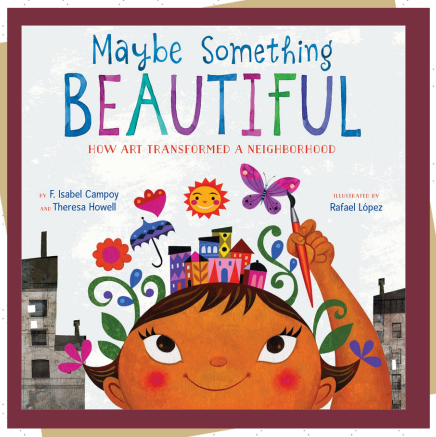

BEYOND THE BOOK GUIDE

Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood
by F. Isabel Campoy

Book Summary

What good can a splash of color do in a community of gray? As Mira and her neighbors discover, more than you think! Based on the true story of the Urban Art Trail in San Diego, California, Maybe Something Beautiful reveals how art can inspire transformation and how even the smallest artists can accomplish something big. Pick up a paintbrush and join the celebration of art and community!

Before Reading the Story

- Discuss what you see on the cover of the book.
- Make predictions on what the story may be about.
- Using Google, look up Urban Art Trail in San Diego, California. What do you find?
- Let's flip through all of the pages of the book. Observe the illustrations closely. What do you notice?

Target Vocabulary

- **scurried**: to move quickly and with short steps
- **muralist**: a person who paints directly on the surface of a wall
- **pizzazz**: a quality or style that is exciting and interesting
- **merengue (mer-ren-gay)**: a Caribbean ballroom dance in which one foot is dragged on every step
- **bebop (bee-bop)**: a fast and complex type of jazz music
- **cha-cha**: a fast dance from Latin America
- **canvas**: a specially prepared piece of cloth on which a picture can be painted by an artist

BEYOND THE BOOK GUIDE

During the Story

- Read the book aloud with the pictures facing your child.
- Make predictions about the story based on the pictures.
- Provide definitions and connections for any of the target vocabulary words that may be unfamiliar.
- Have your child repeat the words that they do not know.
- Relate the details in the story to events and experiences in your everyday life.
- Ask questions throughout the story to help your child understand what's being read.

After Reading the Story

- Have your child retell the story in their own words using the pictures.
- The story is called Maybe Something Beautiful. What is something you consider beautiful?
- Using a piece of paper and art supplies, draw or paint your own mural.
- The people danced while painting the murals. Look up a YouTube video of one of the dance styles.
- Go on nature walk and gather different materials (e.g,. leaves, rocks, sticks, etc.) to create a mural.

Example Questions to Ask

- "The man's laughter was like a _____ spreading across the sky."
- In the beginning of the story, what was Mira giving to people?
- Why do you think the man handed Mira a paintbrush?
- What can you say about Mira and the city where she lived, by looking at the illustrations on pages 2–3?
- If you could join Mira and the muralist, what would you paint on the wall?
- Mira enjoyed giving paintings to others to spread art and joy. What would you do to brighten someone's day?