

Last Stop on Market Street

Written by Matt de la Pena

Illustrated by Christian Robinson

As you introduce yourself, answer this question:

Is there anything in the story that you relate to in your life?

At the beginning of the book, CJ skips down the steps of the church. “The outside air smelled like freedom, but it also smelled like rain.” How can air smell like freedom?

Look at the verbs in the story. How does the use of these verbs help tell the story?

Read the page about CJ listening to music. Do you sometimes close your eyes while listening to music? Does closing your eyes improve your enjoyment of the music?

CJ does not use perfect English when he speaks. What do you think about the author’s decision to have CJ speak this way?

The author uses many similes and metaphors in the story. What are some of them?

The author told some children, “If you see the straw, you understand the entire book.” What do you think he meant?

Nana sat right up front. Can you think of a reason why it was important for the author to include this in the story?

“Sometimes when you’re surrounded by dirt, CJ, you’re a better witness to what’s beautiful.” What do you think Nana wants CJ to understand?

CJ’s attitude changed from the beginning of the book to the end of the book. What caused the change in CJ’s attitude?

CJ wondered how his nana always found beautiful where he never thought to look. Are you more like Nana or CJ?

What lessons might a child learn from this book?

Describe the illustrations and tell how they help to tell the story.