



Read-Aloud A Potluck for Pia

2



Pia's family is new in town. Her neighbors hold a potluck in their honor.

"What's a potluck?" Pia wonders.

"It's a party where all the guests bring food to share," Nonna explains.

3



Pia hides behind her Nonna's legs as they go into the common room.

"Make yourself at home," Mr. Parra says. But Pia is nervous. There's loud music, and unfamiliar voices.

 **Ask:** "What do you notice? What do you wonder?"

4



For Pia, everything is a little scary. She doesn't know anyone. All she wants is to be back in her old home, with her old friends.

5



But Mr. Parra’s son Manuel gives Pia his hand. “Come with me,” he says. “I’ll show you around.”

Hesitantly, Pia leaves her Nonna’s side. Manuel takes her through the room, past the adults. “I’ll show you where the good stuff is,” he says.

6



Pia’s eyes grow wide when she sees what Manuel means by “good stuff.” In front of her are plates and plates of different foods—all with wonderful colors, smells, shapes, and sizes.

Manuel takes a tray and heaps different foods on top. “Yum!” Manuel says as he hands Pia a tray.

Pia watches as he picks up a wrapped square of something steamy. “My dad made the chicken hallacas,” he said. “They are the best!”

 **Ask:** “What do you notice? What do you wonder?”

7



Manuel spots a plate of bright, colorful balls on the ends of skewers.

“The Fujitas in 2A made dango!”

Manuel passes her one, and she takes a bite. It is sweet and chewy.

“I made that one myself!” Ren says.

“With my help,” adds his sister Jun.

8



Further down, Pia spots a rectangular tray filled with packages wrapped in banana leaves.

“What’s this one?” Pia asks.

Manuel dips his head and takes a breath. “Ahh! Conkieos!”

“My grandma made them,” Decoursey says as he hands them out.

9



Pia and Manuel keep going down the table.

There are the steamed buns Mei and her dad made from scratch. There are little diamonds of fresh-baked baklava from Mrs. Balik's kitchen.

Pia sees so many foods from so many families. Chinua's family brought hot tihlo. Magda's family brought potato pierogies. And the stacks of fresh bazlama are thanks to Ajar's family.

For the first time that day, Pia feels a smile come to her face.

10



Manuel and Pia take their trays to where the other kids are sitting.

"This is Pia," Manuel says to the group.

Everyone stares at her for a moment. Then Decoursey says "Sit next to me."

"No," Mei says. "Sit next to me."

"No way," Ajar says. "Sit over here."

Ask: "What do you notice? What do you wonder?"

11



The kids talk and joke and tell stories as they eat. As her tummy fills, Pia feels warm and happy. Now things are starting to feel more like home.

She can't wait to make something for all of them to try.