




# The Booklist Project

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Focus: Lenore Look

Author Study

Grade Span - Pre-K to Grade 5

Developed by: Patricia Jaspers

SU I 2012

# Lenore Look



## Author Study

By Patricia Jaspers

Lenore Look, who is of Chinese descent, is an author of children's books about Chinese culture and traditions. She writes many essays, poems, and plays about the Chinese-American family and memories of her childhood, especially during the times that she spent with her Chinese immigrant grandmother. She graduated from Princeton University and is formerly a newspaper reporter. When reporting the news she described herself as doing the two things that she especially loves the most – “writing and being curious”.

When Lenore was in kindergarten, she made picture books just for the fun of it and never thought that this would be the beginning of her future career. One day looking for something for her two children to do, Lenore suggested that they make picture books. This prompted her to begin writing children's books. She felt what the Chinese refer to *yun fuen*, the continuing of the work that began in past lives, e.g. her personal experience of making picture books when she was in kindergarten.

Lenore Look is the author of several acclaimed picture books and received several starred reviews in *School Library Journal* and named the ALA-ALSC Notable Children's Books and the Kirkus Review for the Best Continuing Series for her work with the Alvin Ho series.

**Author's Website:** - [www.randomhouse.com/author/results.pperl?authorid=73006](http://www.randomhouse.com/author/results.pperl?authorid=73006)  
- <http://www.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?aid=8778>



Look, L. (199). *Love as strong as ginger*. New York, New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

ISBN: 0-689-821248-5

**Summary:** Katie, a Chinese American girl, spends a day with her grandmother at her job cracking crabs. After working so hard she is exhausted, Katie realizes how hard her grandmother works each day to fulfill her dream to have a better life for her family in America.

**Recommendation:** This story is a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese culture is vividly expressed throughout the story. The author includes a glossary for the Chinese words, which are used in the story. This is very appealing for Chinese American students who can relate to these special Chinese connections. All ELL's can relate to this story, especially those who have grandparents or their own parents working difficult jobs endless hours to fulfill their dreams to have a better life for their children in America.

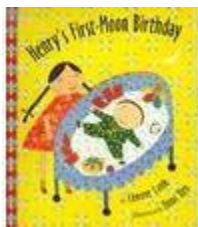
**Grade Level:** 2.5

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

**Interest Level:** Kindergarten-grade 2

**Format:** Book

**Lesson Plan:** [www.homeschoolshare.com/love\\_as\\_strong\\_as\\_ginger.php](http://www.homeschoolshare.com/love_as_strong_as_ginger.php)



Look, L. (2001). *Henry's first-moon birthday*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

ISBN 0689822944

**Summary:** Jenny, a young Chinese American girl, helps her grandmother with preparations for the traditional Chinese celebration for her brother Henry's a one-month birthday – his first-moon. Jenny does not think that he deserves it because all that Henry does is sleep, eat, and cry. Jenny and her grandma work together to prepare everything from dyeing the eggs the Chinese lucky color red, preparing pigs' feet, and ginger soup for the Chinese celebration.

**Recommendation:** This story is a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese native culture is nicely reflected throughout the story. The author includes a glossary for the Chinese words that are used in the story. This will appeal to Chinese American students because they can relate and will learn about their Chinese cultural traditions. This book introduces the Chinese culture especially for adopted Chinese children who may benefit by learning about their particular culture. It can assist all ELL's to learn that we all have our own unique cultures and traditions which we like to celebrate. We have traditions that are special to us and it can be fun to share and to learn about each other's culture.

**Interest Level:** Kindergarten – Grade 2

**Reading Level:** 3.5

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 3-4 – Developing/Expanding

**Format:** Book

**Lesson Plan:** <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/activity-plan-4-5-how-we-celebrate-birthdays>

**Writing activities:** <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/storystarters/storystarter1.htm>  
<http://www.dcmp.org/guides/10025.pdf>



Look, L. (2006). *Uncle Peter's Amazing Chinese Wedding*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers

ISBN: 10: 0689844581

**Summary:** Jenny's favorite uncle Peter is getting married, but Jenny is the only family member who isn't happy about it. Jenny is feeling awful while her family prepares for the traditional Chinese wedding for her uncle. This story tells about a special Chinese tradition in preparing for the tea ceremony, exchanging good-luck money called *hungbau*, and helping the bride with her many ceremonial dresses. Jenny especially worries about not being special as her Uncle Peter's number-one girl now that her new aunt Stella will be around. She tries to prevent the day's events from happening so that Uncle Peter cannot get married.

**Recommendation:** This book would be great for primary grades. It can be used when discussing families, family traditions, different cultural traditions, and Chinese traditions. This story would also be a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese culture is reflected throughout the story. The author includes a glossary for the Chinese words that are used in the story. This is appealing for our Chinese American students because it gives them insight to their Chinese wedding traditions. This book shows children that as families change over time, while our love for each other remains strong. It will be interesting for all ELL's to

read about the Chinese wedding traditions and compare these traditions to theirs. Students will learn to about a typical Chinese wedding, which is completely different from American weddings. They will discover what type of food is served; the ceremonial clothing that is worn; the traditional gifts given; and the ceremony itself.

**Reading Level:** 4.2

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

**Interest Level:** Kindergarten-grade 2

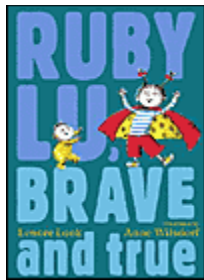
**Format:** Book

**Websites:**

[http://www.rif.org/documents/us/Uncle-Peters-Amazing-Chinese-Wedding\\_A-RIF-Guide-for-Educators.pdf](http://www.rif.org/documents/us/Uncle-Peters-Amazing-Chinese-Wedding_A-RIF-Guide-for-Educators.pdf)

[http://www.rif.org/documents/us/Uncle-Peters-Amazing-Chinese-Wedding\\_RIF-Extension-Activities-for-Educators.pdf](http://www.rif.org/documents/us/Uncle-Peters-Amazing-Chinese-Wedding_RIF-Extension-Activities-for-Educators.pdf)

[http://www.rif.org/documents/us/Uncle-Peters-Amazing-Chinese-Wedding\\_A-RIF-Vocabulary-Scaffold.pdf](http://www.rif.org/documents/us/Uncle-Peters-Amazing-Chinese-Wedding_A-RIF-Vocabulary-Scaffold.pdf)



Look, L. (2004). *Ruby Lu, brave and true*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

ISBN: 0-689-84907-9

**Summary:** Ruby Lu is an eight-year-old Chinese American girl who lives a life filled with fun. This is an amusing book for beginning readers about Ruby's great imagination as shown in her love for performing magic shows; she is wild about her new baby brother; she loves her grandparents; and the snacks that are provided at Chinese School. However, she does not like a girl in her class named Christina or learning the new Chinese words. By the end of this story, Ruby's friendship grows with Christina and she becomes proud of her newly learned Chinese talents. The story includes black-and-white illustrations.

**Recommendation:** This story is a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students and could easily serve as a basis for them to relate their personal experiences with Chinese culture and their own identity. The Chinese culture is portrayed throughout the story. The book includes a glossary for Chinese words used in the story. This is appealing for our Chinese American students when they relate to the Chinese cultural traditions. It is a fun story that ELLs and independent readers will enjoy reading.

**Reading Level:** 4.1

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

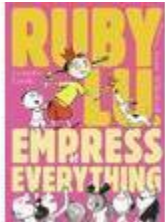
**Interest Level:** Grade 3-grade 5

**Format:** Book

**Websites:**

<http://k8talksbooks.blogspot.com/2008/02/ruby-lu-brave-and-true-by-lenore-look.html>

[http://beepdf.com/doc/104514/ruby\\_lu\\_brave\\_and\\_true.html](http://beepdf.com/doc/104514/ruby_lu_brave_and_true.html)



Look, L. (2006). *Ruby Lu, empress of everything*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

ISBN-10: 0689864604

**Summary:** This is a sequel to *Ruby Lu, brave and true*. Ruby's cousin Flying Duck emigrates from China to live with her family. Flying Duck is Ruby's new best friend and to accommodate the new arrivals, no one will speak English. They will eat ethnic food every night and use chopsticks. Another problem is that Flying Duck is deaf. Ruby doesn't know any Chinese sign language. Ruby also wants to learn how to swim, and she has to attend summer school. This is a lot for Ruby to handle!

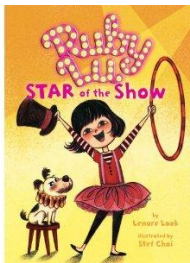
**Recommendation:** This beginner's chapter book would be a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese culture is represented throughout the story. The author includes a glossary for Chinese words used in the story. This is appealing for our Chinese American students when they relate to the Chinese cultural traditions shared. It addresses hearing disabilities and how a family deals with it. It is a fun story that all ELL will enjoy, perhaps a teacher too! It begins the discussion about achieving and doing a number of things at the same time.

**Reading Level:** 3.8

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

**Interest Level:** Grade 3-5

**Format:** Book



Look, L. (2011). *Ruby Lu Star of the show*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers

**ISBN-10:** 1416917756

**Summary:** There is a big change for Ruby because her father lost his job. Now, her mother must go to work to support the family. Ruby and her little brother, Oscar, need to adjust because their father is now caring for them. Money is tight. So, Ruby tries to make changes and earn money on her own. In addition, Ruby discovers that making money is not easy. She cannot wait to start third grade to do all the exciting things third graders do, ballroom dancing, playing a musical instruments, and writing in cursive. All these things are going on all at the same time is exciting for Ruby. Ruby begins to realize that a loving family is the most precious thing of all.

**Recommendation:** This beginner's chapter book is a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese culture is portrayed throughout the story. The book includes a glossary for Chinese words used in the story. This is appealing for our Chinese American students when they relate to the Chinese cultural traditions shared. It addresses stresses that children bear when a parent loses a job and the effects young children experience. How the love of family helps to make things a little better, especially when going through these family difficulties. It is a fun story that all young independent ELL readers and early readers will enjoy.

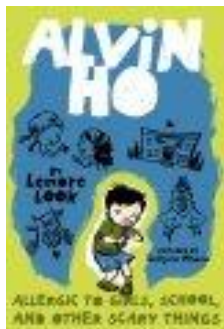
**Reading Level:** 3.9

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

**Interest Level:** Grade 2-4

**Format:** -Book

<http://www.state.lib.la.us/empowerlibrary/RUBY%20LU%20BRAVE%20AND%20TRUE.pdf>



Look, L. (2008). *Alvin Ho allergic to girls, school, and other scary things*. New York: Schwartz & Wade Books.

**ISBN-13:** 9780375849305

**Summary:** Alvin Ho is going into second grade. He lives in Concord, Massachusetts with his Chinese family. Alvin is fearful of girls, new situations, elevators, bridges and school! For him, life would be perfect if there wasn't any school. He would prefer to stay home and dig holes or make things explode dressed as Firecracker Man! This neurotic boy has plans and a Personal Disaster Kit (PDK) is one of them, which Alvin thinks will help him handle almost anything, but

things don't go as he planned. Children will enjoy Alvin as he tries to solve some difficult predicaments that have hysterical outcomes. With the help of his friends and family, he learns how to deal with them, especially while having fun.

**Recommendation:** This chapter book is a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese culture is reflected throughout the story. Included in the book is a glossary for Chinese words that are used in the story. This is appealing for our Chinese American students when they can relate to the Chinese cultural traditions. Students will connect with the character and all his fears. It would be a perfect read aloud for first and second graders. ELL's may relate to the fear, the friendships and the building of self-confidence experienced in this book. It is a fun story that all students will enjoy.

**Reading Level:** 3.8

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

**Interest Level:** Grade 3-5

**Format:** -Book

-Kindle and free Kindle apps

-ebook compatible devices and computers

**Website:** -<http://quizlet.com/10279069/alvin-ho-allergic-to-girls-school-other-scary-things-flash-cards/>

- <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/>

- <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/>

- [http://www.professorgarfield.org/pgf\\_comics\\_lab.html](http://www.professorgarfield.org/pgf_comics_lab.html)



Look, L. (2009). *Alvin Ho Allergic to camping, hiking, and other natural disasters*. New York: Schwartz & Wade Books.

ISBN: 978-0-375-85750-8

**Summary:** This is the second book in the funny Alvin Ho chapter book series. The neurotic Alvin Ho has another worst fear, which is to go camping. He is frightened about the wilderness with bears, the darkness, and where to go to the bathroom. He brought night-vision goggles, water purifying tablets, and super-duper heavy-duty flashlight to help keep him and his dad safe.



**Recommendation:** This chapter book would be a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese culture is represented throughout the story. The author includes a glossary for Chinese words used in the story. This is appealing for our Chinese American students it will assist lowering their affective filter when they relate to the Chinese cultural traditions and to the character and his fears. Alvin Ho is getting ready for second grade. So, it would be a perfect read aloud for first graders and second graders. This funny chapter book about a Chinese-American second grader is perfect for beginning and reluctant readers alike with lots of boy appeal. The Alvin Ho series was honored by *Kirkus Reviews* Best Continuing Series. It is a fun story that all students will enjoy.

**Reading Level:** 3.7

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

**Interest Level:** Grade 3-5

**Format:** -Book

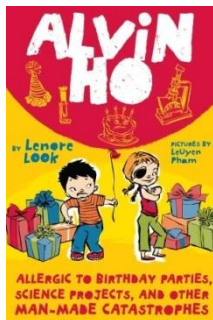
-Kindle and free Kindle apps

-ebook compatible devices and computers

**Website:** -<http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/>

-<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/>

-[http://www.professorgarfield.org/pgf\\_comics\\_lab.html](http://www.professorgarfield.org/pgf_comics_lab.html)



Look, L. (2010). *Alvin Ho allergic to birthday parties, science projects, and other man-made catastrophes*. New York: Schwartz & Wade Books.

-Kirkus Reviews Best Continuing Series

**Summary:** This is the third book in the hilarious Alvin Ho chapter book series. Alvin Ho is afraid of almost everything. In this book, he is nervous about an invitation to a birthday party. He fears that he may be ready for a bowling party. . . but when he gets there, it is a swimming party. So, when he receives the actual invitation – it’s for a *girl’s* party, Alvin doesn’t know how he will survive. This is a comical book about an Asian American second grader who is frightens himself endlessly about everything.

**Recommendations:** This chapter book is a great story for an ELL, especially for Chinese American students. The Chinese culture is reflected throughout the story. The author includes a glossary for Chinese words used in the story. This is appealing for our Chinese American students can relate or learn about the Chinese cultural traditions. This book will interest children who have fears, which they can relate to Alvin and his fears. It will be appealing to boys and reluctant readers.

**Reading Level:** 3.8

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 4 - Expanding

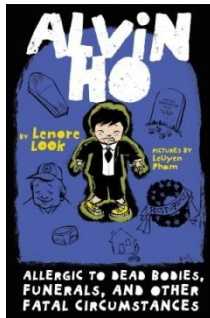
**Interest Level:** Grade 3-5

**Format:** -Book

-Kindle and free Kindle apps

-ebook compatible devices and computers

[http://www.edhelper.com/books/Alvin\\_Ho\\_Allergic\\_to\\_Birthday\\_Parties\\_Science\\_ProWordWall.htm](http://www.edhelper.com/books/Alvin_Ho_Allergic_to_Birthday_Parties_Science_ProWordWall.htm)



Look, L. (2011). *Alvin Ho allergic to dead bodies, funerals, and other fatal circumstances*. New York: Schwartz & Wade Books.

ISBN 9780375868313

**Summary:** This is the fourth book in the Alvin Ho chapter book series. It is about the neurotic second grader who deals with something very scary: the idea that someone he loves might die. When Alvin's grandfather, GungGung, loses his best friend, Alvin offers to go with Gung Gung to the funeral. This experience makes Alvin uneasy about what he would do if he lost his grandfather. This book touches on a more serious and sensitive subject about a child who finds the world very challenging.

**Recommendation:** For any young grade-school reader and even older elementary because they can probably laugh easier in a light-hearted treatment of the subject of death and dying in a child's sensitive way. The different cultural responses to death and burial is approached cautiously with careful and skill to young readers. This book could be a source for opening a discussion about the sensitivity to death, dying and different cultural practices for remembering and honoring people who die.

**Reading Level:** 3.7

**WIDA Proficiency Level:** 5 - Bridging

**Interest Level:** Grade 3-5

**Format:** -Book

-Kindle and free Kindle apps

-ebook compatible devices and computers

# REACH. INSPIRE. CONNECT.



## The Booklist Project

A Project of the  
M.Ed. In TESL Program,



Feinstein School of Education and Human  
Development  
Rhode Island College

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