

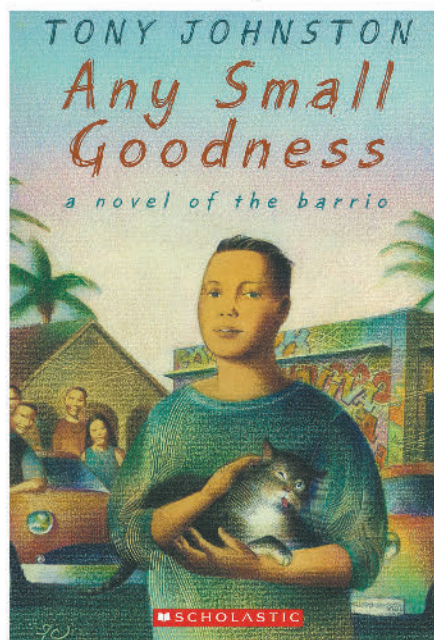
# Reading <sup>with</sup> Relevance<sup>®</sup>

Building Independent Readers and Thinkers

YOUR STUDENT WORKBOOK FOR

## *Any Small Goodness*

A novel by Tony Johnston



This workbook belongs to:

# About the Book

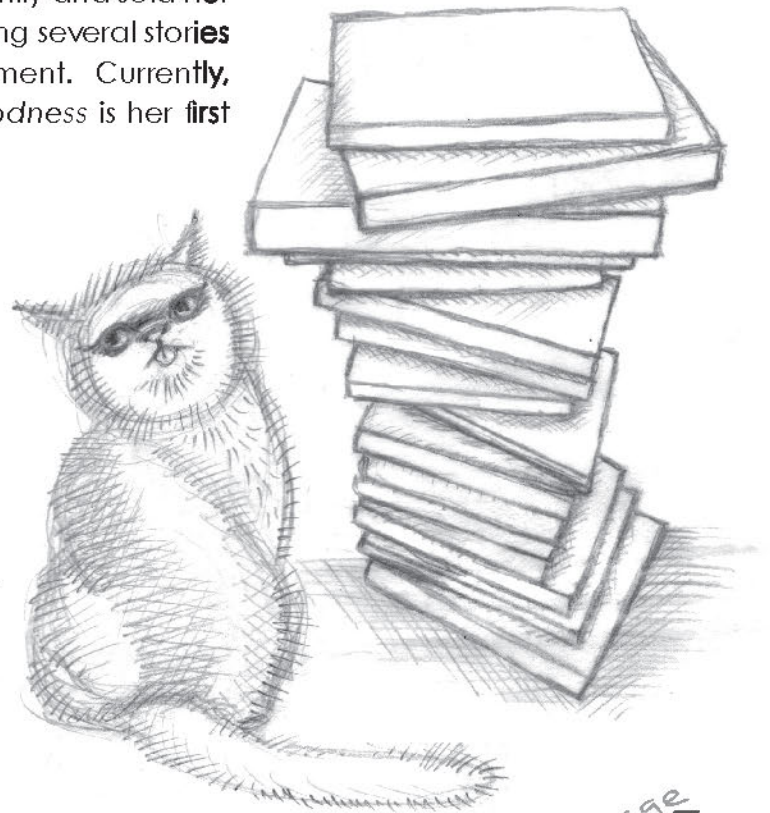
## *Any Small Goodness*

### Story Summary

*Any Small Goodness: A Novel of the Barrio* **describes the journey of Arturo Rodriguez**, a young Mexican-American boy who, despite living in an impoverished and violent neighborhood in Los Angeles, California, is able to recognize beauty and “small goodness” around him. While the Rodriguez family struggles to make ends meet and gain acceptance into mainstream culture, Arturo shows how a young person can be optimistic about the future, persevere through adversity, and embrace one’s familial roots. The ability to find the good in otherwise challenging situations is a valuable coping mechanism for Arturo; participating in acts of kindness and charity helps Arturo define himself, and his neighborhood, in a positive way.

As a fourth-grade teacher in California, Tony Johnston first began writing stories for her students. While living in Mexico City during the 1970s, Johnston raised a family and sold **her** first book. She also writes in Spanish, including several stories commissioned by the Mexican government. **Currently**, Johnston lives in California. *Any Small Goodness* is her **first** novel.

### About the Author





# Session 8

## Theme: Emotional Resilience

**Guiding Question:** Resilience is the ability to bounce back when bad things come your way. How do you foster your own resilience in the face of the realities and challenges you encounter?

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Write a complete sentence for each of the following vocabulary words. Use the definitions provided to make sure you are using these words correctly!



### Vocabulary

**brooding** (pg. 104): v., thinking or worrying persistently about something

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**prowl** (pg. 107): v., to search or roam about, as if looking for prey

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**skimp** (pg. 114): v., to not give a lot of something

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### Session 7 Recap

Arturo is worried about the gang members attacking Luis. One night, the gang members open fire on the Rodriguez house while everyone is home. They shower the house with bullets and destroy much of the kitchen, including Rosa's beloved lunchbox. Everyone is physically fine, but Arturo wonders if they will ever recover from this, and he wishes he could have shielded Rosa from the experience. The police come, but there isn't much they can do. The next day, Officer Paster brings Rosa a new lunchbox as a gift.

# Read pages 104-115



## **While You Read:**

As you read, keep track of unfamiliar words, inspiring quotes, and questions you have.

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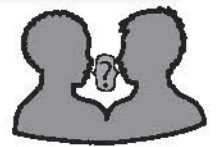
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## **Discussion Questions**



Write your response to each question below using a complete sentence.

- How does Arturo feel at school after the gang attack?

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- Would you like to be a part of Arturo's gang? Why or why not?

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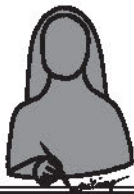
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- How do you think the families feel after being visited by the Green Needle Gang?

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Choose one of these prompts to respond to in at least one full paragraph of writing.

**INITIATIVE**

Arturo forms his own "gang" in response to the ugliness of the barrio and his desire to support people in his community during the holiday season.

**Describe Arturo's gang and their mission.**

- » If Arturo asked you to join the Green Needle Gang, would you?
- » If you had a gang for good, what would your gang do?
- » Who else would you invite to join your small-goodness gang?

**ADVICE**

Arturo forms his own "gang" that delivers Christmas gifts and food to people who probably can't afford any.

**Do you think that Arturo has been influenced by his father's advice?**

- » How are Arturo's choices connected to his father's words?
- » Give details and examples from the story to support your opinion.

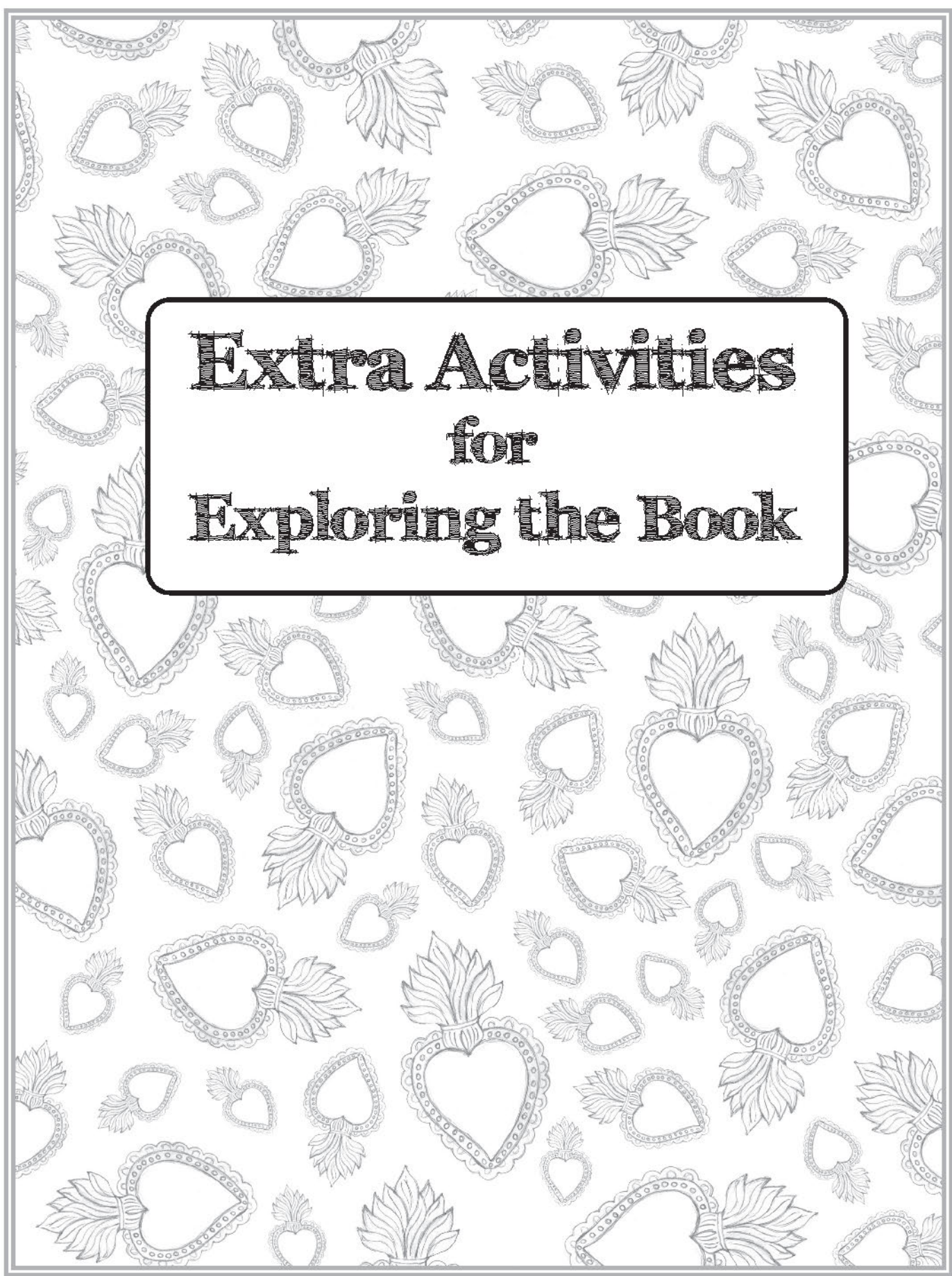
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**From the Book:****Example****Difficult Situation:** *The cat runs away.***Positive Outcome:** *They meet Mr. Love, who becomes their friend. They are also excited to find the cat, and love her even more.***From the Book:****Difficult Situation:****Positive Outcome:****Difficult Situation:****Positive Outcome:****Difficult Situation:****Positive Outcome:****From My Life:****Difficult Situation:****Positive Outcome:****Difficult Situation:****Positive Outcome:****Difficult Situation:****Positive Outcome:**

Sometimes things in our lives can feel really hard in the moment, but often, these situations get resolved and something positive comes from the experience. In this activity, think about a few examples from the story when something positive came out of an otherwise difficult situation. Then, you'll get to think about how this has been true in your own life. What positive things have resulted from your own difficult moments?

**Flip It**





# **Extra Activities for Exploring the Book**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

My Life

Arturo's Life



Create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast Arturo's life and your life. Show how your lives overlap and how they are different. Consider where you live, who your friends are, your personality, your beliefs and experiences, etc.

**Venn Diagram**