



## Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel

written by Carla J. Messinger with Susan Katz  
illustrated by David Kanietakeron Fadden

### About the Book

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Format:** Paperback, \$10.95

**ISBN:** 9780892394111

**Reading Level:** Grade 3

**Interest Level:** Grades K-5

**Guided Reading Level:** P

**Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:**  
3.2/0.5

**Lexile™ Measure:** N/A

\*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

**Themes:** Responsibility, Overcoming Obstacles, Neighbors, Music, Immigration, Friendship, Cultural Diversity, Conflict resolution, Bilingual, Asian/Asian American Interest, Poverty, Empathy/Compassion, Leadership, Optimism/Enthusiasm, People In Motion, Persistence/Grit, Respect/Citizenship, Pride, California, Collaboration, Courage, Home, Kindness/Caring, Protest

#### Resources on the web:

[leeandlow.com/books/lakas-and-the-makibaka-hotel](http://leeandlow.com/books/lakas-and-the-makibaka-hotel)

### SYNOPSIS

On a stroll through his neighborhood, Lakas meets new friends, drum-beating Tick A. Boom, tap-dancing Firefoot, and the singing Karaoke King. But, these new friends face a crisis: Makibaka Hotel, where they make their home, is about to be sold. They must pack their belongings and leave their home in thirty days. Lakas leads his friends in a rollicking protest against their eviction. Before long, the streets of the neighborhood reverberate with taps, raps, and chants of *Makibaka*-- of struggle, spirit, and laughter.

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

## BACKGROUND

### Introduction from Author Anthony D. Robles

"The spirit of Makibaka is the spirit of struggle. When Pilipinos like my grandparents came to America in the early days, they brought Makibaka with them. When they picked lettuce in the fields, they planted the seeds of Makibaka beneath the blazing sun. Their boots kicked up the dust and dirt of Makibaka, which covered their hands and faces. The Makibaka wind carried them from California to Washington to Hawaii to Alaska and beyond, as they worked to create a future for their families for Pilipinos yet to arrive in the United States.

Pilipinos have encountered many hardships, yet our songs of Makibaka have given us the strength to fight for our rights as human beings-- for the right to organize as workers and for the right to housing. The spirit of Makibaka is alive as people of all colors struggle for these rights. This struggle continues to this day, here in San Francisco and in far away New York City, in cities in Michigan and Indiana and Missouri and all over the United States.

Huwag Matakot! The spirit Makibaka lives on here and all over the world. The spirit of Makibaka is the spirit of struggle, of love, and of laughter too."

### Author's Note from Anthony D. Robles

"Keeping up the struggle: In 2002, the tenants of Trinity Plaza Apartments in San Francisco were faced with the demolition of their homes. An amazing group of people made up of seniors, young people, artists, and activists came together with a common purpose-- to fight for the rights of people over profit. It has been my privilege to work with these tenants and activists who are so deeply committed to their community. The tenants of the Trinity Plaza Apartments won their struggle. But they continue to struggle alongside other groups in San Francisco to fight the gentrification of neighborhoods, and to keep the cost of housing affordable for working class people."

### Gentrification Against Filipino-Americans

An example of gentrification against Filipino-Americans, and extremely similar to the story of *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel*, was in Waipahu Hawaii, when the residents of Ota Camp were faced with eviction for a new apartment complex in 1972, beginning a 30-year struggle for the residents to control their land. Ota Camp was a community for the Filipino immigrants, and locally-born descendants of Filipino laborers on Hawaii's sugar and pineapple plantations, where residents lived in shacks on leased land. After being told they had 30 days to vacate their homes, the Ota Camp protested and negotiated the relocation of the entire community over the course of 2 years. The phrase "Makibaka! Huwag Matakot!" was used as a rallying cry for residents, and ultimately, developer Jack Ujimori was enlisted by the Hawaiian Housing Authority to put up homes, where he would act as landlord until 1984 when the residents would take over. The people renamed their community Makibaka Village. The residents paid monthly costs, which they believed was to pay off their homes. However, in 1981, Ujimori illegally raised the rents, and in 1984, sued the residents for back rent. In a show of defiance and strength, the Makibaka Village residents sued him, the city and the state to honor the original agreement. In 2001, the case was finally settled, when the residents were permitted to buy back their land. Now, the Makibaka Village is owned by the people.

(<http://archives.starbulletin.com/2001/04/15/news/story4.html>)

(<https://unityarchiveproject.org/article/hawaiis-people-fight-for-land/>)

## BEFORE READING

### Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- What is your neighborhood like? What makes it special?
- Have you ever been involved in a civil demonstration or a peaceful protest? Why?
- What are civil rights?
- Have you ever seen a street performer? What were they doing?
- Have you ever stood up for what you believed in? What did you do? Why?

### Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book, *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel*. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- **Picture Walk:** Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, author's note, and illustrations.
- **Read Author & Illustrator's Biographies:** Read about Anthony D. Robles and Carl Angel.
- Encourage students to stop and jot down notes in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.
- Have students quickly write their feelings in their notebooks during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote down those feelings and have them write journal entries about them.
- Ask students to make a prediction: Do you think this book will be fiction or nonfiction? What makes you think so? What clues does are given that help you know whether this book will be fiction or nonfiction?

## Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- why the landlord is selling the building
- why Lakas and his friends are protesting their eviction
- how Lakas and his friends problem solve to save the hotel and his friends from eviction

Encourage students to consider why the author, Anthony D. Robles, would want to share with young people this book about a young activist who wants to inspire change in his community.

## VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word. (Many of the Spanish words can be found in the book glossary, but there are also some that are not included. Students could be encouraged to create a log of these words—they will not be listed here.)

### Content Specific

makibaka, manong, adobo, landlord, eviction, tap-dancing, karaoke, manager

### Academic

wildly, dyeing, clomped, snatched, crisp, impatiently, chanted, stomped

## AFTER READING

### Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

### Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Who does Lakas see on his walk? What are they doing?
2. What are the street performers performing for?
3. What does Lakas have in his pocket?
4. Who does Lakas see in the lobby of the hotel? Does he know them?
5. What is Fernando (the Karaoke King) doing in his room?
6. The next day, what is happening in the lobby of the Makibaka hotel?
7. What does Peachy do?
8. Why is Peachy in a bad mood?
9. What is the landlord wearing?
10. What deal does Lakas make with the landlord? Does the landlord agree?
11. What does Lakas encourage Tick A. Boom, Firefoot and Fernando to do?
12. What do the guys write on their posters?
13. Why does Peachy have a change of heart?
14. What do the protesters chant?
15. What does Lakas' lucky nickel keep doing?
16. Do the residents get to stay in the end?

### Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What are the conditions of the hotel? What does this show about the landlord?
2. What are the occupations of the people living at the hotel? Why do you think they are living in the hotel?
3. Do you think the landlord is a good person? Why is the landlord selling the building? Who will be hurting? What will happen to the tenants?

4. What is wrong with the displacement of low-income residents? Why is this unjust?
5. What does Makibaka Huwag Matakot mean? Why are the residents chanting it? What is the importance of struggling and fighting for what is right?
6. How does Lakas demonstrate perseverance and problem solving? How does he demonstrate that young people can make a difference in their communities?

### Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about your neighborhood and how you would stand up for your community. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think Anthony Robles' message is to the reader? Think about possible motivations the author had for writing this book. What do you think he wanted to share with readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make between the book and your own life? What scenes do you relate to and how did they make you think of your own childhood or growing up experiences?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books or poems while reading *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make between the book and what you have seen happening in the world, such as on television, in a newspaper, or online? What in this book made you think of that?

### ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
  - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.
  - Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask

students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.

4. Have students give a short talk about which part of the book they identified with the most and why.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

### Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Why is Lakas angry that the landlord is selling the building? Have you ever felt that something unjust was happening? What did you do about it?
2. Why are Tick A. Boom, Firefoot, and the Karaoke King upset? How would you feel if you were being evicted from your home?
3. Why do the protestors chant Makibaka Huwag Matakot? What is the importance of struggling and not being afraid? Have you ever had to struggle and not be afraid? What happened? How did it make you feel?
4. Why do you think Peachy had a change of heart? Have you ever felt one way, then changed your mind? Why?
5. Have students write a short journal from the perspective of Lakas after speaking with the landlord. How does he feel? What is he thinking? What does he want to do?



## INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

### English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students research a cause they care about and write a letter of appeal to a real or imaginary figure about it.** What do they think needs to change? Why? Have them provide data, quotes and/or anecdotes as evidence.
- **Have students write three entries from Lakas' perspective throughout *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel*:** 1) After meeting Tick A. Boom, Firefoot and Fernando the Karaoke King; 2) After speaking with the landlord; 3) Organizing the protest with friends. Afterwards, have students reflect on the experience. What was it like to write in the different perspectives? Did this activity make them think about perspective-taking in a new way? Why or why not?
- **In a connected lesson, review with children the Urban Displacement Project's overview of gentrification** (<https://www.urbandisplacement.org/gentrification-explained>). Have students write a persuasive essay about the negative impacts of gentrification, using the plot of *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel* as supporting evidence.
- **Read *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel* along with *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish*** ([leeandlow.com/books/lakas-and-the-manilatown-fish](http://leeandlow.com/books/lakas-and-the-manilatown-fish)). Compare and contrast the stories. How are the stories similar? How are they different? How does Lakas change in both of the stories? Why do you think author Anthony D. Robles chose to write these two stories featuring Lakas as the main character? Have students write their findings in an essay.

### Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students research the Philippines and write a short report. What ethnic groups live in the Philippines?** What is the government like? What is the climate and land like? Have students share their findings in a visual format of their choosing (<https://www.ph.undp.org/content/philippines/en/home/countryinfo.html>).
- ***Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel* is based on the International Hotel in San Francisco.** Have students research the hotel, its significance, and what happened to it (<http://www.ihotel->



[sf.org/history/](https://www.sfbay.com/history/)). Students can write about their findings in an essay or with an informational poster.

- **Have students research protests against eviction.** What were the circumstances? What was happening in that time period? What did people do about it? Have them write a short report about it.

### Art & Media

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students create a map of their neighborhood.** Have them identify important local landmarks, including parks, the library, businesses, places of worship, and buildings of historical importance and tell why each is important. If possible, have them interview local people in their community, including police officers, firefighters, bus drivers, and shopkeepers, or other long-time residents. Display the maps around the classroom or school for other students to see.
- **Have students draw their own poster as if they were attending Lakas' and his friends' protest.** What would they want to share with others? Why

### School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students go home and discuss with protests and civil demonstrations with their families:** have them write a report about if their parents or other relatives have ever participated in any civil demonstrations. What was it for? When was it?
- **Have students write about any civil demonstration they would want to take part in.**
- **Encourage students to support small, and if possible, minority-owned businesses in their neighborhoods, in efforts to support them in the face of gentrification.**
- **Provide families with a list of resources about Native people, such as museums, organizations, and children's books that they can use on their own as a family.** Have students continue to research current Native literature and activities with the family.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Anthony Robles** is a poet and activist born and raised in San Francisco. His poetry has appeared in many journals and magazines, including *Pinoy Poetics* and *The Asian Pacific American Journal*. He is the author of *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish* and *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel*.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**Carl Angel** is an artist, illustrator, and graphic designer whose work has been exhibited throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and Hawai'i. A Filipino American who grew up in Honolulu, Carl lives in San Leandro, California. He is the illustrator of several books, including *Willie Wins*, *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish*, and *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel*.

## REVIEWS

"Author and activist Robles has created a memorable story, supported by Angel's vibrant, hopeful art. . . .The messages—that voices of all people are worthy of being heard and that social change comes with unity—are those that all readers will appreciate. A great read-aloud, the story will also be enjoyed by independent readers, along with *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish*." —*School Library Journal*

"This is a fun, engaging tale, enhanced by Carl Angel's colorful illustrations. . . . Robles and Angel, together with Tagalog translator Eloisa de Jesus, do a wonderful job of keeping alive the stories of struggle in the Filipino community." —*San Francisco Chronicle*

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