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# Yoko Writes Her Name (A Yoko Book)



## Synopsis

Yoko is so excited for the first day of school. She's just learned to write her name. But when Mrs. Jenkins asks Yoko to show everyone, Olive and Sylvia make fun of her Japanese writing. "Yoko can't write. She's only scribbling!" The teasing continues as Yoko shares her favorite book at show and tell, and reads it back to front. That evening, Yoko declares that she can't go back to school. "How can I when my reading and writing are a failure?" she asks. Luckily a little wisdom from her Mama, a little cooperation from Mrs. Jenkins, and a lot of enthusiasm from her classmates teach Yoko the most important lesson of the year: that friendship can bridge cultural differences. Not only does Yoko learn to read and write in English and graduate Kindergarten with her classmates, but everyone's name appears in two languages on their diploma; even Olive's and Sylvia's!

## Book Information

Series: A Yoko Book

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Product Dimensions: 9 x 9 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #589,086 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #241 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American #1587

in Books > Children's Books > Early Learning > Beginner Readers #3422 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > School

Age Range: 3 - 6 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 1

## Customer Reviews

PreSchool-Grade 2 • The endearing kitten introduced in Yoko (1998) and Yoko's Paper Cranes (2001, both Hyperion) returns in this lovely story illustrating the challenges facing young children who are bridging two cultures. Life for Yoko in the first week of school is anything but

positive. In the eyes of the other children, her Japanese characters look like "baby marks," her numbers are just lines, and she "pretends" to read a book as she pages through it right to left instead of left to right. Olive and Sylvia decide that Yoko won't graduate from kindergarten, and soon the child is unhappily refusing her favorite sushi. Even with the considerate assistance of insightful Mrs. Jenkins and the support of her mother, the situation is not improved until a fellow student steps in. Angelo recognizes Yoko's characters as a secret language, and when she writes his name in Japanese, he shows her how to write the ABC's. After only a bit more classroom drama, all ends well with a kindergarten graduation and bilingual diplomas. This is a carefully crafted picture book with Asian-inspired illustrations that delight the eye just as the gentle story soothes the soul. —Piper Nyman, Brookmeade Elementary School, Nashville, TN Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

**\*Starred Review\*** When Yoko writes her name in Japanese instead of English, two classmates mock her and gleefully predict, "She won't graduate from kindergarten." Worried, Yoko hides under a table and is discovered by Angelo, who wants to learn how to write Japanese. In return, he shows her how to write her name "in ABCs." Soon the entire class is learning how to write Japanese words, and graduation day has a distinctive Asian flavor, cheering even Yoko's tormentors. In the sunny illustrations, Japanese and English labels on familiar objects invite children to write in both languages. Any child who has coped with being different, especially those from other cultures, will identify with Yoko's painfully realistic dilemma, and others will understand Yoko's palpable fear of failure. Once again, Yoko shares her Japanese culture in a story that can spark discussions about accepting and honoring differences. Meaningful and delightful in equal measure. Preschool-Grade 2. --Linda Perkins

Yoko Writes Her Name, written and illustrated by Rosemary Wells, tells a story familiar to many, how difficult it is to be the new kid on the block, the new student in the school, or worse yet a student who can speak English, but doesn't know how to write it. Competitive first graders play "Graduation" on the playground on her first day, where everyone but Yoko graduates. The story weaves a tale of pain and awareness as cultural traditions are learned and shared. Each page features a framed illustration depicting events and emotions. Instead of page numbers illustrations of a word, spelled in English are one page, with the Japanese spelling on the facing page. This is a delightful tale of what it means to be a newcomer, who with the help of parents, teachers and classmates learns how to write a new language, English, while sharing with others the way to write

in Japanese. Children 5-9, as well as teachers and adults will find it both entertaining and instructive.

A fun book about a bi-lingual child adjusting to life at school. My daughter is half-Japanese and could relate very well to Yoko's struggle to fit in, accepting her Japanese heritage and sharing it with others. I also used it in my classroom and the children enjoyed it, and we used it to discuss how all of the students are different. Highly recommended,

I am a retired teacher, who now teaches Japanese children to speak English. YOKO WRITES HER NAME is a wonderful book to use with Japanese students, especially the younger ones. It has common words on the corner of each page in both English and Japanese, which helps the teacher and students learn some Japanese, while teaching English. The story line shows how Yoko is accepted into her class by all the students first by Yoko teaching them how to write their names in Japanese. Subsequently, the class ends up learning Japanese as a second language. What a wonderful way to make a foreign child feel important and special.

My 3-year-old, who has some linguistic and ethnic difference issues to deal with herself, loves these books, appears to understand them and asks for them again and again. I have one criticism on this book. The book shows Japanese characters but not very clearly and doesn't do much to help a child see them as a writing system just like ABCs. The graphics on that could be better.

This is a very cute picture book. If you speak more than one language and you try to teach your kids another language, this is a good book to read. My kids are proud that they can recognize the Japanese Hiragana letters on the pages.

great book

Cute

I love all the Yoko books ...worth get each and every one

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