



HERITAGE MUSEUM

INDEPENDENCE, OR

Museum Activity

We read the book "Maddi's Fridge," written by Lois Brandt and illustrated by Vin Vogel, to the students. Once the book has been read, and a short discussion has occurred, the group will be led to the *Ella Curran: Feeding the Community* exhibit. There our guide will give a very brief introduction about who Ella was and the work she did to help her community. Then, we explain the hands-on activities in the exhibit, and let the students explore. If time permits, we encourage students to draw a picture for Maddi's Fridge. Take home materials are provided.

Book Synopsis

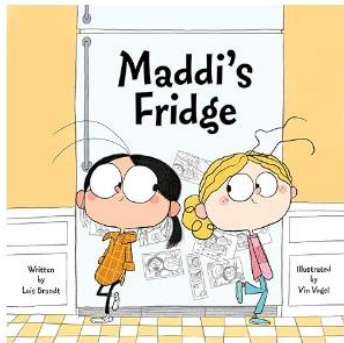
Best friends Sofia and Maddi live in the same neighborhood, go to the same school and play in the same park, but while Sofia's fridge at home is full of nutritious food, the fridge at Maddi's house is empty. Sofia learns that Maddi's family doesn't have enough money to fill their fridge and promises Maddi she'll keep this discovery a secret. But because Sofia wants to help her friend, she's faced with a difficult decision: to keep her promise or tell her parents about Maddi's empty fridge. This story addresses issues of poverty with honesty and sensitivity while instilling important lessons about friendship, empathy, trust and helping others.

Book Themes

Poverty, Friendship, Empathy, Helping others

Note

As we read and discuss this book, we are mindful about the students in our group. We know we may have students who are experiencing poverty, homeless and/or hunger. We try to be sensitive about their situation and do not put any student in a position where they are required to. Sometimes children feel relieved to discuss something so personal and others may feel awkward and embarrassed about it.



Questions We May Ask Students

- How do you feel when you haven't eaten enough?
- Can you tell if someone is hungry just by looking at them?
- Can a family experience hunger if members of the family have jobs?
- Why doesn't Maddi just ask for help?
- If a family needs help to fill their fridge once, will they need to do it forever?
- If they do need help more than once, is that okay?
- If Maddi's fridge is empty, does it mean that she or her family have done something wrong?

The right questions can change everything. We try to give the kids the space to wonder, too. At the museum we do not answer a question with "That's not an appropriate question" or "We don't ask that here". Once kids know that our museum is a safe place to ask big questions, conversations become deeper, more vulnerable, and more meaningful.

Take Home Activity

Maddi's Fridge is a story about friendship and helping others. We will provide you with two worksheets that can be done when you return to school. They allow a student to choose to write about a time they helped someone or write about a time someone helped them.

These worksheets are also downloadable and available online www.loisbrandt.com/classroom-activities:

[I was helped](#)

[I helped someone](#)



Decorate Maddi's Fridge

Maddi had lots of pictures of her and Sofia taped to her refrigerator door. Draw a picture for Maddi's fridge.



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