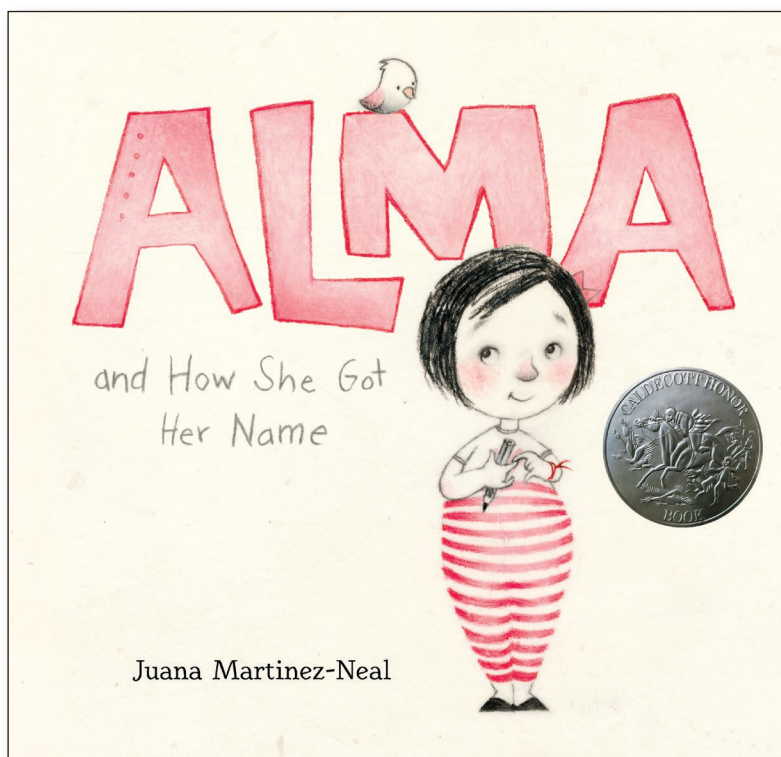


# ALMA and How She Got Her Name

Juana Martinez-Neal

## About the Book

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.



## Common Core Connections

This guide, which can be used with large or small groups, will help students meet several of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts. These include the reading literature standards for key ideas and details, craft and structure, and integration of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL), as well as the speaking and listening standards for comprehension and collaboration and for presentation of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL). Questions can also be used in writing prompts for independent work.

HC: 978-0-7636-9355-8

Spanish edition, *Alma y cómo obtuvo su nombre*

HC: 978-0-7636-9358-9

Both are also available as e-books

  
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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. All of us have a unique name. What is the story of your name?
2. How does Alma feel about her name at the beginning of the story? How does she feel after learning more about her name?
3. Alma's grandfather José liked to "paint everyday life." What does that mean? What is a part of your "everyday life" that you would like to paint?
4. One spread shows Alma's drawings and paintings of different animals with their names written in Spanish. Can you identify the animals' names in English or in another language spoken in your family or community?
5. Because of your ancestors, you are here sharing the world with all of us. What would you say to your ancestors about yourself? What would you like to ask them?
6. If this book had no words, how would the illustrations tell the story of Alma and her name?
7. The story ends with "I am Alma, and I have a story to tell." What is your name? What story do you have to tell?

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The following activities will help students meet the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, grades K-5, including the reading standards for key ideas and details and for integration of knowledge and ideas; the writing standards for text types and purposes, for production and distribution of writing, and for research to build and present knowledge; the speaking and listening standards for comprehension and collaboration and for presentation of knowledge and ideas; and the language standards for vocabulary acquisition and use.

### MY PHOTO ALBUM

In the book, Alma and Daddy look at a photo album together. Digital photography has changed the way many of us preserve our family photos and history. Create a physical or digital photo album of your family.

### TRAVELING AROUND THE WORLD

As Alma says, "The world is so big!" Alma's great-grandmother Esperanza hoped to travel around the world. Write down the places where you would like to travel. Create a map, find the places where you'd like to travel, and connect them with a red string or red lines.

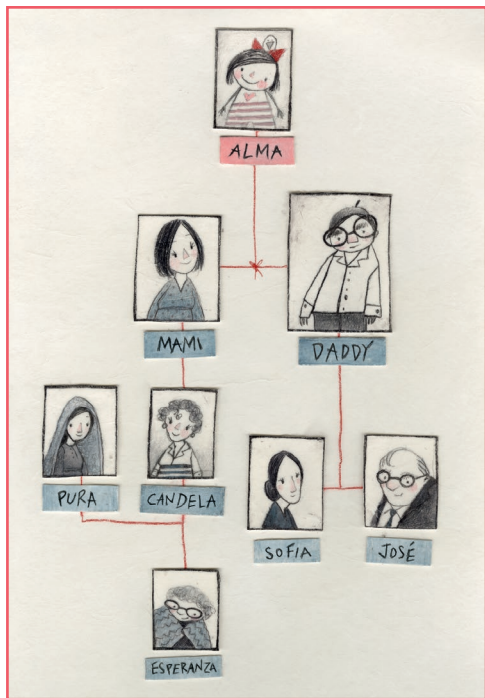
### I HAVE A VOICE

Alma's grandmother Candela "always stood up for what was right." What does standing up for what is right mean to you? What would you stand up for? One spread shows an image of activists holding up signs. Use this image to create your own message. You have a voice to say what is right and what we all need to fight for!

### ORAL HISTORY

Many of our stories are not included in history books or texts; many important stories of our people live in our memories, our lives, and the spoken word. We all have our own history and our own stories to tell. Interview people from your family to learn about your family and yourself.

Illustration © 2018 by Juana Martinez-Neal



## FAMILY TREE ACTIVITY

Throughout the story, Alma learns about her elders and ancestors and how they each connect to her life. We all have people who take care of us, whether they are related by blood or by choice, and they also have people who took care of them. All of them are part of our family tree. Draw your own family tree connecting your elders, ancestors, and important people in your life.

## IMAGES OF ME

You can tell the story of your name and family not only through words, but also through images. Several of Alma's ancestors in the book are surrounded by images of cultural artifacts, paintings, books, nature, and more. Draw or create a collage of images important to you and surround a picture of yourself with all of them. These images will tell the story of yourself.

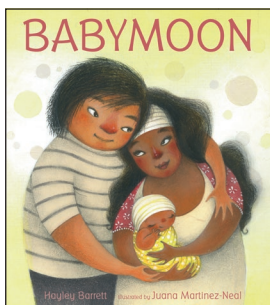
Photo by Jade Beall



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR

Juana Martinez-Neal is the daughter and granddaughter of painters. She started her story in Lima, Peru, and then moved to the United States. She is the author-illustrator of the Caldecott Honor Book *Alma and How She Got Her Name* and winner of the 2018 Pura Belpré Illustrator Award. Juana Martinez-Neal is writing the story of her life, with the help of her husband and three children, in Arizona.

## JUANA MARTINEZ-NEAL'S OTHER BOOKS



*Babymoon*  
by Hayley Barrett  
illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal  
HC: 978-0-7636-8852-3



*Zonia's Rain Forest*  
HC: 978-1-5362-0845-0  
Spanish edition, *La selva de Zonia*  
HC: 978-1-5362-1336-2

This guide was prepared by Sujei Lugo, children's librarian, independent scholar, and activist.