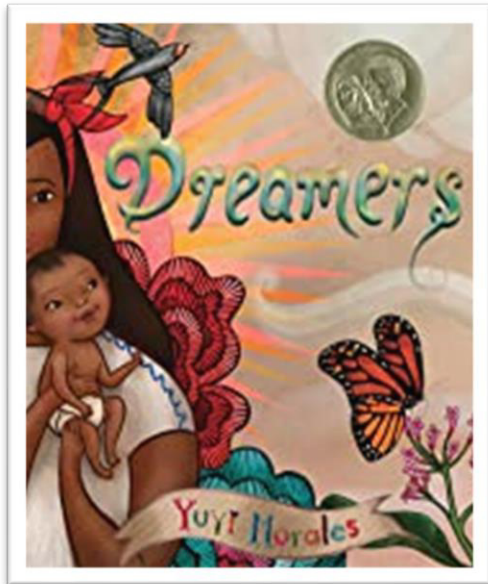


Read for Pleasure

Dreamers

By Yuyi Morales



What if you dreamed of a new life...
and it came true?

What if that new life led you to a new
country where no one spoke your
language, where you felt alone and
ignored?

What if you had to make that new place
your home?

What if you found that home
in a world full of books?

Based on the experiences of the author,
who immigrated to the United States from
Mexico in 1994.

Title Talk

The title of this story is: Dreamers.

- Where and when do we usually dream?
- What might we dream of? Why might we dream of this?
- We can also dream of a better life, one filled with happiness and hope. What might we have to do to achieve such a dream?
- What would you do if the only way to fulfil this dream was to move to a new country, a country where no one spoke your language, where you felt alone and ignored? Would you still go?
- If you did go, what could you do to overcome these barriers to happiness?
- Would such barriers be easy to overcome? Why might this be?
- Who might help us if we were finding it difficult? Why is this important?
Discuss.



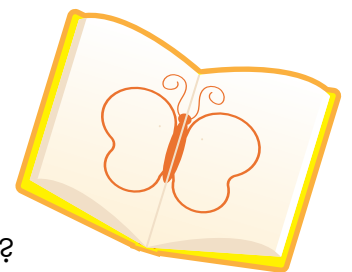
Cover Chat

Now look at the cover of this picture book.

- Open the book and lie it flat so that you can see its cover in full.
- Here we see a mother holding her child. Which of these two characters looks happier? Why might this be?
- When we have a dream, it is often about the life we hope to live in the future. Where is the baby looking? Might this be significant?
- Where is the mother looking? Why might she be looking at us directly?
- How might she be feeling at this time? What might she be thinking?
- This cover is really very clever. Look at the mother's warm, gentle smile. Slowly tilt the book as though you were putting the book face down and no longer wanted to read her story. What happens to her smile? What happens to her eyes? Why might this might be? Discuss.
- Now slowly lift the book as though you were picking it up to show and to share her story with someone else. What do you notice? What happens to her eyes? What happens to her smile?
- What message might the author be trying to send the reader? Discuss.
- To the left of the mother and child, what can you see in the distance?
- What might this smoking volcano represent? Why might it have been placed on the back of this book cover and not the front?
- To the right of the mother and child, what can you see?
- What might a bird flying in the sky and a butterfly feeding on a beautiful flower represent?
- Might these images have been placed on the front cover for a reason?
- Finally, behind this image of a loving mother holding her baby, we glimpse the sun rising in all its glory. Why might this be?

Page 1-2

- Why do you think the author begins this story with I?
- This story is her story. How is this reflected in the illustration?
- How important is it that we know that the story we are about to read belongs to the author herself? Discuss.
- Can you spot the Spanish word for LOVE?
- Why might the word AMOR appear on these pages twice?



Remember: The author is from Mexico and is about to journey to the United States. Might seeing these two languages placed side by side be significant?

Why might these particular words have been written by hand?

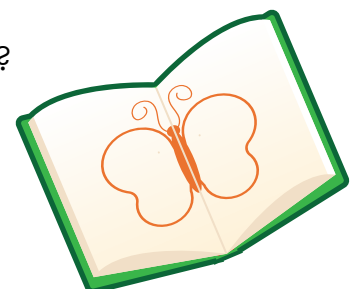
- Look up the word RESPLENDENT. What does it mean?
- Why do you think the author chooses to use this word to describe her life after the birth of her first child?
- How is the brightness and the beauty of her life at this time depicted? Have we seen this before on the front cover? If so, where?

Page 3-4

- Look at Yuyi's backpack. Why might she have packed a pencil?
- Have we seen this pencil before? Where? What did it write?
- Yuyi tells us that she crossed a bridge, a crossing that felt as long as the universe itself. Explore this idea. Why might Yuyi feel that crossing this bridge was A] a long and difficult journey to take and B] a journey that was full of infinite possibilities and hope?
- Do you notice the barbed wire on the bridge? Why might it be there?
- The phrase ADIOS CORAZON is seen at the foot of the page, hand stitched into a piece of ribbon. It means GOODBYE HEART. Might this be why her journey felt so long and so difficult? Discuss.
- Can you see the birds and the butterflies again? Do they remind you of anything? If so, what?
- Can you spot a snake in this scene on page 4? Why might it be there? What might this snake suggest about this Yuyi's journey?

Page 5-6

- Here we see Yuyi and her baby looking out over the new country she is about to call home. How did she feel at this time? Why would this be?
- What is an IMMIGRANT. Look this word up using an online dictionary. How is this word A] edged with excitement and filled with expectation and B] tinged with sadness? Discuss.
- What do you notice in the night sky on page 6?
- Why might both the snake and the butterfly be there?



Page 7-8

- Look up the word MIGRANT? What does this word mean? Does it remind you of a word we have already looked at? Which word is this? How do you think these two words are linked?
- Which words and phrases can you see written in the clouds?
- Why do you think these words have been written backwards?
- How might this make you feel? Why would this be?
- What kind of shop do you notice nearby? Might this be significant?

Page 9-10

- On page 9 Yuyi speaks a single word of English when speaking on the phone. Why is this small positive step so important?
- Did Yuyi ever make any mistakes when she first lived in America?
- How is this depicted on page 10?
- Can you spot the butterfly on this page? Why do you think it is here?

Page 11-12

- There is a Spanish word on these pages. Can you find it?
- What do you think CAMINANTES means? How do you think it might be pronounced?
Knowledge: Translated into English, this word means WALKER.
- Why do you think Yuyi had to walk everywhere? How is this depicted?
- Interestingly, Yuyi has found a stroller she can push her baby around in. What does this tell us about Yuyi as a mother?
- We are told that she takes thousands of steps while looking around until the day she finds something. We see them both staring up towards a building or sign of some sort. What type of building could this be?

Page 13-14

- Where has Yuyi and her baby stepped into and found?
- Why would finding the public library be so important for Yuyi? Discuss.
- Notice that the butterfly (a symbol of migration). It is as though it has been leading Yuyi to this place of knowledge and possibilities.

- Look back at pages 7-8, when Yuyi was stood on the edge of the city. What kind of shop did she not go in?
- If books are important and would help her, why do you think she passed by this shop and did not go in at this stage of her journey? Discuss.

Interestingly, her butterfly does not appear on these pages.

- A library is a PUBLIC building, where books can be taken out FREELY and SHARED with ANYONE. Why is this so important?
- What would this opportunity mean to A] Yuyi and B] her child? Why?

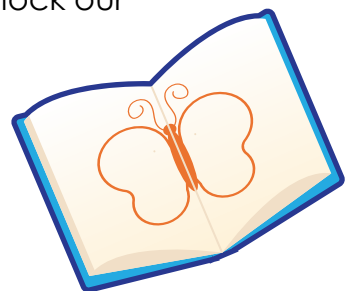
Page 15-16

- Only two words appear on these pages. Which words are they?
- Are these words positive or negative in nature here? Why is this?
- Contrast this with the two words that Yuyi felt when she first entered the library on the previous two pages.

Interestingly, when Yuyi is feeling negative, she reverts back to Spanish. However, when she feels positive, she continues to speak English. Why might this be? Discuss.

Page 17-18

- Books are like keys. They open doors to knowledge and unlock our potential. How is this depicted on these pages?
- What else can reading and sharing books unlock? Discuss.



Page 19-20

- Which word stands out on page 19?
- Why is this important when you don't know a language very well?
- Who does Yuyi learn to TRUST?
- What does the librarian give Yuyi and her baby?
- Why might it be said that the librarian is also trusting when she does this?
- Why is this important when it comes to building a strong community? Discuss.

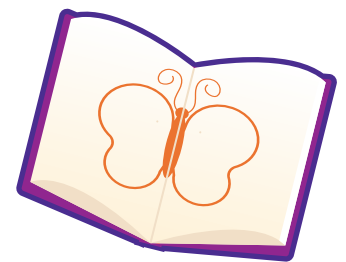
Notice that the butterfly reappears and flies towards the librarian.

Page 21-22

- What did Yuyi learn to do?
- Did it surprise you that some adults can't read and have to learn?
- What does this tell us about Yuyi and her strength of character?
- Why do you think she wanted to learn to read at this time?
- What did books become to Yuyi?
- What does this tell us about how important the library and its books were to Yuyi?
- Is our school/class/local library as important to us? Discuss.

Page 23-24

- Why did Yuyi learn to read?
- Is Yuyi the only one learning to read and write?
Notice the use of the word OUR on page 24.
- What is Yuyi making? Why do you think she is making it?
- What is the baby holding? Why is this significant?
- How might making and writing a book enable Yuyi to tell us her story?
- Why might she want to do this?
- How important is it that we read and listen to her story once it has been written? Discuss.



Page 25-26

- Here we see Yuyi and her child drawing on the blank pages of the book Yuyi has created herself. What is Yuyi drawing?
- Why do you think Yuyi would want to write down and illustrate her story?
- We see her drawing a bird. Yet no birds appear in her story. Why do you think she is drawing it?
- We also see the drawing of a shooting star. Might this be significant?
- What is Yuyi's child (now standing on his own two feet) holding?
- Why might he be holding a rocket and reaching for the stars?

Page 27-28

- What does Yuyi tell us she and her son are? Discuss each one. Relate them to yourself where possible.
 - * We are **stories**: what stories might these be?
 - * We are **two languages**: which two languages are they?
How is this depicted on page 28? Who is writing these words?
Compare how Yuyi writes these words at the start of this story.
 - * We are **lucha**: what does this Spanish word mean? Why use it?
 - * We are **resilience**: why is this an important quality to have?
 - * We are **hope**: what hope do libraries and books give us? Why?
 - * We are **dreamers (sonadores)**: why do we all dream of a better life?
 - * We are **Love**/We are **Amor**: why must we always remember this?

A note about this book:



The perfect companion to
Reading Rocketeers: **Unit 2.6**

WWW.YUYIMORALES.COM



Following her story, the author gives us a factual account of her being an immigrant and decorates this with butterflies.

“One of the most important things I learned at the library is that through books we can find our path and our purpose.”

It is here we learn why Yuyi gave her book the title: Dreamers.

“Kelly (her son) and I were Dreamers in the sense that all immigrants, regardless of our status, are Dreamers: we enter a new country carried by hopes and dreams, and carrying our own special gifts, to build a better future.”

She goes on to provide us with a list of books that have inspired her (and still do). This list of books she shares freely in the hope that it will inspire others.

“To Dreamers of all kinds, especially those who have brought their abundant gifts to a new land – you are the inspiration for this book.”