

Title, Author, Illustrator:

Maribel's Year

Written By: Michelle Sterling

Illustrated By: Sarah Gonzales

Ideas for enjoying the book at home

Created by: Natomas Unified School District Early Learning

About the Book:

Maribel's Year follows Maribel and her mother as they begin a new life in America while waiting for Papa to join them from the Philippines. Through a year of changing seasons, Maribel experiences a new school, new friends, unfamiliar traditions, and the challenge of missing the people and places she loves. Even though Papa is thousands of miles away, letters, memories, traditions, and family love keep them connected. This lyrical story celebrates family, friendship, belonging, and the ways we can feel close to the people we love—even when they are far away.



Before Reading:

- What do you notice about the cover?
- What do you think about the title?
- What do you think we will discover in this book?



While Reading:

- What do you notice in the picture?
- What do you think about what we just read?
- What are you curious about now?



After Reading:

- What did you think about the book?
- How did it make you feel?
- What was your favorite part?

Jump into Joyful Reading!

Invite your child to share their thinking and ask questions as you enjoy the book together. The main thing is to have fun and enjoy one another's company as you read together. Here are some things you can say and do to create a joyful reading experience for your child.

**Turn the page over for
creative expression ideas!**



Creative Expression Activities

After you read the book, unleash your imagination and creativity! Use the ideas below to choose your own adventure. What other ideas did the book inspire your amazing mind to think of?

 Creative Writing	 Visual and Digital Arts	 Kindness and Community
A Letter to Someone Special: Maribel stays connected to Papa through letters and packages. Help your child write or draw a letter to someone special. Share what you've been doing, something you miss, or something you hope to do together.	My Year in Pictures: Maribel's story follows the changing seasons. Draw four pictures showing something your family enjoys doing in winter, spring, summer, and fall. Create your pictures on paper or with a digital drawing tool.	Welcome a New Friend: Maribel has to adjust to a new school and make new friends. Talk about how you could help someone who is new or feeling left out. Choose one welcoming or kind action to do together.
 Mindfulness and Self-Awareness	 Music and Movement	 Dramatic Play
Feelings Through the Seasons: Think about how Maribel feels as she experiences a new home and misses Papa. Talk about a time you felt lonely, excited, nervous, or happy. Take a few slow breaths and share what helps you feel better.	Move Through the Seasons: Choose a song for each season of the year. Move your body to show what each season feels like—swirling like falling leaves, stretching like spring flowers, or moving like a warm summer breeze.	A Visit From Papa: Pretend someone special is coming to visit after being away for a long time. Act out how you would welcome them, what you would show them, and what you would do together.