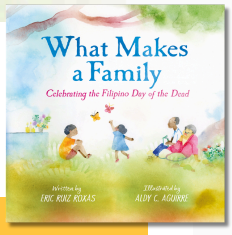
Resources to accompany *What Makes a Family* written by Eric Ruiz Roxas and illustrated by Aldy Aguirre.



Dicussions and Activities:

A note for teachers: Choose activities that suit your class. Discussions about death, remembrance and families may bring up personal experiences. Allow children to decide what they share, and offer opportunities to respond through drawing, conversation or writing. Respect different beliefs and family traditions.

1) Exploring the illustrations

Look closely at Aldy Aguirre's watercolour illustrations. What do you notice about the colours, textures and the way the paint blends? How do the pictures make you feel?



Choose a spread and explore how the illustration helps tell the story. Which details suggest joy, quiet reflection or affection? Why might this painting style suit a story about family and remembrance?

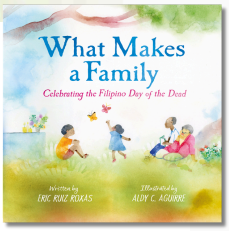
Try using watercolours to paint a moment spent with someone you care about. Choose colours that express how that moment feels.

2) Discovering Undas

Read the information about Undas at the end of the book. Undas takes place in the Philippines on 1 and 2 November, during All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day. Families remember loved ones who have died, often visiting their graves, bringing flowers, lighting candles and praying.

The end matter also describes stories, laughter, food, dancing and singing. Which of these can you find in the story? What does this tell us about the different ways families remember people they love?

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Why might sharing a meal or telling a funny story help people feel connected to someone who has died? Can a gathering include both sadness and happiness?

Create a class display about Undas, using drawings and short captions to show what you have learnt. Explain that traditions can vary between families and communities.

3) Noticing the Philippine setting

Find the Philippines on a map or globe. Where is it in relation to where you live? What do you notice about its many islands?



Explore the illustrations for clues about the setting. Look at the tricycle: how is it different from vehicles you see in your neighbourhood? What would you like to find out about travelling in it?

Use the glossary at the end of the book to explore Filipino words such as nanay, tatay, lolo and lola. What names do you use for the people in your family?

Find out about something else mentioned in the glossary, such as sampaguita flowers or adobo. Can you spot it in the illustrations? What can you learn about it?

Choose one detail to draw and label for a class display about the Philippines. Include something you have discovered and a question you would still like to investigate.

4) Remembering loved ones around the world

People around the world have different traditions for remembering loved ones who have died. Explore another tradition, such as Día de los Muertos in Mexico or Obon in Japan.

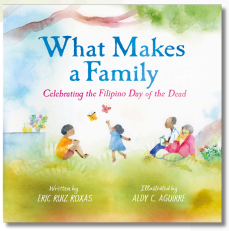
With an adult's help, look at photographs and information about your chosen tradition. Where and when does it take place? How do people remember their loved ones? Do they use flowers, food, lights, music or special places?

Compare it with Undas. What similarities can you find? What makes each tradition distinctive? Mark the countries on a class map and share your discoveries through pictures or a simple comparison chart.

How is Halloween connected to these traditions? Investigate how its history brings together traditions associated with the Celtic festival of Samhain and the Christian observance of All Saints' Day. The name "Halloween" comes from "All Hallows' Eve"—the evening before All Saints' Day.

Undas and Mexico's Día de los Muertos also take place around All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, while drawing on their own cultural traditions. How have these celebrations developed differently? Compare their ways of remembering the dead,

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gathering together, using food and decorations, and expressing beliefs. Which connections surprise you?

Children may share traditions from their own families if they wish, but should not be expected to speak for a whole country or culture.

5) Places and ways to remember

What is a cemetery? What happens there in the story? How do the words and illustrations help us understand it as a place of both remembrance and family gathering?

People also remember loved ones in other ways: through photographs, stories, songs, a planted tree or a memorial bench. What examples can you think of?

Look at photographs of a local memorial or churchyard, or arrange a visit if appropriate. What do you notice? How do people care for these places?

Invite children to draw a place, object or activity that could help someone remember a person they love. They can use an example from the story or imagine one, without sharing a personal loss.



6) What makes someone special?

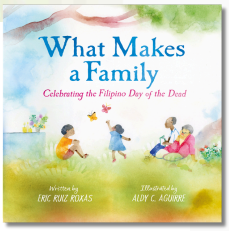
The story invites us to think about the love people share. What qualities help someone feel loved and cared for? Think about kindness, patience, humour, generosity or being a good listener.

Choose a character and explain how their words or actions show one of these qualities.

Invite children to draw a portrait of someone they appreciate and add words or pictures showing what makes that person special. What do they do that makes a difference?

As a class, choose one quality to practise during the week. What might it look like in action? Return to it later and share examples you have noticed.

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7) Families and belonging

The families in the story differ in size, members and ways of spending time together. What do they have in common? What does the story suggest makes a family?



Invite children to draw around a hand, placing a picture of their family in the palm and a word or symbol on each finger to describe it. They can include anyone they consider part of their family and choose whether to share their work.

Revisit the words: “Some families have babies born in the tummy. Some have babies born in the heart.” Look at the accompanying illustration. What do you think the writer is expressing?

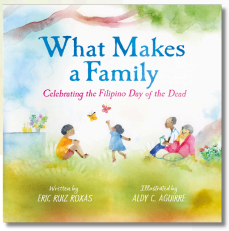
Explain that “born in the heart” is a way of describing a loving connection, including when a child joins a family through adoption. Families can come together in different ways, and every child deserves care and belonging.

Finish by asking: How can we help everyone in our class feel that they belong?

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Colouring Sheet







What Makes a Family?

Families come in all shapes and sizes.
Draw the people who make up your family —
the people you love, who care for you, and who make you feel at home.







What makes your family special? Write one thing you love about your family.



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