



TEACHING NOTES

My Dad, My Rock

Author

Victor D.O. Santos

Illustrator

Anna Forlati

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Category

Picture book

PLOT

Oliver has never met his grandpa, and neither has his dad.

In this heartwarming book, Oliver imagines telling his grandpa about the most important person in his life — the man who teaches him to live with joy and feel deeply.

A moving ode to parenthood, the bonds we share with our children, and the ways we shape their lives.

*If I could meet my grandpa,
this is what I would tell him ...*

*When I grow up, I want to be like
my dad.*

THEMES

Father-son bond

Generational wisdom

Kindness

Unconditional love

Male role models

Emotional intelligence

Open curiosity

Simple life lessons

ABOUT THE CREATORS



Victor D.O. Santos is a professional linguist and the author of ten picture books. Originally from Brazil and raised by a single mother, he now lives in Iowa (USA)

with his Ukrainian wife and two multicultural, trilingual children.

My Dad, My Rock was inspired by a true question his son asked him one night, which can be found on the very first page of the book.



Anna Forlati was born in Padua, Italy. After receiving a degree in contemporary art and a degree in film history at the IUAV University in Venice, she now

teaches illustration at the prestigious Ars in Fabula School of Illustration in Macerata (Italy) and dedicates herself to the world of illustration for children. She has illustrated over 40 children's books and has taken part in many international exhibitions dedicated to illustration.

DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

Before reading

- * The title of this book is *My Dad, My Rock*. Do you know what it means to be someone's 'rock'? What could it be?
- * Look at the illustration on the front and back covers. What kind of story do you think this will be?



After reading

- * Oliver never met his grandpa, and neither did his dad. Where and how do you think Oliver's dad learned to be a good dad?
- * Who is your role model? Why?
- * When Oliver has climbed up on his father's back, he feels like he is safe from everything. Do you have somewhere you go where you feel completely safe? Why is it there?
- * What does Oliver's dad mean when he tells Oliver about 'teaching a boy how to fish instead of always giving him fish'?
- * What kind of life lessons would you like to share with your younger siblings or peers?

ACTIVITY

Drawing activity: Card for your rock

Make a card for your dad, or caregiver, explaining them all the things that make them your rock.

Fold a piece of card in half, and on the front, draw a picture of you and them having fun, look at the way Oliver is on his dad's shoulders on the cover of *My Dad, My Rock*.

Inside, write a message about how much they mean to you.



ACTIVITY

NAME:

Colouring activity: Creating a direct transfer

My Dad, My Rock is illustrated in a gentle pencil illustrations. The illustrator, Anna Forlati, has also used lots of different shading and textures to create depth in her artwork.

Now, let's try making your own textured drawing!

Find a small object with an interesting texture on its surface (a coin will work well!). Slide it under a piece of blank paper, and shade in the area on top. When you take the object away, you will be left with a textured image of the object!