

Julián’s imagination through watercolor illustrations that suggest gentle, flowing motion and legato musical lines. Invite students to swim and float lyrically through the classroom. Consider using recorded music, for example Saint Saens’ *Aquarium*, or ambient music such as *Fun in the Sun* by Swimming TV. Alternatively, utilize classroom instruments such as metallophones and an ocean drum to improvise accompaniment for the movement exploration.

Julián’s creativity as he gathers materials around his apartment reflects the ingenuity of children to make even the most mundane things magical. In Orff classrooms this happens with props, instruments, “found sounds,” and everyday

items. Besides mermaids, what might we imagine ourselves to be? How would we look? Move? Sound? How can we repurpose classroom and ordinary objects to bring our imaginings to life?

A beautiful book about acceptance, imagination, and freedom to be oneself, *Julián Is a Mermaid* is an engaging “tail” that will earn its place on anyone’s classroom shelf. ■

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CHILDREN’S BOOK REVIEW

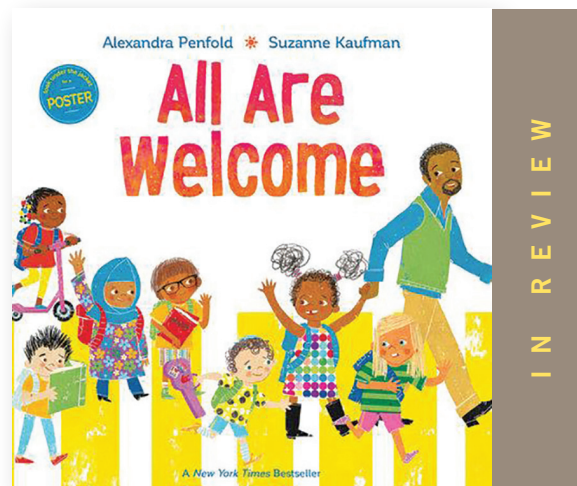
Reviewed by **Jody Petter**

All Are Welcome

Written by Alexandra Penfold

Illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman

New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018



All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold, illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman, is a charming book representing the diversity of community in its full glory. Readers are welcomed into a place where everyone is celebrated, included, and valued regardless of skin color, gender, age, ability, size, faith, or family structure. The story unfolds with families dropping off their children at school

where they are greeted with open arms, smiles, and waves from their teachers and classmates. “Fears are lost and hope is found” as the class begins with the children engaged in many different ways. The reader follows them through a very relatable elementary school routine including art, music, and story time in the library. As the day comes to an end, the children go home, get ready for bed, and reflect on all of the positive memorable things they experienced earlier. The last page is truly my favorite: “You

Children will immediately identify with the students in the story with their vast array of skin tones, freckles, missing teeth, hairstyles, and eye glasses—wearing hijabs, yarmulkes, and patkas.

have a place here, you have a space here, you are welcome here,” and it unfolds to reveal the school community gathering together for dinner and a science fair.

Themes of sharing, inclusivity, and embracing others are prevalent everywhere through the evocative illustrations. Each page pops with vibrant color and fine details to enhance the simple beauty of the story. “We’re part of a community, our strength is our diversity, a shelter from adversity.” Children will immediately identify with the students in the story with their vast array of skin tones, freckles, missing teeth, hairstyles, and eye glasses—wearing hijabs, yarmulkes, and patkas. As children see themselves represented in literature, their sense of being visible and feelings of importance begin to take root.

This book blends seamlessly in the music classroom regardless of student age or location. The repeated refrain of “all are welcome here” can be sung, played on an instrument, or paired with lovely body percussion. I chose to compose lyrics and adapt a simple canon exercise from volume I of *Music for Children* (1977, page 91, exercise 1a) to be sung or played at every refrain in the book.

All are welcome here.

People near and dear.

Hear us singing loud and clear.

All are welcome here.

Students performed this with body percussion, xylophones, and singing, both in unison and in canon. Nawal, one of my fourth graders, suggested we change the lyrics to “you are welcome here” for the last time it is sung in the book.

All Are Welcome is the perfect book for creating a program because it allows music teachers to highlight songs from the community and broaden the world for others. Some suggested complementary song literature includes *Dreams of Harmony* by Joanne Hammil, *A Child of the Universe* by Wilfred Josephs, *We All Sing with the Same Voice* by J. Philip Miller and Sheppard Greene, or *A Wish for Peace* by Denise Gagne and Michael Cassils. Include other culturally appropriate songs that represent the student population, and an entertaining and enlightening program is ready to go.

All students deserve to be recognized for who they are and how they live. The more we include diversity in our classrooms and embrace our differences, the stronger our communities will grow. This book is an excellent resource to have in any music room, welcoming all. ■

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