



Read-Aloud Special Day, Special Lei

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Maile's family runs a lei shop in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

Pat's Lei Shop is named after Maile's grandmother, who opened the store years before Maile's mom was even born.

The store serves customers from all around the world. Some come in person to choose their *lei*. Others order them to be sent all across the country.

Everyone at Pat's Lei Shop works hard to create beautiful *lei* for their customers' special occasions. To show their appreciation, many customers write thank-you letters. Some send photos, too!

Here are a few:

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Dear Pat's Lei Shop,

I came to your store to buy *lei* to welcome my family to the islands. It was their first visit to Hawai'i, and I was really nervous about choosing the perfect flowers and styles for all 16 of my relatives. It had been many years since I'd seen them. I had no idea what they would like!

Luckily, Maile helped me figure out what to buy. She said orchid *lei* are often given to welcome someone, and that ginger *lei* symbolize love and affection.

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

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I'm so glad I took her suggestions. Aunty Lynn and Aunty Jessica loved the smell of the ginger flowers. Uncle Hiram and Uncle Richie admired the bright purple orchids.

Here's a photo of us reunited after many years. Your special *lei* made this moment unforgettable.

—Paul Uperesa

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Dear Pat's Lei Shop,

We can't thank you enough for the floral decorations and *lei* you provided for Grandma's 75th birthday party. We weren't sure how to decorate the house for such a huge celebration, but with your help, all 200 guests had a blast—and some beautiful flowers to take home!

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The *haku lei* you suggested was perfect for Grandma. It stayed put on her head as she danced all night, and made her feel extra special on this important day.

The table decorations you made with the leftover leaves and ferns added such a festive touch! We appreciate how hard you worked on them!

—Arlene and Nona

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

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Dear Pat's Lei Shop,

I used to come to your shop all the time when I was a kid. My family trusted yours to create the perfect *lei* for all our special moments and events.

Since leaving Hawai'i to attend college in Illinois, I've missed home so much. When my parents told me they couldn't be here to attend my college graduation, I felt so homesick!

But then, on graduation day, boxes from Pat's Lei Shop arrived! As soon as I opened them the scent of the flowers comforted me. When I put the *lei* on, I felt like my family was with me, telling me that they were proud.

And oh, I can't believe how fresh the *lei* stayed after the long airplane journey from Hawai'i, thanks to your amazing packaging and speedy shipping!

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Here's a picture of me wearing my very special *lei* on my big day!

Lehua