

A Home Named WALTER

An Educator's Guide for
A Home Named Walter
written by Chelsea Lin Wallace
illustrated by Ginnie Hsu

ABOUT THE BOOK:

A home named Walter learns how to heal his broken heart after a family he loves moves away in this poignant picture book about loss and renewal.

Walter was a happy home.

He loved the bustle and warmth of the family that lived with him. But when they move away, his feelings are hurt. He grows cold and quiet and only wants to be left alone.

So when a little girl and her mama move in, Walter is determined to get them out! But in his struggle to do so, Walter may just feel livable again and change how he feels.

Chelsea Lin Wallace has written a truly poignant story. With its classic sensibility, paired with Ginnie Hsu's warm and lush illustrations, *A Home Named Walter* is a special story that will resonate with many readers for years to come.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Chelsea Lin Wallace is an author and a poet with a Master's in Education. As a former elementary school educator, she loves teaching creative writing to children. As a little girl, Chelsea moved around a lot, but felt a unique connection to every home. She now lives happily in Los Angeles, California with her husband, daughter, and dog.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:

Ginnie Hsu is an illustrator, designer, animator, maker and educator living in upstate NY where she teaches illustration at the University of Syracuse. Her love for drawing began in her childhood in Taiwan, and her work is often inspired by everyday life, nature, human living, travel and old artifacts she randomly finds. She loves mixing new and traditional media to create magic for all. Her illustrated books include *A Home Named Walter* and *Lady Bird Johnson, That's Who!* and her publishing clients include Quarto, Old Dungate Press, Henry Holt, and Feiwel and Friends at Macmillan.

About this resource:

All of the following activities are designed for students in Kindergarten-Third Grade. They can be adapted and differentiated for other grade levels and student needs. Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards connections are listed below each section.

Educators' Guide created by Kari Allen. Kari is a certified elementary school educator and author. Visit her website kariallenwrites.com for more information.

LITERACY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- At one point Walter is described as "A cold, quiet, empty house, growing weeds all around." Use this sentence to talk about adjectives and how they describe objects. Have the students try writing their own descriptive sentences either about Walter (maybe at the end of the book to see how he changed) or of their own home or of their school.

Extension: If you wrote about the school, put it together into a communal piece of writing. Maybe try turning it into a poem.

- Introduce the idea of personification. What evidence of personification can you find in *A Home Named Walter*?

- Discuss what makes a home? Can you have places that feel like a home that are not the actual place you live? Prompt: Describe a place that feels like a home to you. Why does it feel that way? ([See printable prompt.](#))

- What would you name your home and why?

- Walter is very angry at the beginning of the book. How do we know how Walter was feeling? Write or share about a time you were angry. ([See printable prompt.](#))

- Little Girl talks to her Papa but he is not in the story. Discuss and infer why do you think Papa isn't there?

- Discuss who the narrator for this story is. Through whose perspective is the story told? Rewrite the story from a different perspective. For example: the mom, the family that left, a neighbor of Walter's.

CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3

With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7

With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.10

Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.4

Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.6

Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7

Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3

Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.8

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

POETRY

- Most of the book is told through Walter's perspective. Use the poem drawing sheet to have students draw a picture of their own home and name it. Then use the poem template to create A Home Named _____ poems by taking on the perspective of their homes. ([See printable templates.](#))

MATH

-Use measurement to explore a space or a home. Students can use non-standard or standard measurement tools.

- Can you find the perimeter of the space?
- Can you notice any patterns in the measurements you take for certain rooms or spaces?
- Can you make graphs or make an infographic to show the different measurements your spaces have?

- Walk through your own home or school. How many windows can you count? How many doors? How many pictures? Use tally marks to keep track. ([See printable recording sheets](#))

CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.MD.A.2

Express the length of an object as a whole number of length units, by laying multiple copies of a shorter object (the length unit) end to end; understand that the length measurement of an object is the number of same-size length units that span it with no gaps or overlaps

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.2.MD.A.2

Measure the length of an object twice, using length units of different lengths for the two measurements; describe how the two measurements relate to the size of the unit chosen.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.4

Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.K.CC.B.5

Count to answer "how many?" questions about as many as 20 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 10 things in a scattered configuration; given a number from 1-20, count out that many objects.

STEAM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ART and MATH)

- Design and build a house out of found/recycled materials. Have students draw, design and plan out their house before starting. Can the house they are building solve a need or a problem? (Optional extension: Have an architect or someone who works in construction visit with the group to answer questions.)

Extension: Put the homes together to make a town. Have students design and build other buildings. Use the town to introduce mapping skills. Have students draw a map of their town.

NGSS STANDARDS CONNECTIONS:

K-2-ETS1-2 Engineering Design

Develop a simple sketch, drawing, or physical model to illustrate how the shape of an object helps it function as needed to solve a given problem.

3-5-ETS1-1 Engineering Design

Define a simple design problem reflecting a need or a want that includes specified criteria for success and constraints on materials, time, or cost.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Look at photos of homes from around the world and around your country. Compare and contrast how they are different and the same.

- Interview people whose jobs involve building and designing homes: architects, construction workers, plumbers, electricians, designers.

SEL DISCUSSION:

- Sometimes when we are feeling big feelings, we react with big emotions and actions that do not always make sense to someone else. How is Walter really feeling at the beginning of the book? How does he show his feelings?

- After Walter's pipes break, he feels better and is able to move on. Have you ever had an experience like this? How can we release our sadness or anger in a safe, healthy way?

OTHER:

- Draw a picture of where you live. Then add a face to it so that it looks like Walter does in the illustrations by Ginnie Hsu.

- Listen to the song written by Tara Trudel based on *A Home Named Walter*. Discuss how the song connects to the book. The song asks us what makes a home. What do you think makes a home? Extension: Write your own song about your home.



VOCABULARY TO EXPLORE FROM THE TEXT OF *A HOME NAMED WALTER*:

- hustle
- treasured
- ragged
- cramped
- snuffed
- quirks
- coursing

Ideas for Vocabulary:

- Clap the syllables for these words.
- Define the words. What do they mean?
- Look for known phonemic patterns within the words or introduce new ones.

CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.4

Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

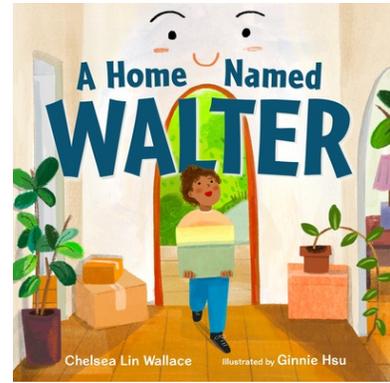
PICTURE BOOK TEXTS THAT COULD BE USED WITH *A HOME NAMED WALTER*:

- *Building Our House* written and illustrated Jonathan Bean
- *Iggy Peck Architect* by Andrea Beaty illustrated by David Roberts
- *Uma Wimple Charts Her House* by Reif Larson and Ben Gibson
- *The Blue House* written and illustrated by Phoebe Wahl
- *Everything You Need for a Treehouse* written by Carter Higgins illustrated by Emily Hughes
- *The Boy Who Loved Maps* written by Kari Allen illustrated by G. Brian Karas

Name: _____

Date: _____

Describe a place that feels like a home to you. What does it look like? What other details can you include? Why does it feel like a home to you?



Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid blue top and bottom lines and a dashed red middle line, repeated ten times.

Name:

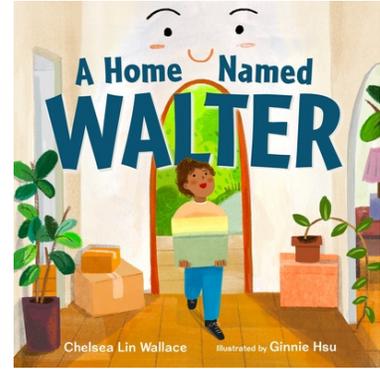
Date:

Handwriting practice area consisting of 10 sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Name _____
:

Date: _____

Walter is very angry at the beginning of the book. Write about a time you felt angry. How did you process your feelings?



Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines: a solid top blue line, a dashed middle red line, and a solid bottom blue line.

Name:

Date:

Handwriting practice area consisting of 10 sets of horizontal lines. Each set includes a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Name: _____

A HOME NAMED _____

Draw a picture of your home. Name it!



A Home Named Walter Poem Template

I am _____
(Name of your home)

_____ lives in me
(List who lives in your home)

I have _____
(Describe outside of home)

And I have _____
(Describe inside of home)

I am _____
(Name of your home)

Sometimes I feel _____
(Describe how your home feels)

I like _____
(List some things your home likes)

I am _____
(Name of your home)

A Home Named Walter Poem Template

I see _____

I taste _____

I hear _____

I wonder _____

I am _____
(Name of your home)

I feel _____

I think _____

I am _____
(Name of your home)

Name _____

How many?

Use tally marks to keep track of how many objects your home has.

A large, empty square box outlined in red, intended for the student to write tally marks to count the number of doors in their home.

How many doors does your home have? Show with tally marks in the box.

A large, empty square box outlined in red, intended for the student to write tally marks to count the number of chairs in their home.

How many chairs does your home have? Show with tally marks in the box.

A large, empty square box outlined in red, intended for the student to write tally marks to count the number of people living in their home.

How many people live in your home? Show with tally marks in the box.



How many doors does your home have? Show with tally marks in the box.



How many photos or artwork does your home have on the walls? Show with tally marks in the box.

Your picture here!

You pick something to tally from your home! Draw a picture and put the tally marks in the box.