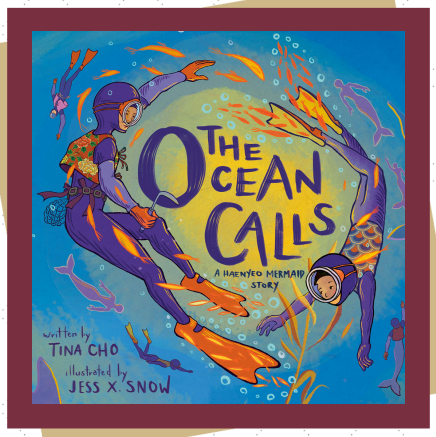


BEYOND THE BOOK GUIDE

The Ocean Calls: A Haenyeo Mermaid Story by Tina Cho

Book Summary

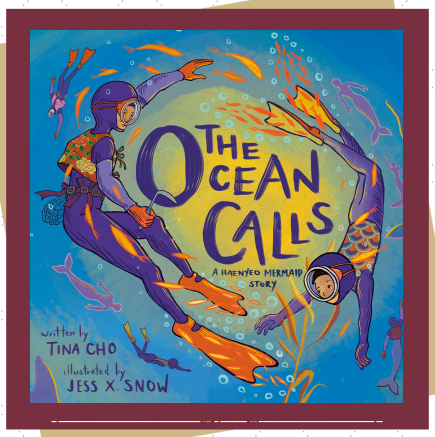
Dayeon wants to be a haenyeo just like Grandma. Generations of Korean women have done the haenyeo dive off the coast of Jeju Island to pluck treasures from the sea. Dayeon believes the haenyeo are as strong and graceful as mermaids. To give her strength, Dayeon eats Grandma's abalone (ab-uh-loney) porridge. She practices holding her breath while they do the dishes. Dayeon grabs her suit, flippers, and goggles. A scary memory of the sea keeps Dayeon from diving, but with Grandma's guidance, she comes to appreciate the ocean's many gifts.

Before Reading the Story

- Discuss what you see on the cover of the book.
- Make predictions on what the story may be about.
- Jeju is pronounced (Jay-Joo).
- Haenyeo is pronounced (Hen-Yo).
- Jeju is a small island on the southern tip of South Korea. Can you find it on a map? On YouTube, search Haenyeo: the sea women of Jeju Island. What did you learn?

Target Vocabulary

- **shivered**: to shake slightly because you are cold or afraid
- **pluck**: to pull something quickly to remove it
- **tromped**: to have walked or stepped heavily
- **sea urchin**: a small sea animal that lives on the ocean floor and is covered in sharp spines
- **shuddered**: to shake because of fear or cold
- **sea anemone**: a small, brightly colored sea animal that looks like a flower and sticks to rocks or coral



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.
- Look up a map of Korea. Label North Korea, South Korea, and Jeju Island.
- Discuss how a mermaid and haenyeo are similar and different.
- Dayeon and Grandma spend time at the beach, cooking, eating, and cleaning together. What kind of things do you do to spend time with your family?

Example Questions to Ask

- Dayeon said "You're like a _____hunting mermaid!"
- What does Grandma cook for Dayeon and why?
- Why was Dayeon scared of swimming?
- Dayeon's Grandma says "Know the sea and find its gifts." What do you think are the gifts of the sea?
- If you could be a haenyeo like Dayeon's Grandma, what kind of things would you dive for?
- Dayeon's Grandma shared a tradition, that is shared with many generations of Korean women. Is there a tradition you have learned from a grandparent or elderly person in your life?
- Dayeon was no longer afraid to be a haenyeo at the end of the story. What would you do if you are afraid to do something?