Guide for
Going Home, Coming Home
Về Nhà, Thăm Quê Hương
by Truong Tran
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The Five-part Process

Although each book in the AfterSchool KidzLit® program is different, follow the same process to introduce the story, read and talk about it, and help the kids see how it relates to their own lives. This process should be done over several days. For more ideas and information about the process, see “Explore the Five-part Process,” page 16, in the Quick Tips Plus handbook.

Part 1: Introduce the story.
Lead an introductory activity (or two) (see “Introduce,” page 8).

Part 2: Read the story.
Read the story aloud to the kids and define new words (see “Leaders Read,” page 13) or have the kids read the story in pairs or small groups if the reading level is appropriate (see “Kids Read,” page 23).

Part 3: Discuss the story.
If you read the story aloud to the kids, ask some of the group discussion questions listed in the guide (see “Discuss,” page 15). If the kids read the story in pairs or small groups, they can discuss the questions listed in “Talk!” (page 24) on their own. Then reassemble the kids and discuss the book together.

Part 4: Connect to the story.
Lead the kids in a connection activity (or two) to deepen the connection between the story’s content and the kids’ lives (see “Connect,” page 16).

Part 5: Wrap up the story.
Lead the kids in an activity that extends their thinking about the story, reviews new words, or brings closure to the book (see “Wrap It Up!” page 21).
Get Ready

Review the “Five-part Process” to help you lead the guide. Read through “What’s the Story?” “Heads Up!” “Some Things the Kids Will Need to Know,” and “Some Big Ideas Suggested by the Story” for an overview of the book and the themes emphasized in discussions and activities. You and the kids may discover other themes as you read.

What’s the Story?

For Ami Chi, her home has always been a ruby red house in America with a garden in the backyard. But when her family travels all the way to Vietnam one summer to visit her parents’ homeland, she learns that she really has two homes—one in America and another halfway around the world in Vietnam. As she meets her Vietnamese relatives, makes friends, and gets used to life in Vietnam, she realizes that “home” is not only a place but also a feeling deep in one’s heart.

Heads Up!

• This book is written in both English and Vietnamese. The English text includes the following Vietnamese words and names. You may want to practice pronouncing them before you read the book aloud.

  Ami Chi (Vietnamese) AYMEE CHAY: Vietnamese name (p. 5)
  Binh (Vietnamese) BUHN: Vietnamese name (p. 6)
  Ho Chi Minh (HOH CHEE MIHN) City: largest city in Vietnam, formerly known as Saigon (p. 8)
  Ba ngoai (Vietnamese) BAH NGUY: grandmother (p. 11)
Cho Lon (Vietnamese) CHUHR LUHRN: the big market (p. 14)
Cam on (Vietnamese) KOM UHRN: many thanks (p. 17)
Thao (Vietnamese) TOOH: Vietnamese name (p. 17)
Tuan (Vietnamese) TWAHN: Vietnamese name (p. 17)

• Page 3 of the book is an Introduction that gives background about the story and how it reflects the author’s own personal experiences returning to the country his parents once left and rediscovering his identity as a Vietnamese-American man.

Some Things the Kids Will Need to Know
• This story takes place in Vietnam, a country in Southeast Asia. You may want to use a globe or map to point out where Vietnam is in relation to the United States.
• Sometimes people have relatives living in other countries.
• Some Vietnamese Americans were born in Vietnam and immigrated to the United States. Other Vietnamese Americans were born in the U.S.; their parents and/or grandparents were born in Vietnam.

Some Big Ideas Suggested by the Story
New Experiences
• Sometimes people can be afraid of or unsure about things that are new or unfamiliar.
• It can take time to get used to new places and new people.
Family Relationships
• Spending time with extended family can be fun and rewarding.
• Family relationships can be strong no matter how far apart family members might live from one another.

Home
• Home is not only the place where we live but can also be a feeling in one’s heart.
• It is possible to feel “at home” in more than one place.

Cultural Identity
• People can enjoy being part of more than one cultural group.
• Visiting the place(s) your family comes from can teach you about your heritage and culture.
Introduce

Choose 1 or 2 Activities
Lead an introductory activity (or two) to build curiosity and excitement about the story. An introduction prepares the kids for the characters and ideas they will encounter and gives them a chance to build on what they know from their own life experiences.

Going on a Trip
15 minutes

Materials

• Chairs

• Optional: tray and snacks, world map or globe

1. Introduce and discuss. Explain to your kids that, in the story they will hear, a young girl goes on a big trip to visit relatives far away in Vietnam. You may want to use a world map or globe to point out where Vietnam is in relation to the United States. Begin a discussion about getting ready for and going on a trip. Ask these questions:

Q Have you ever gone on a trip?

Q Who were you traveling with?

Q Where were you going and who were you going to see?

Q How did you get there?

Q How did you feel as you were getting ready for your trip? How did you feel when you were traveling there?
2. **Pretend to travel by airplane.** Set up chairs in rows with an aisle down the center, like the seating in an airplane. Include the pilot’s and copilot’s seats at the front and ask for a volunteer flight attendant. Have the kids role-play boarding the plane, the plane taking off, and the flight attendant making announcements and pretending to distribute snacks or drinks. Remind the kids about each of the different emotions they shared about traveling (such as *excited*, *happy*, or *nervous*) and ask them to act out these feelings. Ask questions such as the following and encourage everyone to have fun acting out the scene.

   Q: What might you might say or do if you are [excited]? How might you look?

### A Picture of Home

25 minutes

**Materials**

- Large sheet of paper for each pair
- Markers

1. **Discuss the concept of home.** Explain that the main character in the story the kids are about to hear is a girl named Ami Chi who learns that she has two homes—one in America where she and her parents live and another in Vietnam where her grandmother and other relatives live. First in pairs, and then as a whole group, discuss the following questions:

   Q: What kinds of things do you have in your home?
• Who lives in your home? What other people might live together in a home?
• What good sounds might you hear in your home?
• What good smells might you smell in your home?

2. Illustrate home. Tell the kids that each pair will get a sheet of paper and that they can write their names and the word HOME at the top. (You may want to write the word on a board or piece of chart paper if the kids do not know how to spell it.) Ask the pairs to draw pictures and write words to illustrate what they might see, hear, smell, or feel in and around a home. (For example, someone might draw books, a pet, a big table with people eating, or kids playing a game.) Tell the kids their job is to help make the drawing come alive so it tells everything they can think of about home.

3. Share drawings. Post the finished drawings on a wall or bulletin board so that the kids can walk around and view each other’s work.

A Common Language
10 minutes

Materials
• 8 index cards or small pieces of paper prepared with written question prompts (see Step 1)

1. Prepare the activity. In advance, write the question prompts on the next page on individual index cards or small pieces of paper so that you have a stack for the kids to choose from. You might come up with different questions for your group.
**Suggested Question Prompts:**

- Are you hungry?
- Are you thirsty?
- Are you tired?
- Would you like some ice cream?
- Do you like to play baseball?
- Do you like to play basketball?
- Can you do a somersault?
- How old are you?

2. **Introduce the story.** Explain to the kids that in the story they will hear a girl travels from America to Vietnam to visit her grandmother—but they don’t speak the same language. Explain that the girl speaks English and her grandmother speaks Vietnamese, so they have to learn to communicate without words. Tell the kids that they will play a game in which they will communicate without words.

3. **Play a charades game.** Model the game by being player 1. In front of the group, pick an index card with a question, show that you are reading it to yourself, but keep the question a secret. Invite a volunteer to be player 2. Act out the question on your card without using words. (For example, for “Would you like some ice cream?” you might pretend to hold and lick an ice-cream cone and offer it to player 2 with a questioning expression.) Ask player 2 to say what he or she thinks you are asking. Then have all the kids stand up and act out how they might answer the question. Have the kids approach you in pairs (one pair at a time) to pick different cards to act out.
Help the first partner read the prompt if needed, and then have her act it out while the other tries to guess. After each round, ask the group to act out how they might answer the question. Everyone can do this at once and look around to see the different ways people communicate without words. Have partners switch roles and choose a new card so everyone has a chance to act and guess.
Leaders Read

Use this section only if you are reading aloud to the whole group. For kids reading with kids, use the “Kids Read” pages that begin on page 23.

Reading

10–15 minutes (plus 15–20 minutes for discussion)

Read the book aloud to your group, pausing occasionally for the kids’ comments and questions about the story, its illustrations, or words they don’t know.

NOTE

You may want to introduce “Cool Words” before you read. See “Cool Words,” next page.
Cool Words

Help the kids understand each suggested cool word as you come to it in the story. As you read the story, read the word, briefly define it, and reread the word and the rest of the sentence (for example, “And she rapped—rapped means hit sharply and quickly—and she rapped the desk with her ruler”). You may want to write the word and its definition on a self-stick note and attach it to the page where the word appears. After the story, ask the kids if they remember any words that stood out in the reading. Invite the kids to pick words they like or want to remember and write them.

Vietnam (p. 5): country in Southeast Asia

humid (p. 6): moist and sticky weather

rice paddies (p. 11): flooded fields where rice is grown in wet soil

translates (p. 13): says the same thing in a different language so someone else can understand it

flustered (p. 17): excited and confused

canaries (p. 18): small yellow or green birds

clumsy (p. 21): awkward and likely to have accidents

in a panic (p. 22): suddenly and instantly scared

exchange (p. 25): trade or share

stay in touch (p. 25): keep a relationship going by calling, writing, or e-mailing the other person

For more thoughts about using cool words, see “Cool Words,” page 26, in the Quick Tips Plus handbook.
Discuss

Give the kids a chance to react to the story. First in pairs, and then as a whole group, discuss some of the questions suggested below.

Q How does Ami Chi feel about being in Vietnam at the beginning of her trip?
   Q How do you know?

Q How does Ami Chi feel about Vietnam towards the end of her trip?
   Q How do you know?
   Q What things help her change her mind about Vietnam? How do new relationships help change her mind? New experiences? Her family?

Q How does meeting Thao help Ami Chi?

Q What do you think Ami Chi might have learned about herself?

Q At the end of the story, Ami Chi calls Vietnam her “home away from home” and says, “Home is two different places, on the left and right sides of my heart.” What do you think she means?
   Q What are some reasons Ami Chi feels like Vietnam is also her home?
Choose 1 or 2 Activities
Use connection activities after the reading to help the kids take a deeper look at the story’s content and themes, the characters’ actions and motives, and how the book relates to their own lives.

Pick-up Sticks
Two sessions: one 45-minute session to make pick-up sticks with overnight drying and one 30-minute session to play

Materials
- 29 wooden chopsticks for each group of 2–4 kids
- Craft paint in red, blue, green, yellow, and black
- Waxed paper
- Paintbrushes or small disposable gloves
- Containers of water for cleaning brushes

1. Make pick-up sticks. Remind the kids that Thao and Ami Chi played a game of pick-up sticks with chopsticks. Explain that the kids will make colored sticks and play the same game. Have the kids work in groups of two to four to paint the sticks for a single game set. Each game set should include 1 black, 7 red, 7 blue, 7 yellow, and 7 green sticks. You can have the kids use paintbrushes or wear small disposable gloves and finger paint the sticks. Dry the sticks on waxed paper overnight.
2. **Play the game.** Give each group of two to four kids a set of pick-up sticks. To play:

- One player holds all the sticks together (except the black stick) and drops them lightly onto the floor or table. Let the sticks lie where they landed (no rearranging).
- The first player removes a stick from the pile without moving any other sticks. If she succeeds, it remains her turn. If any other stick moves by accident, the next player starts his turn.
- Throughout the game, the black stick can be used to assist in moving or picking up the dropped sticks.
- A player’s turn ends if a stick in the pile moves; it does not matter how slightly the stick moves!
- Once a player starts to move a stick, it is the one that must be removed (no switching).
- The game ends when all the sticks have been picked up from the pile.

3. **Review the game.** Give the kids a chance to talk about how the game went. What worked? What was challenging? What tips can you share for playing the game next time?

### NOTE

If time is short, you can skip the craft session and purchase sets of pick-up sticks (sometimes called jackstraws) or colored toothpicks for the kids to play with.
Dried Bananas

30 minutes to prepare (plus 2 hours to bake)

Materials

- 1 banana for every two kids
- Cookie sheet
- Butter or oil to grease cookie sheet
- 1 cup of lemon juice
- Oven
- Potholders
- Several dull knives
- 2 or more cutting boards
- Optional: glass jars, tins, or resealable plastic bags

1. Make dried bananas. Remind everyone that Ami Chi falls in love with a delicious snack—dried bananas—when she is in Vietnam. Although this recipe is not exactly like the bananas Ami Chi ate in Vietnam, you can make and enjoy dried banana chips together as a group. Have the kids take turns peeling and slicing the bananas, dipping the slices in the lemon juice, and placing them on the cookie sheet.

Directions

- Peel and slice bananas into 1/8" slices.
- Dip each banana slice into lemon juice.
- Arrange banana slices on greased cookie sheets in a single layer.

NOTE

You may want to tell the kids that these bananas are probably a bit different from Ami Chi’s Vietnamese bananas. If you can’t make dried bananas with the kids, buy a package of banana chips at your local grocery store.
• Bake at 175 degrees (F) for 2 hours or until golden brown and crisp.
• Cool chips before storing.
• Serve or package in glass jars, tins, or resealable plastic bags.

2. **Share the treat.** Share and enjoy the dried bananas your group prepared.

### What Would They Say?

20–25 minutes

1. **Show an example.** Explain that the kids will act out some of the scenes in the story by imagining and saying what they think the characters would say to each other. Demonstrate by showing them the picture on page 4 with Ami Chi and her mother sitting on the plane. Ask for a volunteer to act this out with you. Create a dialogue in which Ami Chi says things like, “But I don’t want to go to Vietnam” and “This trip is really long” and her mother says things like, “It will be okay, Ami Chi” and “You’ll be happy to see your relatives when you get there.”

2. **Create dialogue scenes.** Pair the kids and have each pair pick an illustration to act out. Help the kids plan their conversations by encouraging them to say what they think the characters would be saying. Explain that they will imagine the conversation and can get creative about what the characters might be saying. Here are some two-person scenes to consider:

- Page 12: Ami Chi meets her grandmother.
- Page 20: Ami Chi and Thao play pick-up sticks.
- Page 23: Ami Chi and Thao get caught in rainstorm.

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**NOTE**

The cooking time is 2 hours. You may need to remove the chips from the oven after your kids have gone home, and then share them the next day.
Page 24: Ami Chi and Thao walk in the marketplace.

Page 27: Ami Chi brushes Ba ngoai’s hair.

3. Present to the whole group. Organize the pairs to present their scenes to the whole group in the order of the actual story (it's okay if more than one pair has chosen the same scene to act out). Afterwards, invite the kids to give feedback to each other. Ask questions such as:

Q What did you like about how they acted out that scene?
Q What questions or comments do you have for this pair?
Wrap It Up! Bring Closure to Every Book

Choose 1
These short activities help the kids pull together and extend their thinking and learning about the story, its vocabulary, and its themes.

Pass-the-ball Book Review

15 minutes

Materials

- Ball or other small object for passing

1. Review the story. Briefly review the story with the kids by asking them what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Ask how Ami Chi was feeling as the story unfolded. Consider flipping through the book and showing the illustrations to help the kids remember the story.

2. Play the game. Have everyone sit or stand in a circle. Explain that the object is to pass the ball from player to player without letting it drop. Start by calling out a random number from 1–30. The ball is then passed around the room from player to player while the kids count aloud, starting with 1. When they reach the number you called out, the kid holding the ball gives the book a rating—thumb up, thumb to the side, or thumb down—and tells why. This player then raises the ball overhead, calls out a new random number, and the game continues with the kids counting aloud from 1 again. When they reach the new number, the kid holding the ball gives his or her book rating.

For more about wrapping up the five-part process, see page 33 in the Quick Tips Plus handbook.
and explains why. As the game is played, encourage each person to come up with different reasons for their opinions than those that have been mentioned so far.

Cool Word Telephone

10 minutes

Materials

• Board or chart paper
• Chalk or markers

1. Describe the game. Write the cool words on the board or chart paper. Review their definitions with the group. Explain that you will say a sentence using one or two of the cool words and you will whisper it in the ear of your neighbor. (For example, you might whisper, “I was feeling so clumsy this morning, I fell into a rice paddy!”) This person will then whisper it into the ear of the next person and continue “passing it on” until the sentence is whispered to the last person, who then announces it to the group. Most likely the sentence will have gotten changed around by the time it circulates. Then you will share the original sentence with the kids for everyone to have a good laugh!

2. Play the game. Have the kids sit or stand in a line and play the game. Continue to play additional rounds of the game by asking for volunteers to begin by making up a sentence using at least one of the cool words. Have them whisper it to you first so you can be sure it includes a cool word, and then pass it on. Encourage the kids to get creative with their sentences.
**Kids Read**  
For Kids Reading with Kids

For partner or small-group reading, cross-age buddy reading, or book clubs.

Use this section only if kids are reading with kids. If you are reading aloud to the whole group, use the “Leaders Read” section that begins on page 13.

**Directions to the Leader**

1. Photocopy the “Kids Read” pages that follow. Make one copy for each kid.

2. Introduce the story with an introduction activity or two.  
   (See page 8 of this guide.)

3. Give a set of photocopied pages to each kid. Explain how partners or small groups will use the pages to guide them. You may need to provide extra paper for writing or drawing.

4. Group the kids in pairs or small groups with one book per pair or group.

5. Circulate as the kids read and talk, helping to refocus any who are struggling or off task as you go.

6. Reassemble the kids into one group. Lead a discussion about the book and the “Get It Down!” activity. Discuss what went well and what was challenging during their pair or small-group work.

7. Lead a “Connect” and “Wrap It Up!” activity.

**TIP**

For more information about kids reading with kids, see page 18 in the *Quick Tips Plus* handbook.
Read!

20–25 minutes
(plus 15–20 minutes for discussion)

Decide how you will take turns reading the book together. Take turns reading. If you come across new words that are important to the story, talk about their meaning together or ask a friend or leader for help.

Talk!

Q Why doesn’t Ami Chi like being in Vietnam at the beginning of the story?
   Q How do you know?

Q Why do you think Ami Chi changes her mind and starts to like being in Vietnam?
   Q How do new relationships help her?
   Q How do new experiences help her?
   Q How does her family help her?

Q What does Ami Chi mean at the end of the story when she calls Vietnam her “home away from home”?
Get It Down!

Pretend that you are Ami Chi and you are back home at school in America. Ami Chi is asked to write about a new friend she made during the summer. What might she say about her new friend Thao and their friendship adventures? What details would she include? Write a few sentences about Ami Chi and her new friend, Thao, and draw a picture to go with it.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Cool Words
What words do you like and want to remember? Write them down here.

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________
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