

A Gift F7



Rachel, 5th Grade
“The Uchidas’ Home on Stuart Street,”
detail from Journey Home, 2004
Appliquéd quilt
Gibbs Magnet School of International
Studies and Foreign Languages

BACKGROUND

The Bracelet is one of over forty books that Yoshiko Uchida wrote. It is the story of a gift that bound two little girls, one Japanese American and the other Caucasian, in friendship. Uchida drew inspiration from her own pre-World War II life which included two Swedish neighborhood friends, Solvie and Marian.

In the story, Emi is given a bracelet by her good friend Laurie just before Emi is forcibly relocated. Once at the assembly center, Emi realizes that she has lost the bracelet and is heart broken when she can not find it. In time, Emi comes to understand that she does not need the bracelet to remember her good friend because Laurie is a part of her.

“THE UCHIDAS’ HOME ON STUART STREET”

The quilt square above illustrates the home in Berkeley where Yoshiko Uchida grew up.

In front of the home is Laddie, the dog that the family had to give away before they were evacuated to Tanforan Assembly Center in the Spring of 1942. The art work was created by Rachel with appliquéd fabric and is part of a two-sided quilt created by fifth graders at Gibbs Magnet School. One side tells the Japanese American story from immigration in the last half of the 1800s to the evacuation to the assembly centers in the Spring of 1942. The other side tells the story of camp life in Jerome and Rohwer Relocation Centers in the Arkansas Delta from the fall of 1942 to closing of the Rohwer Relocation Center in 1945 at the end of World War II.

ACTIVITY

Make a bracelet for a special friend with an assortment of plastic beads. Give the bracelet to your friend along with a letter that explains why you made it for her.

Supplies:

1. Round elastic cut in 9" lengths with tape wrapped around one end to make stringing easier
2. Beads with large holes for each bracelet, about 10 per student
3. Small squares of heavy paper with small hole in center to anchor the beads

Directions:

1. Tie a knot at one end of elastic.
2. String small paper square onto elastic.
3. Choose about 10 beads. Lay them out in order of the way they will be strung. Pay attention to color and pattern. Make a continuous pattern or place a large bead in the center and arrange the beads symmetrically on either side of it.
4. String beads onto elastic until the bracelet is long enough to fit your wrist.
5. Tie ends in a knot. Trim excess elastic.
6. In your journal, write a letter to the person you will give the bracelet to. Explain why you want him to have your gift. Explain your choice of color and pattern.
7. Copy the letter and give it to your friend with the bracelet. Ask him to wear your art.

Fourth Grade Visual Arts Standards: A.1.2, A.1.7, A.1.9; A.2.1, A.2.3, A.2.5, A.2.6, A.2.7; A.3.1, A.3.4, A.3.5, A.3.6, A.3.7.

Fifth Grade Visual Arts Standards: A.1.2, A.1.4, A.1.7; A.2.1, A.2.2, A.2.3, A.2.5, A.2.6; A.3.4, A.3.5, A.3.6.