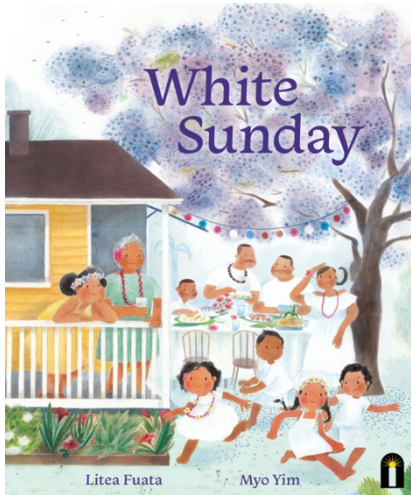


## Teacher's Notes



### WHITE SUNDAY

Written by Litea Fuata

Illustrated by Myo Yim

Teacher's Notes by Robyn Sheahan-Bright

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### RECOMMENDED FOR

Ages 3 and up (Pre-school+)

#### KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: ACHASSS1052, ACELA1447, ACELA14453, ACELT1582, ACELT1584, ACELY1655
- General capabilities:
  - Intercultural Understanding
  - Comprehending texts through listening, reading and viewing

### THEMES

- Samoan Culture
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Bravery and Resilience
- Community

### SYNOPSIS

*White Sunday* is a charming own-voices story that welcomes us into the home of a Samoan family, complete with love, food, merrymaking and ... adventure. A beautifully illustrated, heartwarming story for kids aged 3 and up.

Every year in October, Sina and her family celebrate White Sunday. It's a day when the children are celebrated at church and they get to read, sing, perform and dance in front of the community. There's also a feast after, and the kids eat first! Maybe this year Uncle Fred will bring his green bananas in coconut cream and Sina will receive plenty of ulas for her performance.

This is an exciting story that depicts a marginalised section of our population in a positive light. It is a charming narrative with themes of bravery, resilience and community. There are zero Australian picture books that represent Pacific Islanders (although some have been published elsewhere). Samoan Australians are the second largest Polynesian group behind Maori Australians and this picture book gives them a mirror and a voice.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

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Born in Wellington, New Zealand, **Litea Fuata** moved to Brisbane, Australia, when she was six years old, with her parents and siblings. Litea comes from a very big Samoan aiga (family) with lots of nieces and nephews and plenty of siblings and cousins. Growing up in a big aiga meant she had lots of adventures and was never short of someone to play with but, on the flip side, she also had to ensure she was being heard above all the commotion! Litea lives with her partner and her cat, Gordon, in Brisbane, and works in health care.

See also: “White Sunday” debut book release by Litea Fuata’ *The Coconet.tv*

<https://www.thecoconet.tv/coco-talanoa/pacific-blog/white-sunday-debut-book-release-by-litea/>

**Myo Yim** is a Korean author and illustrator living in Byron Bay, Australia. Her first book, *To the Forest Night*, was published by Yellow Imagination Books in South Korea in 2019. It was nominated for the Little Hakka International Picture Book Award 2019. Myo has also published a book called *Rajah Street* with Walker Australia. Myo Yim was shortlisted for the Little Hare Illustration Prize in 2020. <https://myoyim.com/>

See also: ‘Meet the Illustrator: Myo Yim’ *Kids’ Book Review*

<http://www.kids-bookreview.com/2021/03/meet-illustrator-myo-yim.html>

## THEMES

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- **Samoa Culture**

This book explores one of the Samoan cultural traditions – the celebration of White Sunday. The lunch which follows the church service, introduces the reader to other traditions such as making and wearing ulas (chocolate and lolly necklaces); the food they make and eat; the clothes they wear.

What other details did you notice about these Samoan homes?

What other details do you notice about how Samoans celebrate White Sunday?

Read other books about Samoan culture and compare to this one. [See **Further Reading**.]

- **Diversity and Inclusion**

Because Samoan culture is often not reflected in mainstream publishing, it can be regarded as a marginalised society. Therefore, books such as *White Sunday* are important in encouraging diversity and inclusion.

What did you learn about Samoan culture which is different to the culture you are part of?

- **Bravery and Resilience**

Sina’s bravery in coming down from the tree, after she finds herself stuck in the branches, is a great example to children, parents and carers to encourage children to be confident and brave in the face of their fears. Her mother says: ‘Be brave, Bubba. Remember your *mana* – your courage and strength. Now is the time to use your *mana*.’



Why did the parents not attempt to climb the tree to rescue Sina?

- **Community**

This book also explores the concept of a community. Clearly the Samoan families who attend the White Sunday service are a close community.

What makes a community?

What kind of group activities foster a sense of community? (Examples might include festivals, sporting events, arts performances, religious services, etc.)

What group activities does your community participate in?

## WRITING STYLE

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The text is written in first person present tense from Sina's point of view.

## COMPREHENSION

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What do Sina's (the narrator) parents call her? (*Answer: Bubba.*)

How many siblings does she have and what are their names? (*Answer: Two big sisters, Lucy and Alofa, and two big brothers, Peter and Cosmos Junior.*)

What do Samoan children do on White Sunday? (*Answer: They dress in white, and sing and dance in front of the whole church.*)

What are ulas? (*Answer: Necklaces made of chocolate and lollies.*)

Who hosts the White Sunday lunch? (*Answer: Aunty Eve and Aunty Rosie.*)

What are the favourite foods Sina hopes will be served along with her mother's pineapple pies? (*Answer: Sapasui and green bananas and cream.*)

What game do the children play at the lunch? (*Answer: Hide-and-seek.*)

All the females in the story wear what in their hair? (*Answer: Flowers.*)

## WRITING EXERCISE

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Write a fictional story in first person present tense about your participation in a cultural event which your community celebrates.



Invite students to write a short piece about a community celebration they and their families participate in. Then get them to draw a picture of their celebration. Make a classroom display of these stories and images of community celebrations, or bind the stories and images in a ring-back folder to display.

## ILLUSTRATION STYLE

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The illustrator uses **framing devices** in several images: the children in the church on White Sunday are framed by arched leadlight church windows; when Alofa is telling the family that Sina is caught in the tree, they are all framed in the doorway of the home; Sina's mother is depicted framed by a wreath of flowers; when Sina comes down from the tree, the whole gathering is framed by the kitchen window; These framed themes lend a dramatic air to the action which is festive and celebratory.

Several images are taken from an **aerial perspective** with Sina above (in the tree) looking down at her family.

Myo shares how her illustration process with *White Sunday*:

'I love to interpret text into pictures! My illustrations are basically hand drawn using pencil. Once I decide on where the main characters will be on the spread and how they will look, I fill each illustration with details in the foreground and background. These added details help create depth and richness, and I do a lot of angle studies. I like variety in my illustrations from spread to spread, moving between full scenes and close-up vignettes. I also love to explore and create new perspectives (inspired by what's in the text), like the wone where Aunty looks through the window at Sina and the rest of the family. When I'm done with hand drawing, I scan the illustrations onto my computer so I can polish them further.'

## ILLUSTRATION EXERCISE

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Invite students to paint a portrait of Sina using an appropriate framing device of some kind.

Look around your classroom. Then imagine if it was drawn from above? What would you see? Invite students to draw an aerial view of their classroom.

Paint a picture of Sina in the purple-flowering tree.

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

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**Note:** Resources relevant to the following activities are listed under **Further Reading**.

Enjoy some Samoan food (such as Sapaui, pineapple pies and green bananas in coconut cream which are mentioned in this book) together.

Celebrate Samoan Language Week, when it occurs in the current calendar year (usually around the end of May to the start of June).

Make Samoan patterns using simple drawing techniques.

Learn about the decorative Samoan Bark Cloth technique using a paper bag.

Make a Samoan paper doll.



Make ulas like the ones Sina and her family wear in the book. (Also called 'Kahoa Lole' or a necklace of lollies.)

## RELATED READING

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### Picture Books About Samoa and Samoan Culture

Aflague, Mary *Teach Me My Feelings in Samoan* (Bilingual) Ill. by Gerard Aflague. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018.

Aflague, Gerard *Teach me Samoan Using 31 Daily Words* CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018.

Aflague, Mary *Sleepy Time Samoa: A Goodnight Bedtime Rhyme* Ill. by Gerard Aflague. Aotearoa Books, 2018.

Jah Jah, Jahri *Samoan Animals* Aotearoa Books, 2019.

Jah Jah, Jahri *Samoan Colours* Aotearoa Books, 2019.

MacGregor, Jill *Does Chocolate Grow on Trees? A Story from Samoa* Aotearoa Books, 2020.

MacGregor, Jill *Fa'afisi's Turn: A Story from Samoa* Aotearoa Books, 2020.

MacGregor, Jill *Fau Fibres: A Story from Samoa* Aotearoa Books, 2016.

MacGregor, Jill *Siva Afi: A Story from the Islands of Samoa* Aotearoa Books, 2015.

MacGregor, Jill *White Sunday: A Story from the Islands of Samoa* Aotearoa Books, 2019.

*O le lalolagi o lo'o si'omia ai tatou: The World Around Us* Aotearoa Books, 2021.

Riley, David *Samoan Heroes* Aotearoa Books, 2015.

### Non-Fiction

Cervantes, Usha *More than one Hundred First Samoan Words* Ill. by Naira Tangamyran. Aotearoa Books, 2021.

Malaeulu, Dahlia *Fale Samoa* Aotearoa Books, 2021.

Saneirivi, Deborah and Saneirivi, Oka *Learning Samoan Through Bathtime* Aotearoa Books, 2021.

### Websites

'Diversity Awareness Month: paper doll craft: Samoa' *Christchurch City Council Libraries*  
<https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/blogs/post/diversity-awareness-month-paper-doll-craft-samoa/>



'15 Traditional Samoan Recipes' *Insanely Good*  
<https://insanelygoodrecipes.com/samoan-recipes/>

'How to make Kahoa Lole' The Coconet.tv *YouTube*  
<https://www.thecoconet.tv/how-to/tonga/how-to-make-kahoa-lole/>

'Pasifika Picture Books' *The Children's Bookshop, NZ*  
[https://www.thechildrensbookshop.co.nz/c/pasifika-picture-books\\_\\_1XXXXX](https://www.thechildrensbookshop.co.nz/c/pasifika-picture-books__1XXXXX)

'Pasifika Patterns - learning to draw patterns of the Pacific' The Coconet.tv *YouTube*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPwc8cXtk7w>

'Pie Fala –Samoa Pineapple Pie' *NZ Herald*  
<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/eatwell/sponsored/pai-fala-samoan-pineapple-pie/NEWTIFTYYTM5NE4CMETTLL2OLEY/>

'Samoa' *Britannica*  
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Samoa-island-nation-Pacific-Ocean>

'Samoa: Cultural Life' *Britannica*  
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Samoa-island-nation-Pacific-Ocean/Cultural-life>

'Samoan Culture' *Cultural Atlas*  
<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/samoan-culture/samoan-culture-core-concepts>

'Samoan Green Banana' *allrecipes*  
<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/149549/samoan-green-banana/>

'Samoa Language Week' *The New Zealand Curriculum Online*  
<https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/National-events-and-the-NZC/Samoa-Language-Week>

'Samoan Language Week Activities and Resources' *Top Teaching Tasks*  
<https://topteachingtasks.com/samoan-language-week-activities-and-resources-2021/>

'Samoan Picture Books' *Logan City Council Libraries*  
<https://logan.bibliocommons.com/list/share/388639247/1916743889> 'Samoa – Cultural Life' *Britannica*

'Samoan Siapo Bark Cloth' *Crayola*  
<https://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/samoan-siapo-bark-cloth-lesson-plan/>

'10,000 Top "Samoan Arts And Crafts" Teaching Resources' *twinkl*  
<https://www.twinkl.com.au/search?q=samoan+arts+and+crafts>

'Traditional Sapasui (Samoan Chop Suey)' *Food.com*  
<https://www.food.com/recipe/traditional-sapa-sui-samoan-chop-suey-459380>

'White Sunday' *Wikipedia*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White\\_Sunday](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Sunday)

