All the Way to America: the Story of a Big Italian Family and a Little Shovel

**AUTHOR:** Dan Yaccarino
**ILLUSTRATOR:** Dan Yaccarino

**PUBLISHER:** Alfred A. Knopf
**COPYRIGHT DATE:** 2011

**ART MEDIUM:** gouache

**GENRE:** Biography

**LIFE SKILLS:** Courage, Responsibility, Effort, Pride, Resourcefulness

**SYNOPSIS:** The author explains how his ancestors immigrated to New York from Italy, bringing with them a recipe for tomato sauce, some good advice, and a little shovel. The shovel was passed down through the generations, serving a variety of functions, from measuring flour and sugar in a bakery to pouring rock salt on snowy sidewalks. The back jacket flap includes a photo of Dan Yaccarino, holding the little shovel.

**BOOKTALK:** Can you imagine leaving your house to start a new life in another country thousands of miles away? Many families did just that and chose to come to America for better opportunities. In this book, the author and illustrator, Dan Yaccarino, traces his family history back to Italy. Let's find out how it all started with some good advice, tomato sauce, and a little shovel.

**AUTHOR and ILLUSTRATOR:**

Dan Yaccarino has illustrated a variety of children's books and designed characters for television shows. He lives in New York City with his wife and two children.

**Other books written by the author:**
*The Belly Book*
*Birthday Fish*
*Boy and Bot*
*Cooking with Henry and Elliebelly*
*Every Friday*
*The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau*
*Five Little Pumpkins*
*Go Go America*
*Goodnight Mr. Night*
*Kate and Nate Are Running Late*
*Lawn to Lawn*
Mother Goose
Trashy Town
Unlovable

CHALLENGING WORDS (...due to pronunciation, spelling and/or defining):
- Sorrento
- Zucchini
- Opportunities
- Immigrants
- Peddler
- Aniello
- San Gennaro
- zeppoli

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
1. Michele left for the USA with a shovel, photographs and a recipe for tomato sauce. Why do you think those items were important?
2. What three items would you bring to a foreign country?
3. How would you feel if you were boarding a ship to go live in a foreign country where you don’t know anyone?
4. You have arrived in the foreign country. What is the first thing you are going to do?
5. Why did the great-grandfather’s name change from Iaccarino to Yaccarino?
6. What were the different uses of the shovel over the years?
7. What advice was handed down through the generations? What do you think about this advice?
8. Did this book remind you of your own family? How?
9. Did you notice anything in the illustrations that wasn't told in the text?
10. How else could the shovel be used?
11. Look at the illustrations and explain how things changed over the years. How can you tell that some of them show the way life was a long time ago?

ACTIVITIES with CORE STANDARDS:

Language Arts:

1. Compare and contrast with a Venn Diagram The Patchwork Quilt by Patricia Polacco with All The Way To America. Children may also share stories of ancestors that have immigrated to this country. How do their own stories compare to the books? Invite parents to the classroom to share family stories.

1.RI.9 Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).
2.RL.9 Compare and contrast two or more versions of the same story (e.g., Cinderella stories) by different authors or from different cultures.

2. Make a timeline based on the book, including the name of each person and how they used the shovel.

2.RI.3 Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.
3.RI.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

3. Write a letter to a relative, asking them where they were born, where they grew up, and how the world was different when they were your age.

K.SL.3 Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
1.W.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Social Studies:

1. Learn about the Feast of San Gennaro. Taste hot zeppoli and other Italian dishes mentioned throughout the story.

2.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.
3.W.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

2. Interview one or more of your own family members to learn where your ancestors came from and whether there are any special things in your family that have been passed down across the generations. Include a map in your report or on your poster.

K.W.2 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.
2.W.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

RELATED INTERNET SITES:
The Great American Melting Pot – video explains how we come from various backgrounds, but are all Americans.

Immigration Lesson Plan for Grades K-2 (Scholastic)

Statue of Liberty celebrates 125 years http://hmhinentnews.com/americans-celebrate-the-statue-of-libertys-125th-birthday/

Teaching Books.net has many resources about Dan Yaccarino: www.teachingbooks.net

Who Are We? This interactive website shows students that we are a nation of diversity. http://www.webrangers.us/activities/whoarewe/

ATTACH ACTIVITY SHEETS HERE:

Getting to Know You: Developing Short Biographies to Build Community – includes link to biocube. http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/getting-know-developing-short-999.html