

The
Early Years Count
Literacy
Connection



**Alex's Good
Fortune**

Written and illustrated by
Benson Shum

Preschool edition

Overview of Book

Alex is so excited for Chinese New Year and invites her good friend Ethan to join her family in all the festivities! Together, they help the adults make signs, dumplings and more!

Genre: Picture/realistic fiction

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Alex's Good Fortune* to introduce in your classroom:

staff	dragon
banners	dumplings
banquet	tradition

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

**Connecting with the
HighScope Curriculum**

COR Advantage 1.5

Approaches to Learning
Item A (*Initiative and
planning*)

Social and Emotional
Development
Item F (*Building relationships
with other children*)

Creative Arts
Item Z (*Movement*)

Language, Literacy and
Communication Item R
(*Writing*)

Reading Tips

Show the group the book and tell them, "We're going to follow Alex and her friend Ethan as they celebrate Chinese New Year! And look- we can all learn special greetings in Chinese together!" Maintain the enthusiasm that mirrors the children's excitement in the story. Keep a tab on the back page to begin learning the greetings as a group. Ask, "Does anyone have a special greeting they say at a family celebration?" Write down all comments, which might include "Happy Birthday" and other familiar holiday greetings.

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Use small brushes and black paint on red paper to make “banners” while practicing “stroke and sweep” writing movements at **Small Group Time**.

Move like the dragon from the parade as part of **Large Group Time**.

Pretend **Mealtime** is a “banquet” and ask children to share about their favorite family celebrations.

Around the Room

Highlight the book’s content and build on the children’s excitement in a variety of locations.

“Pinch and fold” play dough at the **Art Area** to make *dumplings*. Serve them in the House Area.

Add percussion instruments in the **Music Area**.

Practice the greetings translated in the back of the book together at **Greeting Time**.

Add brooms to the **House Area** for children to “sweep away bad luck”.

Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one “right” answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Alex’s Good Fortune*:

What would you want to do if you were in a parade?

What foods would you have at a banquet?

How does your family celebrate?

*For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact **The Family Connection:***

website—
www.famconn.org

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phone—
574-237-9740

@ Home

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Alex’s Good Fortune* with their child. Here’s a sample message you can send:

The children have enjoyed learning how Alex in the story celebrates Chinese New Year. As you read this book with your child point out in the story the drummers, the people who manage the dragon and all the special banners and foods. Ask questions like, “What would you want to do if you could be in a parade?” Remember with your child the foods served at different family gatherings and holidays and celebrations. Ask, “Which foods are your favorites?” Offer family background as to why some favorite dishes in your family are served at these special times.