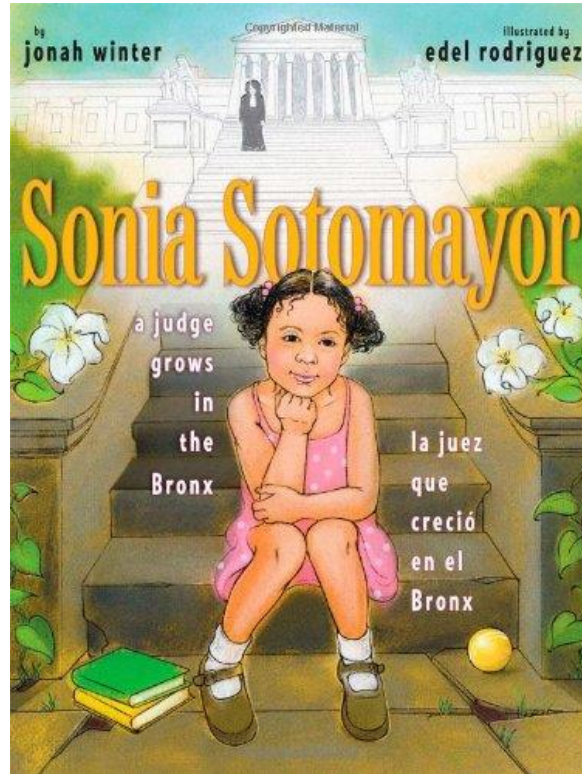


OCTOBER SEL BOOK OF THE MONTH

SONIA SOTOMAYOR, A JUDGE GROWS IN THE BRONX

WRITTEN BY JONAH WINTER AND ILLUSTRATED BY EDEL RODRIGUEZ



SEL Competency	Social-Awareness
SEL Theme	Diversity and Acceptance
ELA Connection	Narrative Writing, Figurative Language, Theme, Author's Purpose, Elements of a Story
Social Studies Connection	Themes: Beliefs and Ideals, Culture, Location-Community U.S. Government, Civil Rights, Historical Figures, U.S. Symbols
Music & Arts Connection	https://sites.google.com/atlantapublicschool.net/apsarts/for-students-parents-teachers/sel-resources

Book Review

Long before Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor took her seat in our nation's highest court, she was a little girl in the South Bronx. Justice Sotomayor didn't have a lot growing up, but she had what she needed—her mother's love, a will to learn and her own determination. With bravery she became the person she wanted to be. This is a timely biography of one of the foremost women leaders in the United States. The Spanish translation is excellent and makes the book accessible to Latino families. Sotomayor's story can inspire children of all ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds to work hard and pursue educational and professional success.

Sonia Sotomayor,

A Judge Grows in the Bronx

Suggested Guiding Questions for a Read Aloud

These suggested guiding questions offer an opportunity to prompt student thinking and discussion around what it means to have acceptance and appreciation for diverse perspectives, experiences, and cultures.

1. What does the author mean by "Sometimes the most beautiful moonflower blossoms in an unexpected place"?
2. Who is Sonia Sotomayor? Why is she significant to our country?
3. How does the author describe Sonia's neighborhood? What is important about the setting of this story?
4. How does the theme of education play a significant role in Sonia's life? What evidence can you find from the text?
5. What cultural traditions does Sonia's family have? What are some of your family's cultural traditions? How are they similar or different to Sonia's family?
6. What challenges did Sonia face as a child growing up?
7. What made Sonia decide to become a judge? What did she do to prepare?
8. When Sonia attended Princeton, she felt different from the other students. Think of a time you may have felt different. What happened and how did you handle it?
9. How did Sonia Sotomayor's childhood help shape her in becoming a strong and dedicated judge?
10. How was Sonia able to become a voice for others? How can you use your voice to make the world a better place?
11. The author ends the story by saying "Success comes to those who make the most of the chances they are offered." Discuss some ways you make the most of chances given to you.
12. Why is it important to learn about other's experiences, even if they are different than our own?

Sonia Sotomayor, a Judge Grows in the Bronx Lesson Ideas

Grades K-8

It's Hispanic Heritage Month. Sonia Sotomayor's family is from Puerto Rico, a Spanish speaking Island. Have students research Hispanic traditions from around the world. Compare and contrast food, traditions, and clothing. Students can draw, write or present to show what they have learned.

Career Day Connection: Sonia Sotomayor knew from the age of eight what she wanted to be when she grew up. Host a class discussion about careers and ask your students what they want to be when they are older. Encourage them to ask their parents or grandparents about the career goals they had when they were young. How many of them actually did—or are still doing—a career they chose when they were young?

Social Studies Connection: teach your students to use their voice productive in curriculum based discussion. Use the SEL productive discussions protocol to teach kids how to agree and disagree agreeably. Get children into groups of 2-3. Choose a questions below that fits with what your students are learning and print the cards from this link.

SEL Productive Discussion Protocol:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z0Rw1QrHPI4qHDnyIkERtL5aeZLBmTIK/view?usp=sharing>

S.S. Curriculum Based Discussion Questions:

- Would your life be different if you lived during the time Christopher Columbus explored...would it be easier or harder? Why?
- The Declaration of Independence argued for the natural right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Which natural right do you think is most important? Would you add another right? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the Creek and Cherokee lived the way they did? If you had to live in the past and make your own food, shelter, and clothing, what is one modern convenience you could not do without? Why?
- The American Indians were impacted by where they were located. How are you impacted by where you live? How do you think your life would change if you lived in the Bronx where Sonia's family lived?
- The Founding Fathers worked and compromised to create a government in which every state was represented in Congress. Do you think the way they decided to structure the government was the best way? How else would you propose that the government could be structures?
- Think about the United States and how we became involved in WWI. Do you think that the United States should have gotten involved? Why or why not?

Civic Action: Discuss ways that students can use their voice to make the world a better place. Have students debate an issue, learn about the current governor's race and the position of each candidate in order to be an informed voter, or have kids create a campaign with posters to hang in the school about an issue related to the curriculum that they are passionate about.

Discuss family traditions. Sonia had family traditions that made her childhood special. Getting together with cousins on Saturday nights, eating rice and beans, and listening to Merengue music, were an important part of Sonia's childhood. What are some traditions—such as events, food, or music—that your students share with their families? Have your students talk about their traditions with their classmates.

Write and Illustrate Additional Pages of the Book. In the last scene of the book, President Obama announces his nomination of Sonia Sotomayor as the next Supreme Court Justice. She then encounters some “bumps on the path” to getting there. Read aloud the last few pages of the book and ask students: What do you think might happen next in the story if it were to continue? What do you think happens after Sonia becomes the nation's first Latina Supreme Court Justice? What kinds of decisions do you think she might make in her position? What will it be like if and when she goes back to her old neighborhood? Have students imagine what would happen in the book if it continued for a few more pages. Instruct them to take their ideas and write and/or draw the next scene or two as they imagine it. If younger students want to write but cannot do so, you can transcribe for them. When completed, students can share their drawings and pages of the book with the rest of the class and you can invite family members in for a whole class reading.

Grades 2-8

Write Biographies of Important Women in history. Ask students: Why is it important that we make note of important women throughout history? Explain to students that that women have had to work hard for opportunities in this country (especially in the past), Explain to students that over the course of our country's history, there have been 112 Supreme Court Justices yet there have only been four women on the Supreme Court. Right now, there are three women—Sonia Sotomayor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Elena Kagan—and the only other woman on the Supreme Court was Sandra Day O'Connor, who retired. Ask students if they can name other important women in our country's history, including important women in the present (e.g., Michelle Obama).

Understand the Use of Metaphor Discuss the use of metaphors in the book. Reread the first sentence of the book aloud: “You never know what can happen. Sometimes the most beautiful moonflower blossoms in an unexpected place.” Ask: Who is the “beautiful moonflower” the book is referring to? What does it mean to “blossom” in this case? If you haven't already talked about the use of metaphor, explain that a metaphor is a word or phrase that is used to make a comparison between people, things, animals or places. Share an example such as: “the snow is a white blanket” or “he is a night owl” and explain that snow is not actually a white blanket but it looks like that and he is not an owl but he stays up late like a night owl. Ask students to share other examples. Read the entire book again and have students call out when they hear a metaphor. There are many examples of metaphors in the book on the following pages: p. 4, 7, 12, 16, 18, 21, 22, 29 and 32. To expand upon this, have students create their own metaphors and turn those into individual or whole class poems.

Find out more about the United States Supreme Court.

In doing your research, try to answer the following questions: How many justices sit on the Supreme Court? How do the justices get selected for the Supreme Court? How long do the justices serve on the Supreme Court? How is the Supreme Court different from the other courts in the United States?

Source: *Source: Anti-defamation League, 2015; Simon & Schuster 2018*

Author/Illustrator Study

Jonah Winter



Jonah Winter is the celebrated author of many picture book biographies, including *Barack*, which was a New York Times bestseller. His books include *Here Comes the Garbage Barge*, *Sonia Sotomayor*, *Roberto Clemente*, and more (see below.) A poet and a painter, Mr. Winter divides his time between Santa Fe and a small town in Pennsylvania.

Find out more: <http://www.jonahwinter.com/>

Edel Rodriguez



Edel Rodriguez is a Cuban American artist who has exhibited internationally with shows in Los Angeles, Toronto, New York, Dallas, Philadelphia, and Spain. Inspired by personal history, religious rituals, politics, memory, and nostalgia, his bold, figurative works are an examination of identity, cultural displacement, and mortality.

Additional Book Recommendations for October's SEL Theme: Diversity and Acceptance

Book Titles

- Julian the Mermaid
- Beautiful Blackbird
- It's Okay to Be Different
- A is for Activism
- The Judgmental Flower
- The Crayon Box That Talked
- The Name Jar
- A Peacock Among Pigeons
- Miss Rumphius
- Those Shoes
- The Story of Ruby Bridges
- Chrysanthemum
- The sandwich swap
- Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun
- Pink and Say
- The Sneeches
- Princess Cupcake Jones
- Puppy, Puppy, Please
- Curlylocks and the 3 Pandas
- Little Lady Leaders
- The Cazuela That the Farm Maiden Stirred

