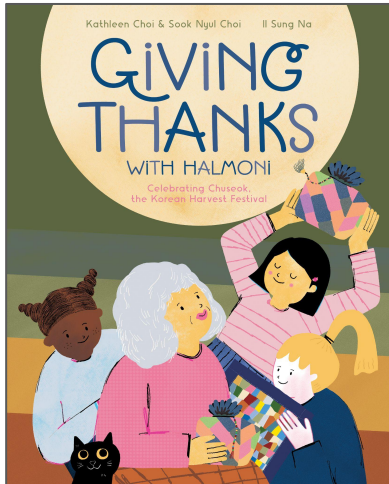


Teacher's Guide



Genre: Juvenile Nonfiction
/ Diversity & Multicultural

Interest Level:
Ages 8+

Guided Reading: W

Themes:
Family &
Intergenerational Bonds
Cultural Traditions
& Heritage
Gratitude & Giving Thanks
Friendship and Inclusion



Giving Thanks with Halmoni

By KATHLEEN CHOI AND SOOK NYUL CHOI

Illustrated by IL SUNG NA

Published by Red Comet Press

ABOUT THE BOOK

This warm, beautifully illustrated picture book introduces readers to **Chuseok**, the Korean harvest festival, through the story of Su-Jin, her Halmoni (grandmother), and her friends Maddy and Keisha. As the girls prepare for the holiday, they learn about traditions, foods, games, and the importance of family and gratitude. The book provides a joyful cross-cultural bridge between Chuseok and American Thanksgiving.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will:

- Understand the meaning and traditions of Chuseok.
- Compare and contrast Chuseok with other cultural harvests celebrations.
- Explore how holidays strengthen family and community bonds.
- Engage in hands-on cultural activities inspired by the story.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. **Picture Walk Prediction.** Flip through the illustrations without reading the text. Ask students:
 - a. What do you notice about the setting
 - b. What kinds of foods and objects do you see?
 - c. What do you think the story might be about?
2. **K-W-L Chart (Know, Want to Know, Learned)**
Before reading, chart what students already know about Korean culture and harvest festivals.
3. **Moon Observation** Have students observe the moon over a week and note changes in its shape—linking to the lunar calendar mentioned in the story



DURING READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why is the moon important to Halmoni?
- What does Chuseok celebrate?
- How does Su-Jin feel about Halmoni missing Chuseok in Korea?
- What traditions do the girls help with?
- How do the characters show gratitude?

POST-READING DISCUSSION

- How is Chuseok similar to Thanksgiving? How is it different?
- What role do food and games play in the celebration?
- Why is it important to share traditions with friends from different backgrounds?
- How might celebrating a holiday help someone feel at home in a new country?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Bojagi Wrapping Art

- Materials: Fabric squares, small boxes, a rubber band (optional).
- Teach students simple wrapping techniques to make an “envelope” or “rose” as Halmoni shows in the book.
- Discuss reusability and sustainability.

2. Songpyeon Craft

- Use playdough or air-dry clay to shape half-moon rice cakes and “fill” them with pretend ingredients
- Label each filling in Korean and English

3. Ancestry Storytelling

- Students bring a family photo or draw one
- Share a story about the people in the picture, similar to Keisha and Halmoni in the story.

4. Math Connection: Lunar Calendar

- Have students calculate the number of days between two full moons.
- Create a moon phase chart for the month.





EXTENSION IDEAS

- **Cooking Together:** Make simple pajun (Korean scallion pancakes) in class or as a family activity.
- **Cultural Exchange Day:** Invite students to share a tradition from their family's heritage.
- **Game Day:** Learn and play Yut Nori or a simple Hwatu-inspired matching game.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- **Social Studies:** World cultures, immigration, traditions, holidays.
- **Language Arts:** Narrative structure, descriptive language, compare/contrast essays.
- **Science:** Phases of the moon, calendars.
- **Art:** Textile design, food art.
- **Math:** Time measurement, patterns (lunar cycles).

KEY VOCABULARY TO EXPLORE

- **Halmoni** – grandmother
- **Chuseok** – Korean harvest festival
- **Bojagi** – traditional wrapping cloth
- **Songpyeon** – half-moon rice cake
- **Hwatu** – Korean playing cards
- **Yut Nori** – traditional board game

WRITING PROMPTS

- Write about a time you shared a tradition with someone outside your family.
- Imagine you are celebrating Chuseok for the first time—describe the sights, sounds, and smells.
- Compare two holidays you know—what do they teach us about gratitude?

ASSESSMENT IDEAS

- Participation in group discussion and activities.
- Completion of compare/contrast chart.
- Creative project (art, writing or performance) inspired by the book.



Common Core Connections:

Reading Literature (RL)

- RL.K-3.1 – Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
Students discuss why Halmoni values the moon, what Chuseok means, and how Su-Jin and her friends prepare for the holiday.
- RL.K-3.2 – Retell familiar stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message.
Students summarize how the friends help Halmoni celebrate Chuseok and identify the theme of gratitude.
- RL.K-3.3 – Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
Students describe Halmoni, Su-Jin, Maddy, and Keisha and how their relationships show kindness and cultural sharing.
- RL.K-3.4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.
Students learn vocabulary such as Halmoni, Chuseok, bojagi, songpyeon.
- RL.K-3.9 – Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.
Students compare Chuseok to Thanksgiving or another harvest celebration they know.

Speaking and Listening (SL)

- SL.K-3.1 – Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade-level topics and texts.
Students share family traditions, compare celebrations, and engage in group discussions.
- SL.K-3.4 – Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and descriptive details.
Students present their ancestry storytelling project or describe their own holiday traditions.

Writing (W)

- W.K-3.2 – Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply facts, and provide some sense of closure.
Students write about Chuseok traditions they learned from the book.
- W.K-3.3 – Write narratives in which they recount two or more sequenced events.
Students imagine and write about celebrating Chuseok, using sequence words like first, next, finally.
- W.K-3.8 – Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
Students use details from the book to answer: “Why is the moon important to Chuseok?”

Language (L)

- L.K-3.4 – Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words.
Students practice using context clues for Korean words and holiday terms.
- L.K-3.5 – Explore word relationships and nuances.
Students compare words like “thankful,” “grateful,” and “appreciative” in the context of the story.