



Read Aloud Guide

Title: *Cassie's Word Quilt*, by Faith Ringgold

Best for: Kindergarten

Summary: This book features a young girl named Cassie (who is also the main character in a popular children's book called *Tar Beach*). Cassie takes the reader on a tour of her home, neighborhood, and school. The story is very simple, and each page has a collection of words that all connect to that page.

Why we chose this book: Faith Ringgold is a prolific painter, writer, mixed media sculptor, and performance artist, as well as a feminist and anti-racist activist. She has won a number of awards for her art and the 17 children's books she has written and illustrated. We love this book because it shows a day in the life of a young girl that will be familiar to any child – her family, her apartment, her neighborhood, and her school. It's a very different format than a typical story book. It is a combination of a word book and story book. The illustrations are rich and detailed, and we love that any child could make connections with Cassie's experiences.

Notes: This is a combination story book and word book, so it's best for the youngest kids. You don't have to read every word on the word pages. Instead, make sure you talk about each page and let students point to things they see.

Central themes: childhood, neighborhood, school, family

Introducing the book: You can begin by showing the cover, reading the title and author, and then saying something like this:

"Today we are going to hear a story about a little girl named Cassie who lives in a city, just like all of you. We are going to see her apartment, her neighborhood, and her school. What kinds of things do you think we will see when we see her apartment? Her neighborhood? Her school?"

(Let children predict what they might see and read about.)

Let's read and find out!

After Reading: Debrief with students

When Cassie is showing us her home: *"Here Cassie tells us about her home. What are some things that are the same about your home?"*

When Cassie shows us her neighborhood: *"What are some things that are the same in your neighborhood?"*

When Cassie shows us her school: *"What are some things that are the same in your school?" "What are some things that are different in your school from the things you see here?"*