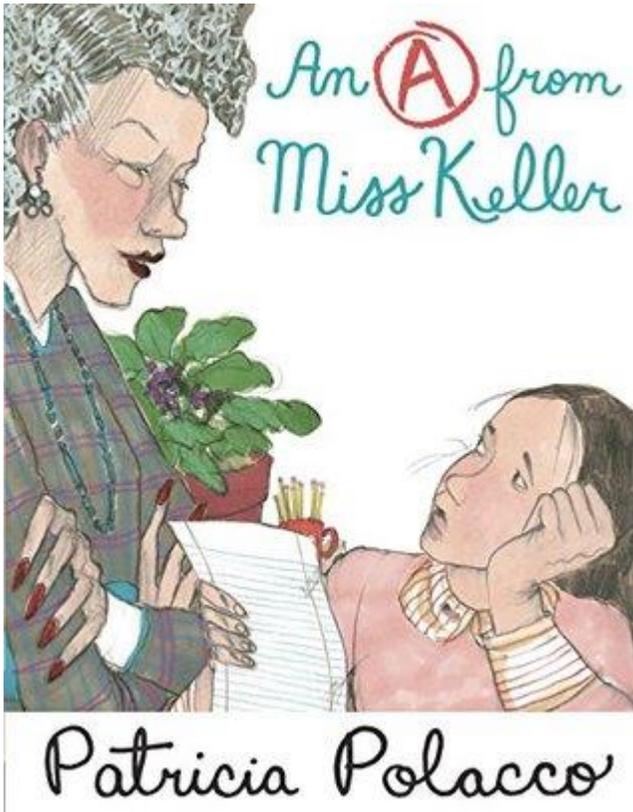


February 2016

Dear PS 98 Families,

In our efforts to continue to work on our instructional focus of collaborative conversations, we are very excited to present our featured book of the month, *An A from Miss Keller*, by beloved author and illustrator Patricia Polacco.



This heartwarming memoir is the author's account of an influential teacher in her life. In this memoir, Patricia is flattered and excited to have been chosen for Miss Keller's writing class. She's also incredibly intimidated as rumors circulate that "Killer Keller" has never given a student an A in her class. On the first day of class, Miss Keller sets the bar high. No matter what Patricia does though, there is no pleasing Miss Keller, who continues to challenge the students to sharpen their senses and "give words wings." Patricia finds solace in her elderly neighbor Pop Schloss, who helps her with her assignments and tells her a remarkable story about Miss Keller. It's that relationship that motivates Patricia to write in ways she never thought she could and earn the elusive grade from Miss Keller.

Questions for Reading:

- \*How would you feel if you had a teacher that acted like Miss Keller?
- \*Have you ever had a friend like Pop that made you feel important?
- \*Create a circle map to brainstorm any word you can think of that means the same thing as love.
- \*What do you notice about how Patricia Polacco draws each character? How does that illustration support, enhance, or counter what we learn about the character in the written text?

Happy Reading!

Sincerely,

Book of the Month Team

**Questions organized by Revised Bloom's Taxonomy of Higher Order Thinking**

Although there are grade band denotations, we found that some questions would be appropriate for all students.

Bloom's Taxonomy Level	Possible Questions/ Thinking Maps	
	Grades K-2	Grades 3-5
<b>Remember:</b> Recognize, recall, locate, identify	Why does Patricia say, "I have the meanest teacher in the whole school?"	Use text evidence to describe the first impression the students get of Miss Keller, when they meet her on the first day of class.
<b>Understand:</b> Clarify, summarize, paraphrase, represent, predict, compare	Describe Miss Keller and Pop using a double-bubble map. Cite text evidence in the frame of reference.	Use a double bubble map to compare and contrast the two characters who influence Patricia-Pop and Miss Keller.
<b>Apply:</b> Use procedure in a given situation, carry-out or use with unfamiliar task	Miss Keller tells the students that they use the word love too often. Use a circle map to brainstorm different words that you could use that would also mean love.	How did Patricia's opinion of Miss Keller change from the beginning of the story to the end? What led to this change of heart?
<b>Analyze:</b> Break into parts, distinguish, organize, outline, deconstruct	How did Pop influence Patricia's life?	Pop says his Millie was "so lovely that when she walked into a room, the sun and the moon would peek into the window just to get a glimpse." How does this quote help illustrate how he feels?
<b>Evaluate:</b> Make judgments based on criteria, critique	On the first day of class, Miss Keller tells the children that they will work harder than they "have ever worked in their entire miserable little lives." How do you think the children feel? How would you feel? Why?	Is Miss Keller mean, or very caring? Support your opinion with reasons and examples.
<b>Create:</b> Reorganize elements into new patterns, design, construct, produce	Create a bubble map to describe Patricia's point of view of Miss Keller at the beginning of the story. Then, using a different color, add to the bubble map her point of view of Miss Keller at the end of the story. Repeat this with Miss Keller's view of Patricia at the beginning and at the end.	Create a bubble map to describe Patricia's point of view of Miss Keller at the beginning of the story. Then, using a different color, add to the bubble map her point of view of Miss Keller at the end of the story. Repeat this with Miss Keller's view of Patricia at the beginning and at the end.