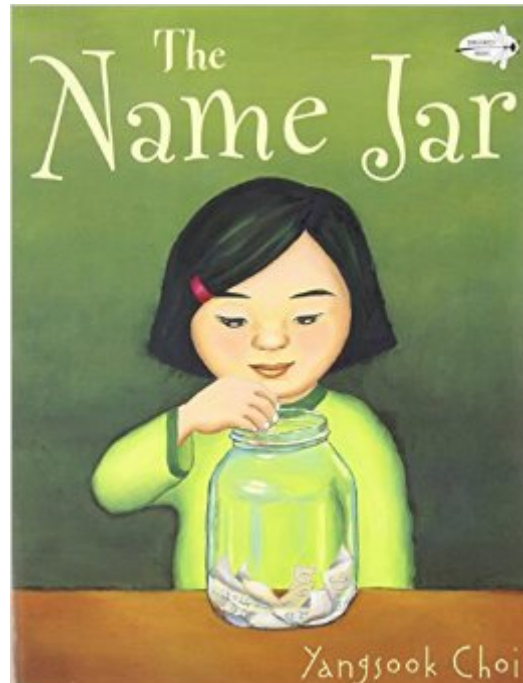


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# The Name Jar



## Synopsis

The new kid in school needs a new name! Or does she? Being the new kid in school is hard enough, but what about when nobody can pronounce your name? Having just moved from Korea, Unhei is anxious that American kids will like her. So instead of introducing herself on the first day of school, she tells the class that she will choose a name by the following week. Her new classmates are fascinated by this no-name girl and decide to help out by filling a glass jar with names for her to pick from. But while Unhei practices being a Suzy, Laura, or Amanda, one of her classmates comes to her neighborhood and discovers her real name and its special meaning. On the day of her name choosing, the name jar has mysteriously disappeared. Encouraged by her new friends, Unhei chooses her own Korean name and helps everyone pronounce it "Yoon-Hey."

## Book Information

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: Dragonfly Books; Reprint edition (October 14, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0440417996

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Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 0.1 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (140 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,578 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

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[Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Fiction](#) #14 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > New Experiences](#)

Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

## Customer Reviews

I love this book because it reinforces the idea that people have a right to their given names and that they have a right to expect people to learn how to pronounce them. I work with many Chinese, Korean and Japanese students and it is common for these kids to feel the obligation to change their name, allow teachers and students mispronounce them if they do use their given names, and their parents often tell them to get used to it rather than teaching them to assert themselves and expect people to learn how to pronounce them. If the child feels that they have a right to their name, the

keep it, teach people how to pronounce it and feel better about themselves. If they change it, the given name still pops up on paperwork, people still mispronounce it and they are always trying to hide it away before it pops up again. Accepting your name and teaching people how to pronounce it, provides people with empowerment and a sense of some control over their lives. It helps a lot in the acculturation process.

Yangsook (Rachel) Choi has written AND illustrated another illuminating book. Unhei has moved from South Korea with her family to America; she has brought her clothes, bags, and a name "chop" stamp from her grandmother. Her schoolmates cannot pronounce her name on the bus, so she doesn't reveal her name to her classmates. Is it good to be different? Should she embrace her difference? In America she can still eat seaweed and kimchi; she can shop at Kim's Market and Fadil's Falafel. But maybe a name of Amanda, Miranda, Daisy, or Tamela would be better than Unhei (Yoon-hye). The kids at school put name suggestions in a jar on her desk, but on the day she will choose her name, the jar has disappeared. Who took it? What will Unhei decide to do? Did Mr. Cocotos her teacher have a hand in this? Will all the kids want to choose a new name? A must read for every elementary school.

Excellent piece of literature that addresses the emotional impact of change. The Name Jar pulls at the core of American assimilation and a loss of individuality to appease the intolerance of differences. Unhei must adjust to a new country, culture, school, and classmates, while she finds the transition from Korea to America difficult.

As a second grade teacher, I read this to my class every year because I love the story and the beautiful message it presents. The story is about Unhei who has just moved from Korea to America and she is very much missing home. Her classmates can't pronounce her name and some of the kids on the bus make fun of it, so she decides she needs an American name and her class starts her a name jar that they all put new name choices in for her. Suddenly the jar goes missing, courtesy of a new friend she makes after he overhears her in the Korean store using her real name; he takes the jar because he wants her to use her real name, which she does and she shows her class the special name stamp she was given. We read this story and discuss it in class and I even look up each child's name and what it means, so they love learning about the origins of their own name just like Unhei. This is such a great multicultural story and a great way to explore a different culture, Korean, and my students love learning some of the tidbits of information about Korea

revealed through the story. The illustrations are beautiful, colorful, and very detailed. The story is a bit lengthy, but it can hold my second graders' attention. Most importantly, I love the messages in the story: 1. We should embrace other cultures and their customs 2. Be proud to be unique and celebrate what makes you unique and don't change for anyone. You will not be disappointed with this book!

i enjoyed this book. i was in the book store one day and it caught my eye so i flipped through it, and i'm glad i did. its about a little girl who comes from korea and moved to north america. she goes to school and doesn't want to tell the class her name because it is different, so she says she doesn't have a name, so her classmates make a name jar for her and put in names that she can use. then she gets a letter from her grandmother who is still in korea saying how much she loves her and in the letter was a seal with her name on it. after getting this she is once again proud of her name and goes back to school and tells her class mates her real name and what it means (i apologize if i got some of the details mixed up it was a while back that i read it). this book was a tear jerker for me. i'm not korean, nor have i had major problem with my name (though people often mispronounce it when reading it), but the struggle for the acceptance of one's self and one's own difference in comparison to others is something we all go through, and this story successfully displays that struggle and overcoming that struggle in a simple way. i think its a good way to get children to understand that though they are different, they will be accepted by someone, and opens them up to other cultures at the same time. worth the read.

Clutching the small wooden block with the characters of her Korean name carved into it, Unhei worries about being accepted and fitting in at her new school and new country. When she finds that the children have difficulty pronouncing her name, she decides to pick a new American name. Sensing her difficulty in choosing a name, Unhei's classmates create a name jar with suggestions for her. Finally, with the help of a new friend, she not only chooses a name that reflects her heritage and culture but also inspires her classmates to better understand cultural differences and similarities. Yangsook Choi's charming story and illustrations explore issues of assimilation and cultural duality faced by immigrant children and their American classmates. It could well serve as the basis for classroom discussions of these issues and would be a welcome addition to class libraries.

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