

HOANG ANH, A VIETNAMESE AMERICAN BOY by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith

OVERVIEW:

This book is a nonfiction account of Hoang Anh, a young boy who lives with his family in California. With photographs and text, it tells the story of how Hoang Anh and his family came to America and the dynamics of both their Vietnamese and American lifestyle. We find out what Hoang Anh's hobbies are, his favorite foods and how he helps around their home. Interwoven with the descriptions are folk tales and pronunciation guides that help illuminate Vietnamese culture. the book culminates with the celebration of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year, and we learn how it is celebrated and what special things happen at that time of year.

Discussion Questions:

(To be used as you read the story or afterwards)

1. Why did Hoang Anh and his family first come to America?
2. What does his family still do that is similar to what they did in Vietnam?
3. How do you think Hoang Anh's mother felt when he gave her the special calligraphy?
4. What would you like to see at the Tet celebration that Hoang Anh goes to?

Suggested Activities:

1. Act out the folk tale, "Cakes for the New Year".
2. Have the snack that Hoang Anh says he enjoys having after school, cucumber slices dipped in nuoc mam. This will take some advance preparation; nuoc mam, a brown thick fish sauce is available at large grocery stores or Asian grocery stores.
3. Have the students role play that they are Hoang Anh writing a letter to his grandparents back in Vietnam. What would Hoang Anh tell them? What would he be curious about since he has never been to Vietnam?
4. Invite a member of the Vietnamese community to come in and talk to the class about what the community in your area does for New Year. Some sources for speakers include parents, students (The University of Washington has a Vietnamese Students Association; call the Student Activities Office at 206/543-2380), and the ESL Department of your school district. Follow up by talking about how students in your class celebrate the New Year.
5. Celebrate Tet in your classroom. Treat it as a new beginning; clean the room, fix anything that is broken, and invite an important visitor to be the first person to come into the classroom.