the illustrator of eleven books for children, including *Step Right Up: How Doc and Jim Key Taught the World about Kindness* and *Ellen's Broom*, for which he received a Coretta Scott King Illustration Honor Award.

danielminter.net

REVIEWS

★ “Imagery is presented in marvelous metaphors...
Minter's acrylic-wash prints soar...

A warm, loving, necessary reminder of the power
in families coming together.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, **STARRED REVIEW**

★ “Minter's illustrations, rendered in an acrylic wash,
work in beautiful harmony with Lyons's joyful portrait
of a deeply loving multigenerational family.

Carefully layered images, patterns, and textures
reinforce the narrative links between family history,
American history, ancestral land and nature,
and the bonds of family...

Readers will enjoy this moving celebration of familial
love, history, and tradition. Highly recommended.”

—*School Library Journal*, **STARRED REVIEW**

“Lyrical...a heartfelt story of family love,
shared history, and connection to a place that binds
everyone together.”

—*Booklist*

“A lushly illustrated tribute to family history...
Lyons's image-rich prose and Minter's powerful
acrylics...convey a sense of historical struggle
alongside cherished tradition while capturing
the experience of performance jitters.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“Geez, this is a gorgeous book. You just want to take out
the pages and frame each and every one....

A true book of family should make you wish you,
like the characters, never had to leave. Of course,
by having this book in hand, you never have to....

Family rendered in its most beautiful light.

A treasure in hand indeed.”

—**Betsy Bird, A Fuse #8 Production**

AWARDS

- ❖ Randolph Caldecott Medal (Honor Book)
—ALSC, 2020
- ❖ Best Book of 2019 —*Kirkus Reviews*, 2019
- ❖ Best Book of 2019 —*School Library Journal*, 2019
- ❖ CCBC Choices (Picture Books for School-Age
Children) —Cooperative Children's Book Center,
2020
- ❖ Chicago Public Library Best of the Best
Book —Chicago Public Library, 2019
- ❖ North Carolina Author Awards (AAUW Award for
Juvenile Literature) —North Carolina Literary &
Historical Association, 2019

Teacher's Guide
prepared by Kesha Grant

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