



The Nian Monster

Andrea Wang , Alina Chau (Illustrations)

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Tong tong! The legendary Nian monster has returned at Chinese New Year. With horns, scales, and wide, wicked jaws, Nian is intent on devouring Shanghai, starting with Xingling! The old tricks to keep him away don't work on Nian anymore, but Xingling is clever. Will her quick thinking be enough to save the city from the Nian Monster?

The Nian Monster Details

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From Reader Review The Nian Monster for online ebook

Paige M says

I Chinese New Year/ Lunar New Year story. Good length for storytime. Cute story. I wish there was a pronunciation key for a few of the words.

Nina says

The Nian monster returns at Chinese New Year, intent on devouring Shanghai. But Xingling, a witty little girl, utilizes her quick thinking to save her beloved city from the Nian Monster!

For this book, I have chosen the Text-to-Text. This book reminds me of how I loved reading books at my grandparent's house, many of which were based on The Looney Tunes . My favorite story was with Wile E. Coyote and the Road runner, and how the Road runner had to use his wits to escape the hungry Coyote. No matter what, the Roadrunner always had a clever plan to outsmart the Coyote. This is similar to the story of the Nian Monster, because Xingling always had tricks up her sleeve to prevent the monster from devouring her city.

Miriam says

This was cute and would work (with some added info) as an introduction to Chinese New Year or a preliminary to a visit to Shanghai -- some iconic locations and dishes are mentioned.

It's fairly slight and there isn't a lot of character description for either our heroine Xingling or the monster.

Nian Monster is super cute, though, huh?

I'm going to check if the library has any other versions of this story.

Rebecca Flansburg says

Excellently written. Great story too that will intrigue kids and adults alike. Andrea Wang is AWESOME!

Alexa Marshall says

Text to Text connection:

Reading this book reminded me of another book that I have read before, called Chelsea's Chinese New Year.

Both stories revolve around two little girls learning about the Chinese new year, but Chelsea's story was more realistic than Xingling's. Chelsea's story focused more on showing different ways of celebrating the Chinese New Year, such as being allowed to stay up late and go to the dragon parade. Xingling's story was more engaging to me though because I kept wanting to know how she would outsmart and defeat Nian. I also think that I liked the illustrations more in The Nian Monster because of the bright colors and the way that Xingling's eyes were drawn.

Joshua says

The book "The Nian Monster" was written by Andrea Wang and illustrated by Alina Chau. This story is a modern day telling of the classic Chinese story relating to Chinese New Year. The illustrations of present day Shanghai are great and the drawing of Xingling's anima/manga stylized eye's make her look adorable. The book is about a little girl named Xingling, she is a culinary mastermind who must stop Nian, the giant red dragon, from devouring Shanghai. It's a delightful story that teaches you the actual Chinese customs that surround this celebration.

After reading this story, I can relate this to Text-to-World. It reminds me of one of the bigger holidays we have in America, the 4th of July. I think of that holiday because of the similarities. The color red, it's one of the more prominent colors found in the month of July, since it's a color in the American flag and in the book it's a prominent color used for the Chinese New Year, since they use it to scare away Nian. On the 4th of July, we make a lot of food to feed our visiting families, which when they're hungry they can be a bit monstrous, and in the book, they make a lot of food to keep the monster full. Lastly and obviously, the staple of both holidays are the fireworks. The 4th of July and the Chinese New Year wouldn't be the celebrations that they are without fireworks.

Carmen says

Text to Text

The Nian Monster is about a little girl who distracts the Nian monster from eating the town before the Chinese New Year approaches. Xingling distracts this crazy monster by offering it different foods from her culture. She offers him long-life noodles, then fish so he can have a good fortune all year long, and lastly she offers him rice cakes to sweeten his future. Then the Nian watches the fireworks and goes back into the sky. Xingling had saved the town. This picture book reminds me of the text "The legend of Nian" This story has many similarities. This beast is a dragon who comes out of the ocean once a year to eat the children in the town. There is an old man who thinks he can keep the dragon beast away. This story classic Chinese legend with beautiful illustrations just like in "The Nian Monster".

Laura Harrison says

How I love Chinese New Year books. The Nian Monster is one of the very best CNY picture books if not the best. Yes, it is that good. The illustrations fit the story just perfectly. Simply magical. A must have!

Curt says

Text to text

The Nian Monster reminds me of The Hungry Caterpillar because it follows a creature's journey through food, not to mention they're both colorfully illustrated. In The Hungry Caterpillar, we see various fruits, but in this book, Wang uses this concept to teach us about Chinese culture: the Nian monster legend, long life noodles, milkfish, rice cake. I love how Wang ends with how "Xingling ran home for the best rice cakes," because even though cultures have their dishes, the best recipes are often at home.

Maritsa Vazquez says

The Nian Monster by Andrea Wang tells the story of a clever girl named Xingling and her plan to save the city from the Nian monster. I really enjoyed reading this book! The story is fun and humorous and the illustrations are fantastic.

Text-to-World: A connection between a book and events in the real world.

For this book, I chose to use the text-to-world connection because of the cultural information throughout the story. Chinese New Year is the oldest and most important holiday in China. From reading this book I learned about the legend of the Nian monster and the tricks that defeated the beast. For example, the color red which is found everywhere during the Chinese New Year. As I read this story, I also noted the various landmarks that the author used such as the iconic Bund and Oriental Pearl Tower which helps expose readers to important locations in Shanghai. One of my favorite parts of the book was learning about the significant meanings behind some of the traditional foods eaten during the New Year celebrations. This book was filled with adventure and useful information that would help introduce young readers to the Chinese New Year and its traditions.

Akoss says

I knew very little about Chinese New Year before this picture book. In fact the little I knew was through a Hollywood lens, so it was refreshing to see it from an actual Chinese pov and understand the customs surrounding the celebration.

Bonus points for the clever, fun and mischievous touches the author added to the story. My daughter loves this book and we've been reading it like every other night since we checked it out of the library. I hope we can get our own copy eventually.

Serina says

Beautiful, bright, and colorful illustrations accompany this story. The Asian exposure and influence to this story were welcome. Always nice to get another countries "folk tales". The little girl was quite clever and fun in dealing with the problems. It made you curious to find out what new trick the girl was gonna use next. I also thought it cool that the monster was pretty instead of a dark, ugly thing. Teacher's may hesitate at assigning it due to the Chinese names scattered throughout. However the places referred to are all major landmarks that children would enjoy learning about. Plus, kids don't know if you're mispronouncing something unless you tell them lol.

Stefanie says

I want to snuggle with Nian even though he wants to chomp everything.

Caleb R says

text-to-text. Reasoning I said text is this kind of reminded me of "Red Riding Hood" In this story the little girl was afraid she was gonna get eaten by the monster, but tricked the monster into not eating her or her city. Red Riding Hood kind of had the roles of the wolf tricking the girl, but both concepts are the same. The girl makes the monster tired, and tricked him into not eating her or her city.

Text -to-text means you find a connection in the story to another book that you have read.

Calista says

Chinese New Year has so many traditions and stories. This seems to be a new story built upon an old one. For Chinese New Year they used loud gongs and noises, fire and the color red to scare away the horrible monster Nian who can devour whole villages in one gulp.

This present year a girl is getting ready for New Years when Nian comes back and declares that he doesn't care about red or fire, he is hungry. So the sly girl tells him ok, but you need to eat noodles for long life first and then he can eat her and the city. So he does and she helps fix up a huge bowl of noodles that fill up the monster. So, it's 3 meals in a row and then she sits him on a seat with fireworks to shot him in the sky. I thought the story was very well done and had lots of cunning from the little girl. I like it when characters show cunning and I think the kids like it too as they themselves like to be sly and cunning.

The nephew enjoyed the monster in this and he thought the story worthy of 5 stars while the niece enjoyed the cool calm of the little girl and she gave this 4 stars. The artwork is nice and it's great to find out more about Chinese New Year.

May you have much prosperity and rest in the Year of the Pig.

