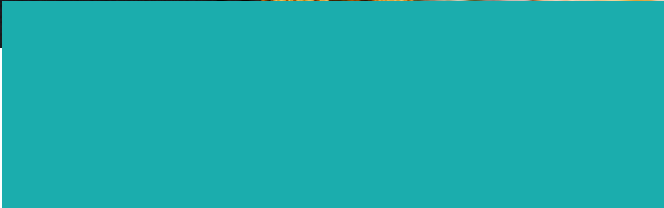
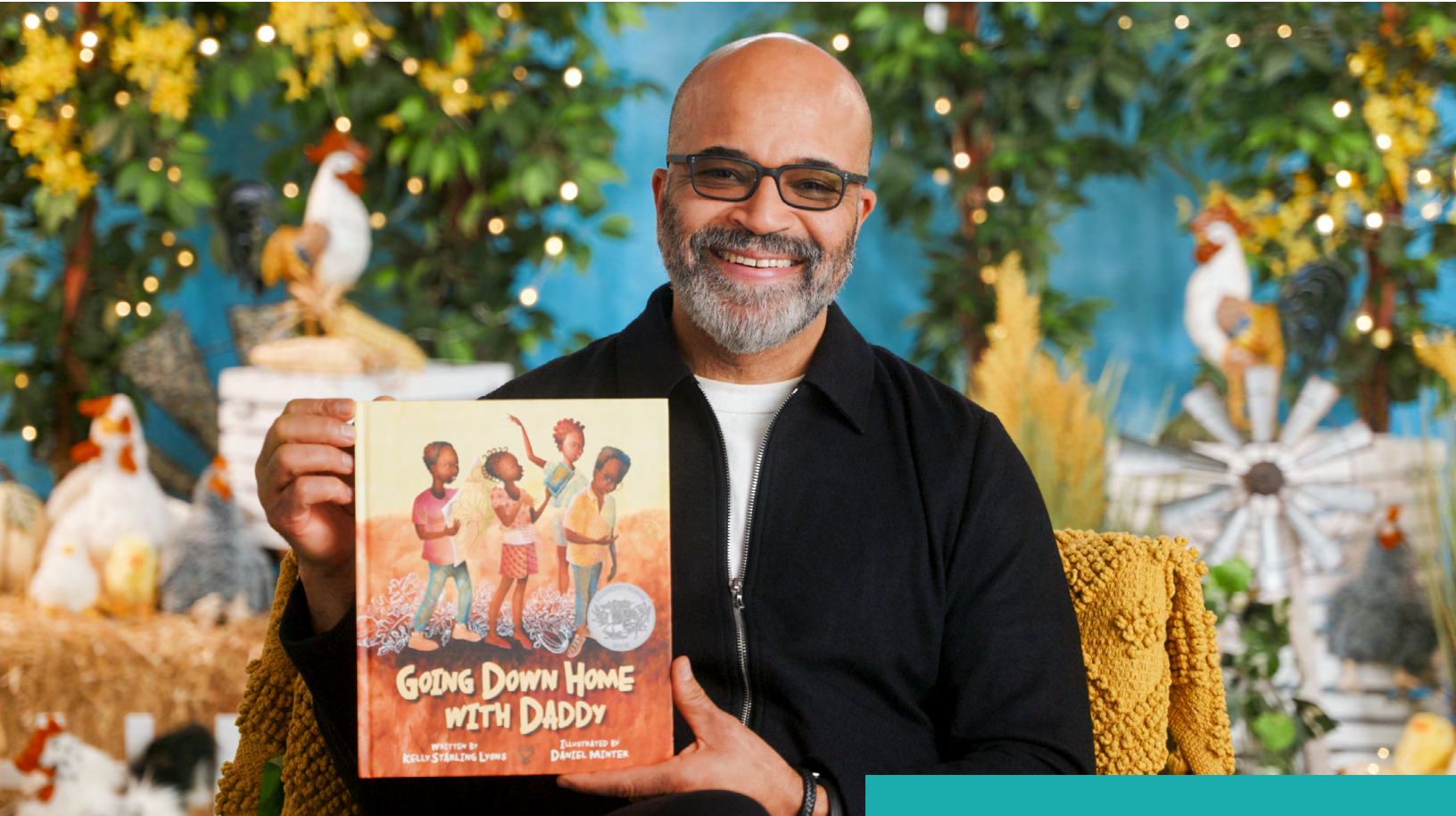




TEACHERS' GUIDE

Going Down Home with Daddy

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: 1st - 3rd

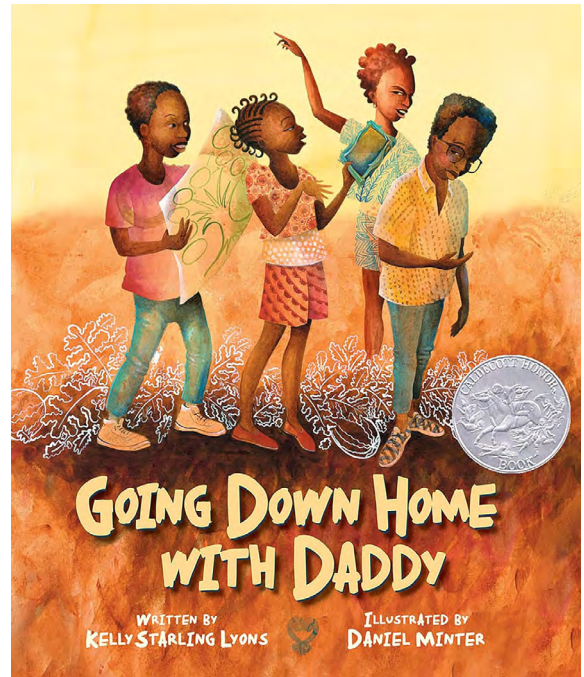


SYNOPSIS

Set at one young boy's annual family reunion, this Caldecott Honor-winning picture book is a rich and moving celebration of Black history, culture, and the power of family traditions.

“On reunion morning, we rise before the sun. Daddy hums as he packs our car with suitcases and a cooler full of snacks. He says there’s nothing like going down home.”

Down home is Granny’s house. Down home is where Lil Alan and his parents and sister will gather with great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Down home is where Lil Alan will hear stories of the ancestors and visit the land that has meant so much to all of them. And down home is where all of the children will find their special way to pay tribute to their family history. All the kids have to decide what they’ll share, but what will Lil Alan do?



THEMES IN THE STORY

- Family traditions
- Remembrance
- Giving
- Family unity
- Heritage
- Land
- Reunions



Written by: Kelly Starling Lyons
Illustrated by: Daniel Minter
Published by: Peachtree Publishing
Read by: Jeffrey Wright
Suggested grade level: 1st - 3rd

ELA COMMON CORE STANDARD

Reading Literature: Students read and respond to works of literature with emphasis on comprehension, and making connections among ideas and between texts with a focus on textual evidence.

Standards listed below are for 1st and 2nd grades, but can be adapted to 3rd grade standards.

BEFORE VIEWING

Standards: *CCSS.SL.1.1, CCSS.SL.2.1*

Objective: Tap into prior knowledge and build background to prepare for viewing the story.

Procedure: Build background with students by discussing the following points. This may be done on the carpet with A/B partners or at their desks.

- What do you see on the cover?
- What do you think the story might be about just by looking at the cover?
- What do you think the title means?
- Do you visit your family for the holidays or other events? What is it like?

DURING VIEWING

Standards: *CCSS.SL.1.2, CCSS.SL.2.2*

Objective: Watch the story and answer the following questions.

Procedure: Stop the video at noted times to ask questions or pose prompts from the suggested list below:

- What clues does the author provide at the beginning of the story of what might happen? (01:21)
- What is Lil Alan's problem in the story? (02:59)
- Why is the land so important to Lil Alan's family? (06:29)
- What does "going down home" mean to Lil Alan and his family? (08:22)

AFTER VIEWING

Standards: *CCSS.RL.1.1, CCSS.RL.2.1*

Objective: Students will ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why* and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

AFTER VIEWING – CONTINUED

Procedure: Students will discuss the following questions with their carpet or table partners:

- How did Lil Alan overcome being anxious about having something to say?
- Lil Alan had cotton, a pecan and dirt when he began to share. What did each item represent?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book?

READING RESPONSE

Standards: *CCSS.RL.1.1, CCSS.RL.2.1*

Objective: Answer reading prompt using details from the text to support the response.

Materials:

- Reading response journal
- Pencils

Procedure:

1. Remind the class that the story takes place at a reunion for Lil Alan's family on a farm and ask the following prompt:

In your own words, describe what Lil Alan learned about his family.

2. Allow time for the group to discuss the prompt.
3. Have students write their responses answering the above prompt in their reading response journals.

Note: Younger students may use sentence stems to help them with their responses. For example:

I think Lil Alan learned _____.

WRITING – POEM

Standards: *CCSS.1.RL.4 and 2.RL.4: Write a descriptive poem using rhythm, rhyme, pattern and alliteration.*

Objective: Students will write an acrostic poem* about their family.

Materials:

- Acrostic Poem worksheet (*page 9 and 10*)
- Pencils

WRITING – CONTINUED

Procedure:

1. Give students the following prompt:

Write an acrostic poem using the word 'FAMILY.' Your poem should relate to the theme of family. **see note*

2. Ask students to brainstorm words that describe or relate to family (e.g., fun, forever, acceptance, appreciation, memories, meaningful, inspiration, important, love, laughter, youth, you, etc.).
3. Give students the **Acrostic Poem** worksheet to write their poem. For a challenge, have students complete the worksheet with the word 'REUNION.'

***Note:** To complete this activity, students should have a basic understanding of an acrostic poem. An acrostic poem is a type of poem where the first letter of each line spells out a word or message, typically vertically. The word being spelled out is often the theme of the poem, and each line usually relates to or describes the subject of the word.

For example:

Forever in my heart,
Always by my side,
Memories we share,
In laughter and in pride.
Love that holds us close,
You are my family.

ART – FAMILY TAPESTRY: A REFLECTION OF US

Art Standard: Make art or design to explore personal interests, questions and curiosity.

Objective: Students will create a personalized artwork that reflects their family, culture and personal identity.

Materials:

- Pencils
- Crayons
- White paper
- Watercolors
- Optional: stencils, decorative paper, hanger for tapestry

Procedure:

1. Share information about the book's illustrator, Daniel Minter, focusing on his use of color, texture, and symbolic designs (e.g., flowers, birds, seeds, trees) to illustrate the themes in the story. Show examples of his artwork from the book to highlight how he uses visual elements to tell a story.
2. Explain to students that they will create their own artwork inspired by their family. Encourage them to think about how their artwork can represent their family's identity, values and experiences.
3. Ask guiding questions, such as: What color could represent your family? Are there patterns, designs, or symbols (e.g., a tree, a bird) that hold special meaning to you? What emotions or stories do you want your artwork to express?
4. Distribute pencils, crayons, paper, watercolors, and any optional materials and instruct students to begin designing their print or tapestry.
5. Encourage them to incorporate a dominant color and recurring designs to give their piece a cohesive theme, and remind them to put thought and emotion into their artwork so that it authentically represents their family and personal identity.
6. Allow students to present their finished pieces to the class, and explain the meaning behind their choices of color, texture, and design.
7. Hang the tapestries or prints in the classroom to celebrate the students' creativity and family connections.

HISTORY – INFLUENTIAL BLACK AMERICANS IN HISTORY

History Standard: Make a timeline to explore historical thinking skills, chronological understanding, civics and social responsibility.

Objective: Students will create a visual timeline highlighting significant figures in Black history, exploring how these people shaped history and connect to the broader theme of storytelling and honoring heritage.

Materials:

- Large roll of paper or poster board
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Glue sticks or tape
- Pre-printed pictures of historical events/figures (optional: allow students to draw their own)
- Sentence strips or index cards for writing dates and descriptions

Procedure:

1. Discuss themes of family, heritage, and honoring ancestors. Highlight how *Going Down Home with Daddy* showcases a family's effort to remember and celebrate their history.
2. Make connections to Black History Month by asking guiding questions, such as: Why is it important to remember our family's history? How does this story connect to Black History Month, where we honor people and events that shaped our world? Emphasize that, just as the characters in the story honor their ancestors, we honor Black history by learning about significant people.
3. Create the timeline base by drawing a long horizontal line on the paper or poster board, marking the start (e.g., 1800s) and end (e.g., today). Identify 8-12 figures in Black history (adjust to age appropriateness), such as:

1822: Harriet Tubman, most well known as an abolitionist and conductor on the Underground Railroad, is born into slavery

1838: Frederick Douglass, an American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman, escapes slavery

1864: George Washington Carver, an American agricultural scientist and inventor, is born into slavery

1947: Jackie Robinson joins Major League Baseball

1955: Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama

1963: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech in Washington D.C.

1967: Thurgood Marshall becomes a Supreme Court Justice

1968: Shirley Anita Chisholm becomes the first black woman to be elected to the United States Congress

1992: Mae Jemison becomes the first African-American woman to travel into space

2008: Barack Obama elected President of the United States

2020: Kamala Harris elected Vice President of the United States

HISTORY – CONTINUED

4. Begin an activity warm-up discussion by asking students what they know about Black History Month. Show pictures of figures like Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, and Martin Luther King Jr., and briefly discuss their contributions.
5. To create the timeline, divide students into small groups, assigning each group a historical figure. Provide pre-printed pictures or allow groups to draw their assigned topic. Have groups write 1-2 sentences (appropriate for their grade level) about their event/figure on a sentence strip, including the date.
6. Have groups present their work and add it to the timeline in chronological order by using glue or tape.
7. Once the timeline is complete, guide a class reflection and discussion by asking questions like: Which event or person did you find most interesting? How do these people help us understand history and the world today?

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide enhances the English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum by providing supplemental learning opportunities alongside quality children’s literature, engaging students as they listen to expressive read alouds.

Suggested story related activities in this guide are aligned with ELA Common Core Standards.