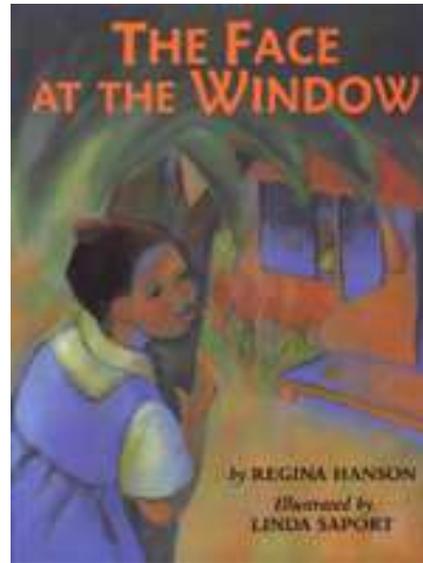


"A petrified Dora listens to the rain pounding on her roof and thinks she hears Miss Nella coming for her on a three-legged horse."

Regina Hanson



### **The Face At The Window**

Regina Hanson

Linda Saport [Illustrator]

Clarion Books 1997

#### **Grade Levels**

9-12

#### **Curriculum Area**

Language Arts • Social Studies

#### **National Language Arts Standards**

##### **NL-ENG.K-12.7 EVALUATING DATA**

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems.

They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources [e.g., print and non-print texts, and artifacts].

##### **NL-ENG.K-12.8**

##### **DEVELOPING RESEARCH SKILLS**

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

#### **National Art Education Standards**

##### **NA-VA.4 UNDERSTAND THE VISUAL ARTS IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURES**

##### **Grades K-4**

Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationship to various cultures.

Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places.

Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art.

#### **National Social Studies Standards**

##### **NSS-G.K-12.2 PLACES AND REGIONS**

Students should understand how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

#### **Objectives**

To provide a range of culturally diverse literature meeting students' needs to understand themselves, understand worldviews and other cultures.

To compare and contrast children in different countries.

Explore how all people use language to communicate.

To demonstrate how languages help us to understand other cultures.

Demonstrate that people everywhere have the same basic needs, but may meet them differently.

To provide meaningful, authentic opportunities to read in a variety of contexts; language in a cultural context.

To gain knowledge of literature, art and history of the West Indies culture.

### Overview

Coerced by her older friends, Dora, who just started school, hurled a stone at Miss Nella's mango tree. Miss Nella's face appeared at the window. "My mama say if you see Miss Nella's face in de window, you in big trouble," Trevor had said. Sensitively told, the story exposes the superstition surrounding mental illness in a small Jamaican community. Dora's parents know Miss Nella and gently guide Dora to confront her own fears and her friends' misconceptions about the woman. Another caringly intimate story from the author of *The Tangerine Tree* brought to life by Saport's striking illustrations.

### Activity

Although this picture book set in Jamaica, has a longer text than most, and includes some dialect, many children will relate to the story.

Outside at recess, Lureen and a girl from her class twirled two jump-ropes. Lureen kept the rhythm by calling out,

"Mosquito one,  
Mosquito two,  
Mosquito jump into hot callaloo!"

Dora joined in the line waiting to jump. As Dora sprang, Lureen yelled,

"Mosquito three,  
Mosquito four,  
Dora hit Miss Nella's door!"

Dora is frightened walking to school past Miss Nella's house because the old woman seems to see things that aren't there and has "such strange and scary ways". According to schoolyard rumor, she changes children into two-headed chickens. Dora and her two friends are outside Miss Nella's house, trying to knock down the last mangoes of the season with stones. Dora's stone bangs her neighbor door: the elderly woman appears at the window. When Dora's parents learn how terrified Dora is, they take her to meet Miss Nella and help her understand that their neighbor is mentally ill but will not harm her. This is a place in which you can have a discussion on mental illness.

[Source: The Face At The Window, Page 7]

### LOOKING EXERCISE

#### The Face At The Window

Regina Hanson

Illustrations Linda Sport

Text Pages 13 and 19



What is going on in this picture? Describe the jump rope game you see. Where do the rhymes that you yell out come from?

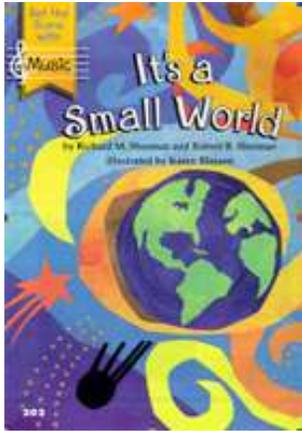


Does the three-legged horse in the rhythm come from stories handed down from Legend? Myth? A good follow up story about the three-legged horse is in the *Mermaid's Twin Sister*. Lynn Joseph. Clarion, 1994.

### Activity

Invite the class to sing, "It's a Small World" with you. Let the children brainstorm about things that children everywhere might have in common. List them on the board. Encourage children to include the similarities mentioned in the song and rhythm. Remind them that all children have needs such as food, shelter, clothing and love. [Source: It's A Small World

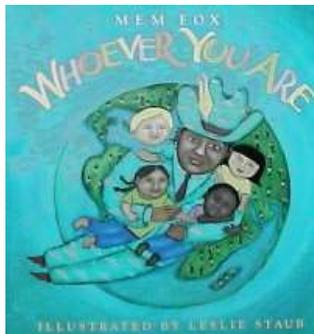
Written by Richard M. Sherman and Robert B. Sherman  
<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/smworld.htm>]



**It's A Small World Music Audio Cassette**  
Harcourt Brace 2000

### Activity

To understand the basic concept of diversity explore and compare the differences and similarities of classroom members. Identify ethnic backgrounds of students in the class and further explore these backgrounds. Read the poem, "Whoever You Are". The more examples that you can give of similarities and differences will help students to also understand students and classmates with disabilities.



**Whoever You Are**  
Mem Fox  
Illustration Leslie Staub  
New York: Harcourt. 2001

Their lives may be  
different from yours,  
and their words may be  
very different from yours.

But inside,  
their hearts are  
just like yours,  
whoever they are,  
wherever they are,  
all over the world.

Mem Fox  
*Whoever You Are*

### Resources

Ajmera, Maya and Anna Rhesa Versola. *Children from Australia to Zimbabwe: A Photographic Journey around the World*. New York: Charlesbridge. 1997.

Fox, Mem. *Whoever You Are*. New York: Harcourt. 2001.

Gray, Nigel. *A Country Far Away*. New York: Orchard Books. 1989.

Hamanaka, Sheila. *All the Colors of the Earth*. New York: Morrow Junior Books.

Joseph, Lynn. *The Mermaid's Twin Sister: More Stories From Trinidad*. New York: Clarion. 1994.

"It's a Small World." *Harcourt Music: Unit Six Audio Cassette*. New York: Harcourt Brace. 2000.

Panzer, Nora. National Museum of American Art. *Celebrate America in Poetry and Art*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children. 1994.

### Internet Websites

Expeditions  
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions>

Mermaid Tales Around the World  
<http://www.humanity.org/voices/folklore/mermaids/>

Seeds of Change Garden  
<http://www.mnh.si.edu/archives/garden/diversity/>

The Mermaid's Twin Sister  
[http://www.humanity.org/voices/folklore/mermaids/twin\\_sister/](http://www.humanity.org/voices/folklore/mermaids/twin_sister/)