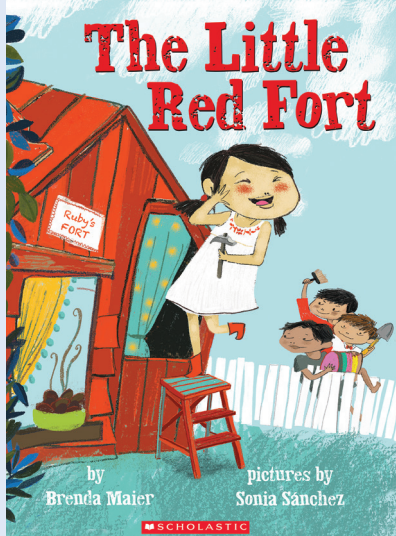


The Little Red Fort

written by Brenda Maier; illustrated by Sonia Sánchez



AT A GLANCE

Based on the familiar tale of “The Little Red Hen,” *The Little Red Fort* by Brenda Maier creates the engaging character of Ruby, who wants to build a fort. Every time she asks her three brothers for help, they refuse. But that doesn’t stop the indomitable Ruby from finding a way to get things done. She engages the help of the grown-ups in her family and perseveres. Using her planning and building skills, Ruby creates a terrific little fort that impresses her brothers. Her brothers collaborate to surprise Ruby, and she invites them into the little red fort for a delicious treat.

Genre/Text Type: Fractured Folktale/
Picture Book
Social-Emotional Focus: Relationship
Skills

Strategy Focus: Compare and Contrast
STEAM Focus: Architecture

Rising Voices Theme Leadership and Collaboration

Note to the Teacher

- **Read-Aloud Tip** Have fun exaggerating the repetition of the question, “Who wants to help me...?”, and the replies, “Not me,” “I don’t think so,” and “No way. I’m too busy.”
- **Language Support** The author describes the different tasks needed to build the fort—draw the plans, gather the supplies, cut the boards, and hammer the nails. Invite children to act out each task.
- **Background** Ruby thinks like an architect. She first makes a plan for her fort. Ruby gets help from adult family members as she builds because the tools that builders use are not safe for young children to use on their own. The adults support her and make sure that the fort is both safe and strong.

Vocabulary

delighted (p. 33) very happy

fort (cover) a place created for children to play in

supplies (p. 14) things needed for a special purpose

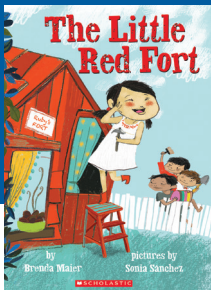
INTRODUCE THE BOOK

Display the cover and introduce Ruby and her three brothers—Oscar Lee, Rodrigo, and José. Explain that *The Little Red Fort* is a story that in some ways is like the story of “The Little Red Hen.” Recall with children that the Little Red Hen had a plan and asked her friends for help. Tell children that Ruby, whose mind is full of ideas, has her own plan. She wants to build a fort and asks her brothers to help. Ask: *Do you think her brothers will help her? Let’s find out more about clever Ruby and her amazing fort.*

DURING READING

As you read the book, pause to discuss the questions below. Encourage children to turn and talk with partners or share their thinking with the whole group.

- pp. 2–9** Ruby’s brothers say, “You don’t know how to build anything.” Ruby says, “Then I’ll learn.” What does that show about what Ruby thinks about herself and what she can do? (**analyze character**)
- pp. 10–13** When her brothers won’t help her draw the plans, how does Ruby solve that problem? Why is drawing plans a good first step when building something? (**problem and solution**)
- pp. 14–25** Even though her brothers don’t help, other family members do. Why was it good thinking for Ruby to ask grown-ups to help her when working with building tools? (**compare and contrast, make inferences**)
- pp. 26–33** After Ruby does not invite her brothers to play in the fort because they didn’t help her build it, the brothers do different things; but what is alike about all the things they do that delight Ruby? (**compare and contrast**)
- pp. 34–37** At the end of the story, Ruby shares her cookies and her fort. Ruby is very proud of her little red fort. When have you been proud of a plan that you made and carried out? (**make connections**)



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AFTER READING

Strategy Focus: Compare and Contrast

Say: *In this story, you meet Ruby and her three brothers. When you compare and contrast characters, you think about how they are alike and how they are different. Ask yourself:*

- *In what ways are the characters alike?*
- *In what ways are the characters different?*

You can better get to know characters when you understand how they are alike and how they are different.

Revisit and read aloud page 10. Guide children to identify in what ways Oscar Lee, Rodrigo, and José are alike. Then ask them to tell in what ways Ruby is different from her three brothers. Discuss why these differences are important to the story.

Extend Learning

Write an Invitation Recall with children that Ruby is very proud of her little red fort. Have children write an invitation that Ruby might send to someone she wants to invite to come and play in her little red fort. Ask children to write things that Ruby might say about her wonderful fort.

(informative/explanatory)

Book Club Discussion Have children meet in small groups to think about the text and discuss the questions below.

- **Leadership and Collaboration** *A leader gets other people to work together to get things done. How does Ruby show she is a leader? When people collaborate, they work together. By the time the story is done, who are all of the people who have collaborated to make the wonderful little red fort?*

Build Social-Emotional Awareness

Ask: After her brothers help to make the fort even better, how does Ruby show them that she appreciates them? Do you think Ruby and her brothers get along well? Why is it important for children in a family to try to get along well?

Have children turn and talk with a partner.

Then select a few children to share their thinking with the class. **(CASEL Competency relationship skills)**

Think Like an Architect Remind children that when Ruby plans and builds her fort, she is thinking like an architect. Note that an architect draws a plan for architectural engineers and construction workers to use. Invite children to pretend to be architects and to draw a plan of something they might want to build with blocks or other objects. Ask children to label their drawings.

Connect to the Internet

About the Illustrator Visit this site for information about and other illustrations by Sonia Sánchez to share with children: <https://bookmarkliterary.com/2019/12/10/soniasanchez>.

The Classic Tale For a version of the classic tale to share with children, visit this site for *The Little Red Hen* by Paul Galdone: www.youtube.com/watch?v=2E72Tzy0LNo.