



## EDUCATOR GUIDE

### SO LOUD!

by Sahar Golshan

illustrated by Shiva Delsooz

Educator Guide by Ira Haghnegahdar

**GENRE:** Picture book, children's fiction

**THEMES:** emotions & feelings, girls & women, multigenerational, Iranian culture, Norooz, SEL, loudness, self-discovery, self-empowerment, biracial, debut author, family, grandmother, intergenerational, noise, voice, water

**SUITABLE FOR:** Grades Pre-K–2, Ages 4–7

**GUIDED READING LEVEL:** Fountas and Pinnell L

**LEXILE:** TBD

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS:** RL.1.1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9  
W.1.1,3,5,6  
SL.1.1,1a,1b,1c,2,3,4,5,6  
L.1.4,4a,4b,4c,5,5a,5b,5c,5d,6

### SUMMARY:

A fun and touching picture book that explores the power of finding your voice.

Rudābeh (Rudy for short) loves to talk, sing, jump, and shout. There's just one problem: the adults in her life are always telling her that she is SO LOUD. When her grandmother (Māmān Bozorg) visits from Iran for the first time, Rudy worries that she might be too loud for her. But as she tries to be quieter, Rudy starts to feel less and less like herself. Listening closely to the many sounds in her world—from husky howls and streetcar chimes to Māmān Bozorg's roaring sneezes—Rudy tries to figure out the full range of her own voice, discovering along the way the joy in being loud.

This charming story will resonate with readers who love to make noise and are still learning where and when to take up space.



Please remember that the suggested questions and activities within this educator guide are meant to serve as a starting point. Educators are encouraged to select items from each part of the guided inquiry process that work best for their style of teaching and will help them meet their goals when covering the topics in this book. Activities and prompts should be tweaked and/or reformatted to best fit your students, context, and community to ensure equity and inclusion.

## BEFORE READING THE BOOK

These activities build the context, introduce the topic of the book, and establish prior knowledge and interest.

1. Bring the students' awareness to their voice. Ask them if they are familiar with the phrase "indoor voice and outdoor voice." Ask for a volunteer who feels comfortable sharing what this phrase means. If there are no students who are familiar or comfortable sharing what it means, then go ahead and explain the term. Discuss why we may speak in different volumes at different times. Ask the students to show what their "indoor voice" sounds like. What does their "outdoor voice" sound like? Do everyone's indoor and outdoor voices sound the same? Ask them which volume feels the most comfortable to them. Are there times when they prefer not to speak? If yes, when? In these moments, do they wish not to communicate at all or do they try to communicate in a different way like drawing, gesturing, etc.? Who is their favorite person to talk to? What is their favorite topic to talk about?
2. Ask students if they are familiar with the term *māmān bozorg* (grandma). If there are Persian-speaking students in the group, ask them if they are comfortable sharing what *māmān bozorg* means. If there are no students who are familiar or comfortable sharing what it means, then go ahead and explain the term.
3. Ask students if they have names for their grandparents in different languages. Make a list of the names students have for their grandparents. Use this as an opportunity to discuss the languages spoken by students and their families at home.
4. Ask students to draw a picture of their grandparents or, if they do not know or have grandparents, an older person who plays a special role in their lives. Ask them to share more about the people they have drawn: Where do they live? How often do they see them? What is special about the times they spend with them?



5. Ask the students if they are familiar with Norooz (Persian New Year). If there are students who celebrate Norooz at home, ask them if they are comfortable sharing how Norooz is celebrated. If there are no students who are familiar or comfortable sharing what it means, then go ahead and explain the term. Use this as an opportunity to also explain the term sabzeh (sprouted wheat) which is a part of haft-sin and the practice of releasing sabzeh into nature through moving water (Sizdah Be-dar).

## WHILE READING THE BOOK

These activities check on comprehension, stimulate interest, involve readers in reflection as they read, and encourage consideration of other readers' reactions.

1. At the beginning of the story we learn that Rudy loves to talk. What do the students love to do? How does it feel when they aren't allowed to do their favorite thing? Do they feel frustrated, disappointed, or impatient?
2. Help students understand the different emotions illustrated in the book and how they contribute to telling the story by giving them meaningful time to look at the details in the illustrations. Ask them what emotions are portrayed in the illustrations by Rudy and the other characters. As you read the story, ask students how they think Rudy feels at that moment. Why does she feel this way?
3. Ask the students why Rudy decides to shut her voice like a water tap. How does Rudy feel when she has to be quiet? Why does she feel this way? How does she feel when she can be as loud as she likes? Ask the students if they have ever been told they are too loud or too quiet or if anyone ever asked them to be quiet or speak up. How did that make them feel?
4. As you read, make a list of the Persian words from the story as a class. Examples include *bābā* (dad), *māmān bozorg* (grandmother), *boos* (kiss), and *shir zan* (lion woman).

Encourage students to repeat the Persian words from the story. You can ask them to repeat these words in different volumes. This may require practicing how to pronounce the words. Students may already be familiar with these words, but if not, use the opportunity for them to learn about new languages. You can also ask students if they know how to say the words in other languages they speak.



5. Ask the students why they think Rudy's water tap gets stuck. How does she feel? Have they ever been afraid of upsetting others with their voice? Make a list of what can help them in these difficult situations. An example may include speaking to a trusted adult. Ask the students what they could do if they wanted to be loud in a place where it's important to be quiet, like a library. An example may include expressing yourself in a different way like drawing, writing, or even dancing!
6. Māmān Bozorg says "Rudābeh means river." Encourage students to think about their own names or the names of people they know. Ask them if they are comfortable sharing the meaning of their name or the name of someone they know. How do they feel about their name? Do they like or dislike their name? Do they relate to the meaning of their name? Do they know who chose their name and how they came to choose it? Conclude the activity by emphasizing the diversity and richness of names and the stories behind them. Encourage students to appreciate and respect the significance of names in their own lives and the lives of others. You may also invite students to research the meanings of their names further and share any interesting findings with the class in the next session. This may include cultural or historical significance, famous individuals who share the same name, or variations of the name in different languages.

## AFTER READING THE BOOK

These activities inspire continued reflection and response to the text, bring conclusion to the experience of reading this particular text, and stimulate further extensions.

1. Māmān Bozorg tells Rudy that "Some people don't like it when girls are loud. Use your voice anyway." Ask the students why some people may not like it when girls are loud. Do they think this is fair to girls? Ask the students if they can name other ways that women and girls are treated unfairly (e.g. girls are often criticized for their appearance more than boys, certain fields and jobs are considered not suitable for women, women get paid less than men for doing the same job, etc.). Why do they think this is and how does it make them feel? Take a moment to emphasize that all genders are equal and deserve respect. Ask the students if they have ever been treated unfairly because of their gender. How did they feel? What can we do when we are treated unfairly? Answers may include speaking up, seeking support from a trusted person, and educating ourselves and others.

2. Revisit the moments Rudy is asked to change her voice. Who is asking her to change her voice? How are they asking her (e.g. her father shushes her, her teacher uses a hand signal)? Why is she asked to change her voice?
3. Remind the students of what happened when Rudy decided to stop talking: her throat felt like it was full of water. Ask the students how they feel when they can't do something they love or be who they are. How does it make them feel (e.g. make their stomach hurt, make them feel small)?
4. Rudy pictures her voice as a water tap, a husky, a lion, and a river. Ask the students to think about their own voice and imagine what it might look or sound like. Ask them to draw their voice. Does their voice look like an animal? What color is it? Is it big or small? Is it round or does it have sharp corners?
5. At the end of the story Rudy realizes her voice, like the river, is always changing. Ask the students if they find that their voice changes. Why and how does their voice change? If they are multilingual, does their voice change when they speak different languages? Has their voice changed as they've grown? How does their voice change depending on how they are feeling?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

These activities are only a start. They are designed to support the goal of helping students explore the story and their own creativity.

### COPYCAT GAME

To promote more vocal awareness in students, play the copycat game. Have students form a circle. Identify or request a student volunteer to be the “cool cat.” This student will have a bean bag or another passing object in their hand. The “cool cat” will make a sound. Examples: a roar, a whistle, a howl. The rest of the students are “copycats.” The “copycats” will repeat or echo back the sound made by the “cool cat.” After a few rounds, other students will have the opportunity to be the “cool cat” and the previous “cool cat” will get to be a one of the “copycats.” Optionally, the “cool cat” gets to choose the next “cool cat” when their turn is over.

### MAKE YOUR OWN HAFT-SIN

Revisit the concept of haft-sin. Use this as an opportunity to talk about the letter “S” and its phonetics. With Rudy’s love for noon-e paneer and lions in mind, make a list or drawings of seven foods and/ or animals that begin with “S.” You can do this as a class or in smaller groups. Remind the students that the objects in haft-sin are symbolic. Encourage them to reflect on the significance of their chosen foods or animals and how they resonate personally.

## EMOTION PUPPETS

In the story, the characters experience various emotions: happiness, excitement, sadness, shame, frustration, and fear. Using paper plates and popsicle sticks, teachers and students can create puppets depicting various emotions. Ask the students what their puppets sound like, if they are loud or quiet, if their voices are high or low. Have the students hold up their puppets at the different points in the story where emotions are present. Talk about the importance of making space for all our emotions as a way of dealing with hard feelings. Ask students how they make space for those emotions and what helps them feel better (e.g., drawing, talking about their feelings with a trusted adult, playing, thinking about things that they are grateful for). Make a list that students can revisit.



## SPECIAL GUESTS

When reading *So Loud!* students may be excited to talk about their own grandparents and family members. This is an excellent chance to bring their grandparents into the classroom based on the abilities and needs of the classroom. Building relationships with families is an important way to connect with the members of the classroom and can provide enriching experiences for the students.