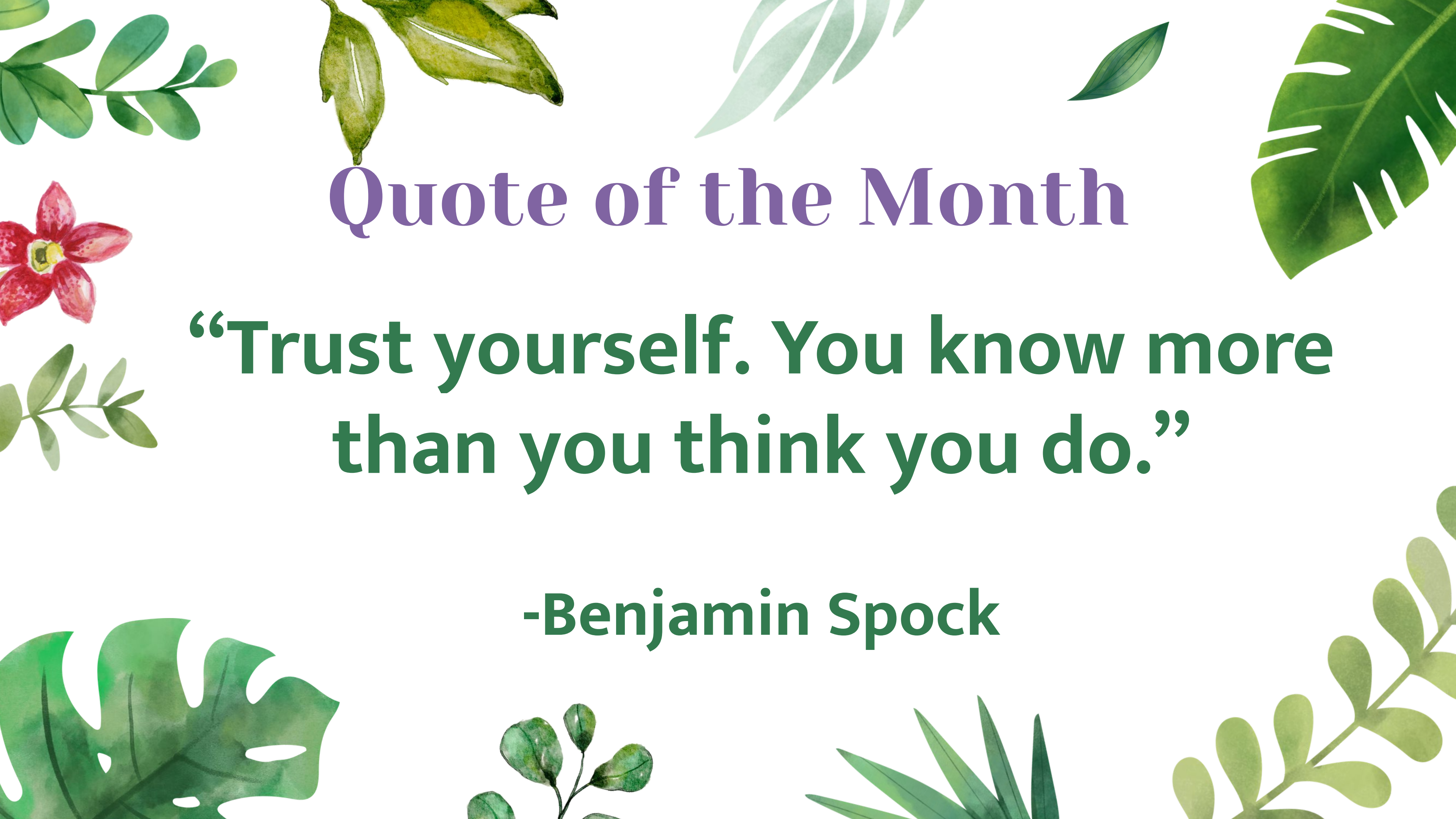




May 2026 Book of the
Month with Activities!

The image features a white background with various watercolor illustrations of plants and flowers. In the top left, there is a sprig of small green leaves and a red flower with yellow center. In the top right, there is a large green monstera leaf and a sprig of small green leaves. In the bottom left, there is a large green monstera leaf. In the bottom center, there is a small sprig of green leaves. In the bottom right, there is a sprig of small green leaves. The text is centered on the page.

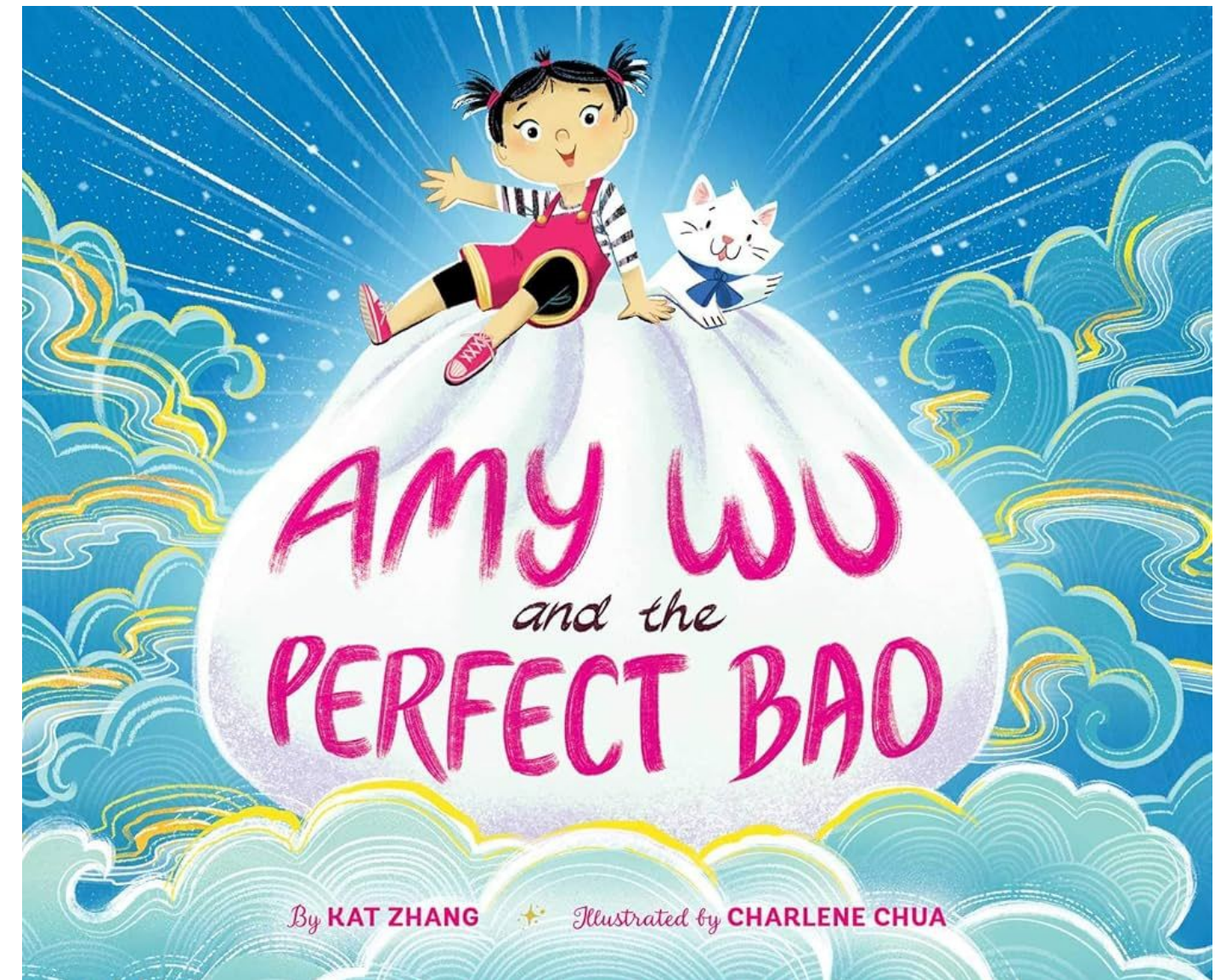
Quote of the Month

**“Trust yourself. You know more
than you think you do.”**

-Benjamin Spock

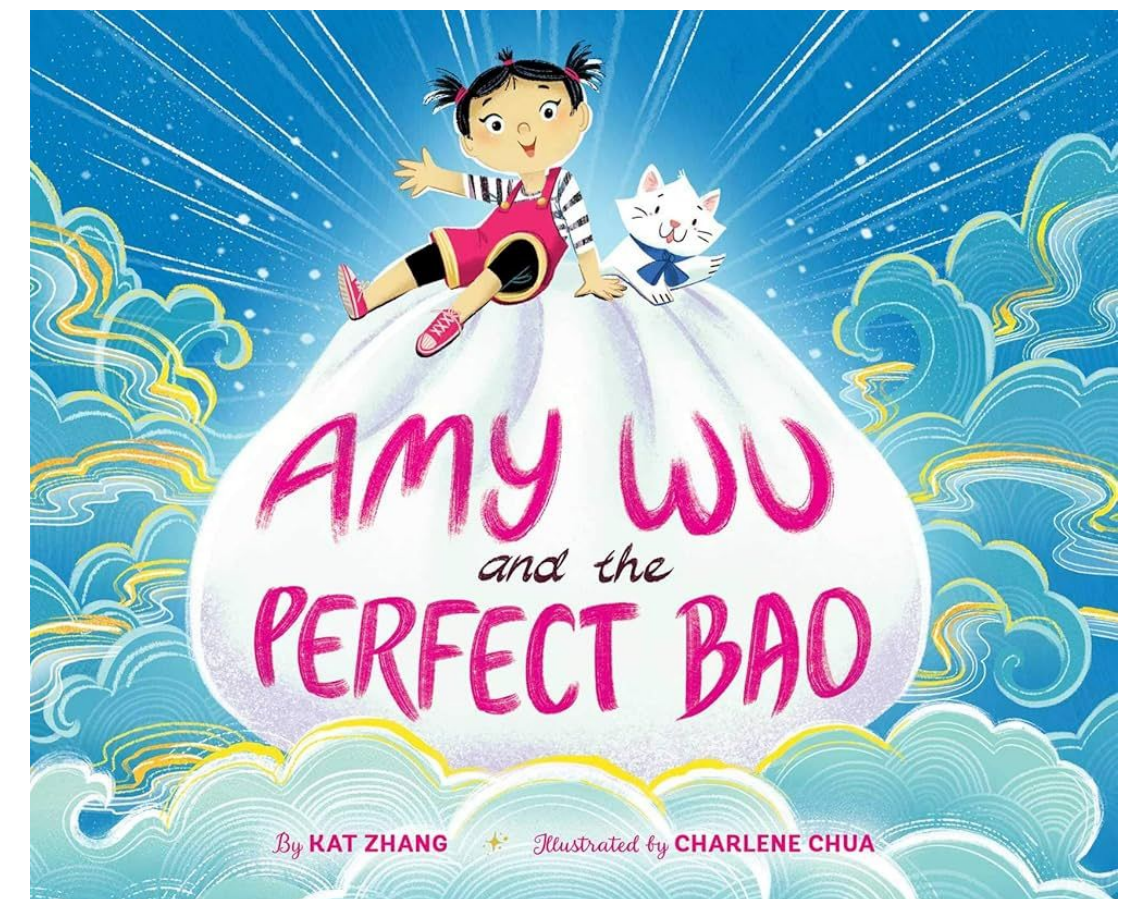
May Book of the Month

**Amy Wu and
the Perfect Bao**
by Kat Zhang

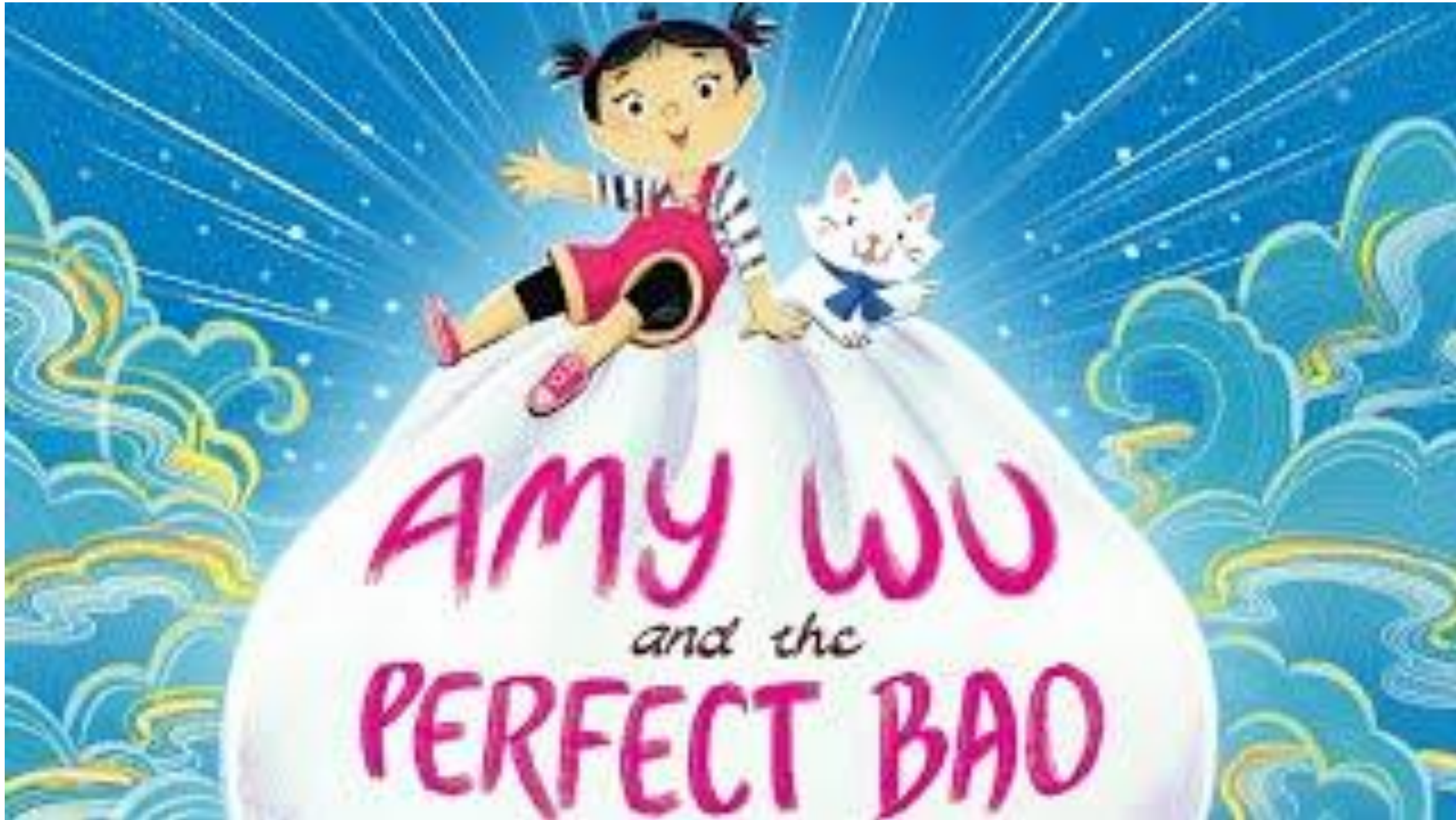


Book Summary

In honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, “Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao” introduces us to Amy, who is excited to celebrate her Chinese culture and help her family create bao, or steamed buns. However, Amy’s bao never seem to turn out like those of the rest of her family: hers are too full, or too empty, or misshapen, and Amy begins to feel frustrated. Then, Amy thinks outside the box and realizes that the dough is not the right size for her! Once Amy gets smaller pieces of dough, her bao turns out to be a masterpiece, and she realizes that even her imperfect bao are still delicious. Amy’s story highlights the importance of cultural traditions, perseverance, embracing imperfection, and charting your own path, encouraging a growth mindset in all readers.



Read-Aloud Video



Click for Related Book

Interview with
the Author!



Official Discussion
and Activity Guide



AMY WU AND THE PERFECT BAO

Hardcover: 9781534411333 | Ages: 4 to 8

ABOUT THE BOOK

Amy Wu loves bao, but why can't she make the perfect bao? Author Kat Zhang introduces the complexities of making bao—Chinese steamed buns—as we follow Amy on a journey to make bao like her parents and grandmother do. While some are too full or too empty, and others fall apart or aren't the right size, Amy works through her frustration and ultimately discovers a solution that works for her. This lovely story highlights a scenario that can resonate for readers in various ways, from the exact experience of trying to pinch those wrappers just right to the pressure of doing something as well as their elders.

★ "An extra-tasty book for bao lovers everywhere." —Kirkus Reviews, starred review

"This sweet book both encourages cooking together as a family and rewards creative problem-solving." —Food Network Blog

"Children will relate to this readaloud if they've ever faced a situation when emulating adults failed, but Amy's triumph is sure to inspire them to try again." —BCCB

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think it was so important to Amy to create the perfect bao?

2. Amy works on creating a bao with pork, shrimp, ginger, and mushrooms. Have you tried a bao like this or with other fillings? Can you think of foods from other cultures that are similar? (For more exploration on this topic, see "This is a Dumpling?" reproducible activity at the end of this guide)

3. Making dumplings is a family activity that means a lot to Amy. What is a food that means a lot to your community or family? Have you been taught to cook or create anything as part of a tradition?

4. In the end, Amy realizes her "not-so-perfect bao...tastes just as good." Can you think of something you expected to be "perfect" that turned out differently?

- What did you expect to be perfect and why?
- Was it still good even if it was different than expected?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Try Out Amy's Family Recipe! Bring ingredients to make baos like Amy's. Have students try their hand at punching the dough, and after it rises, rolling it out and pinching it together. First try using dough pieces made for larger hands. Then try some that fit a child's hand better. How did the size make a difference for them?

Note: the bao dough will need time to rise. Start the dough early and then continue cooking. This way everyone can also see how the dough rises after the designated time.

AMY WU AND THE PERFECT BAO

Problem-Solving with Tasks

Preschool

This book features a girl's persistence as she tries to make her favorite food, Bao. It lends itself to showing how changing your strategy to find a new way can help you complete a task independently.

CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

THINK

Children will:

- Think of how to solve problems or complete tasks by trying different strategies

Teachers will:

- Acknowledge the effort shown in the story

TEACHING TIP

It may feel frustrating to watch a child struggle with a task or take a long time to figure something out, but allowing children the opportunity to build their own skills, confidence, and ideas can support creative problem-solving. Instead of solving a child's problems for them, it's important to give them the chance to take risks, experiment, and learn from their own choices. Being there to observe and encourage the child as they work through a problem, and only stepping in when really necessary, supports the independence that comes along with becoming a problem-solver.

1. INTRODUCE

- "Sometimes it can take a lot of tries to do something. We can keep trying in new ways to solve problems! Today we're going to read a story called Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao. This story is about a girl who keeps trying to make her favorite food, called bao, even when it doesn't quite work. Let's see how she solves her problem all on her own!"

2. READ THE BOOK

- Pause occasionally to acknowledge Amy's effort.
- Narrate Amy's independence and the different ideas she thinks of.

Acknowledge Effort

Read: "Sometimes they fall apart before they reach her mouth"

Acknowledge: "Amy can do so many things on her own, but she has trouble making bao that is the right size. She keeps trying lots of ways to get it right!"

Read: "'Pinch, pinch pinch' says Amy's grandma"

Narrate: "Amy looks frustrated about solving the problem because her family's solutions are not working for her."

Acknowledge: "Amy really wants to make the perfect bao all on her own, but she might need to think of a new way to do it."

Read: "It tastes just as good"

Acknowledge: "Amy tried her own, new idea to cut the dough up, and she finally could make the perfect bao! But even the bao that don't look quite right tasted good. Amy kept trying and made some delicious food."

3. REVIEW

- "It can feel frustrating to not be able to do something at first, but we can keep trying out new ideas, just like Amy, to find a solution that works. And sometimes, even the not-perfect things we do along the way can work out!"

4. KEEP IT GOING

- Encourage independence throughout the daily routine by encouraging children to try out their own ideas and offering just enough support. Allow children to complete daily tasks on their own, like getting ready for rest, and to try things out in their own way, even if it takes longer.

ties!

Read-Aloud
Discussion Tips

AMY WU AND THE PERFECT BAO

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Text To Self

Name: _____

Amy listed a lot of things she was good at but said she still had something she was not good. Let's talk about some things that you are good at!

① _____

② _____

③ _____

What is something you struggle with? How can you work and practice to be better at it?

Book Companion
with More Activities



Theme of the Month:

Confidence



Confidence is when we believe in ourselves and our abilities. When we feel confident, we feel good, and proud of who we are. Confidence makes us feel ready to try new things, because we know that we can handle challenges. Confidence is like a strength inside us: it means that we trust ourselves and feel comfortable.

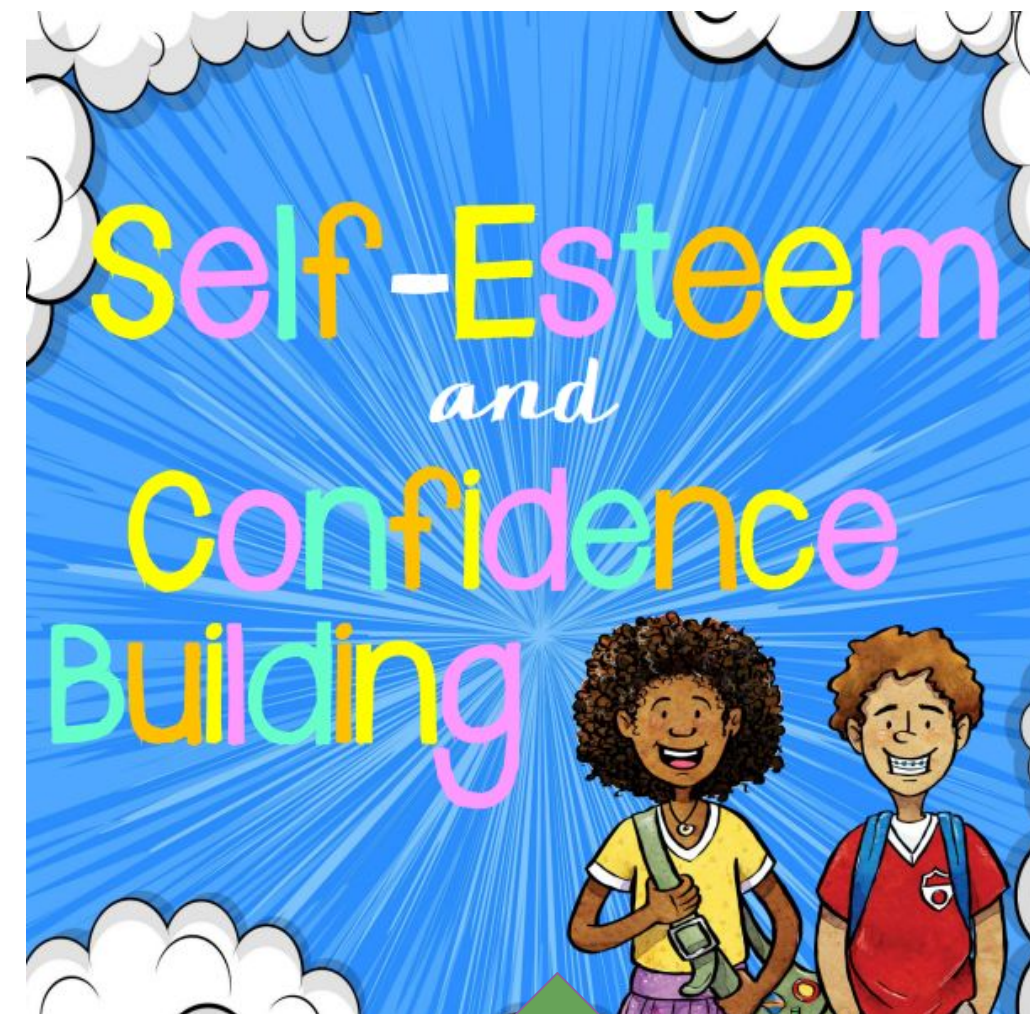




Theme of the Month Activities



Confidence Tips and Strategies



Self-Esteem Worksheets and Activities





Habit of Mind: Striving for Accuracy

Grades 3-5
Lesson/Activity Idea



Habit 6: Accuracy

Teaching Habits of Mind
Lesson 7: Striving for Accuracy (Habit 6)
1 hour

Lesson Objectives:

- To recognize the importance of accurate work.
- To recognize the negative implications of inaccurate work.

Lesson Overview:

Students are asked to think about when they do things that require accuracy. Students are asked to think about when accuracy is important.

Students participate in an activity that demonstrates the difference between being sloppy and accurate. They reflect on how and when they should use this Habit.

Grades K-2
Activity Ideas

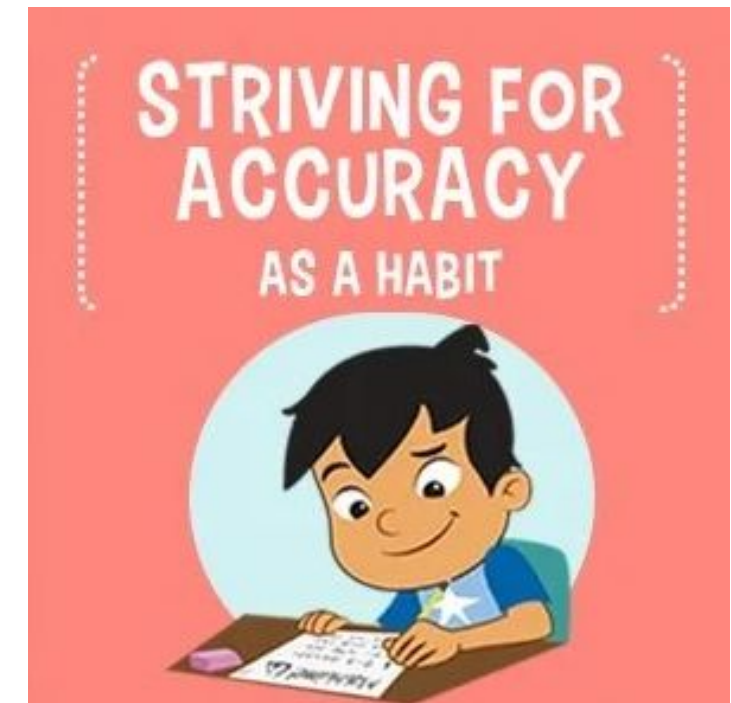


Striving for Accuracy

Check it again!

Always doing your best. Setting high standards.
Checking and finding ways to improve constantly.

Striving for accuracy is all about doing a good job on your work! It means that we have to work hard, pay attention to details, put in lots of effort, and check our work in order to make sure that we get the right answers. Amy had to strive for accuracy when making her bao by taking her time and optimizing her dough to get the best results. How can you take your time and make sure you achieve your goals this month?





Executive Functioning Focus:

Working Memory

The ability to remember information and use it when we need it is called working memory. This term describes how our minds can hold information for a little while, and “work” with that information, like rearrange or apply it, to complete a task. Amy practiced using her working memory in the story by completing the correct steps in order to create bao. This month, we can build our working memory with a variety of strategies!

Strategies to Build Working Memory		
www.thepathway2success.com Clipart by Kate Hadfield		
Make Lists 	Make Meaningful Connections 	Chunk Information 
Use Mnemonics and Acronyms 	Use Games and Puzzles 	Practice Mental Math 
Exercise Before & During Learning 	Visualize 	Make a Song 

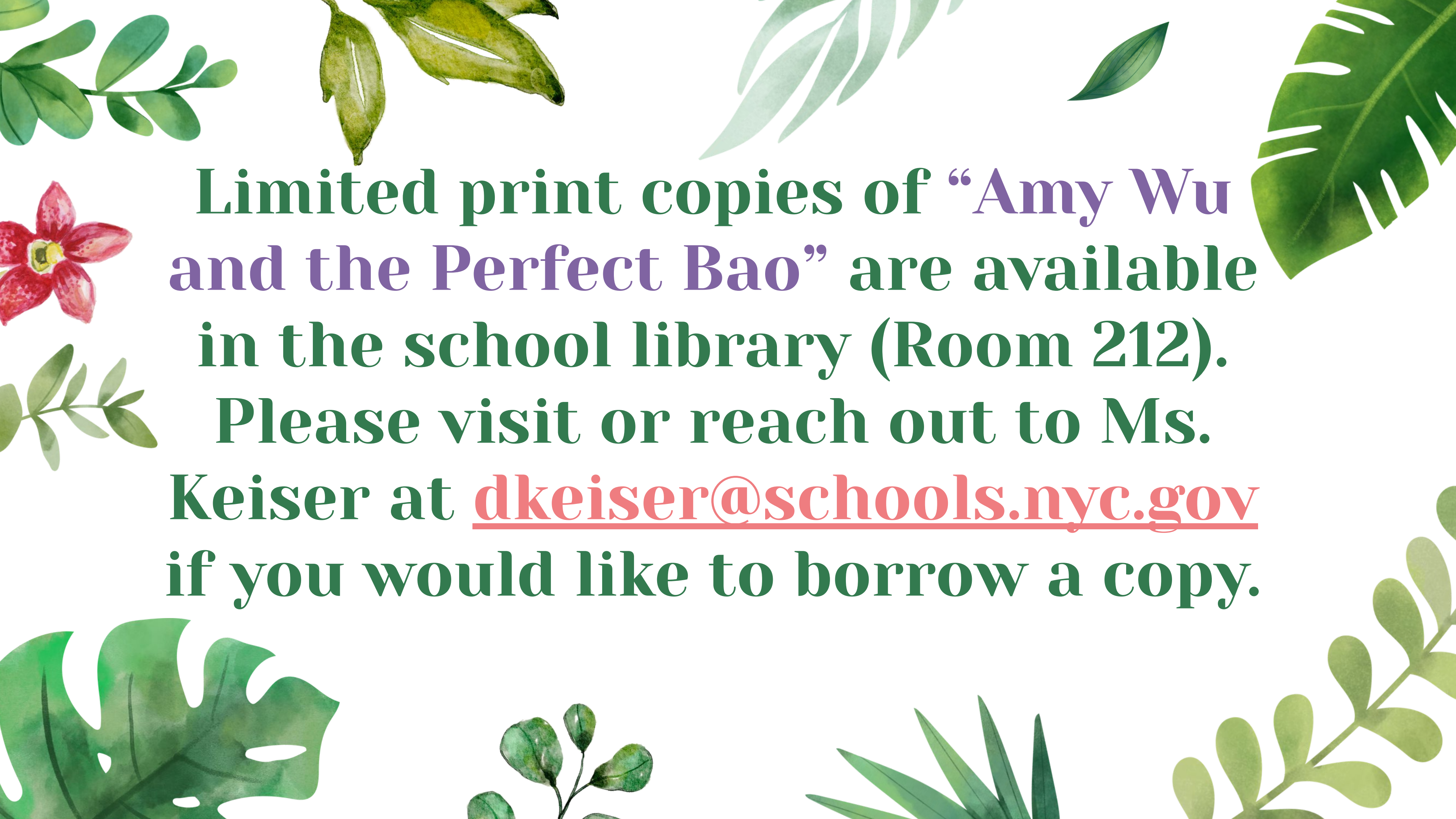


What is Working Memory?

Working memory involves the ability to keep information active in your mind for a short time (2-3 seconds) to be able to use it for further processing. Working memory is a temporary storage system and is vital for many day-to-day tasks (e.g. following instructions, responding in conversations, listening and reading comprehension, organisation).



Working Memory
Information and Activities

The image features a white background with various green leaves and a red flower. The leaves are scattered around the text, with some at the top, bottom, and sides. A single red flower with yellow centers is on the left side. The text is centered and reads: "Limited print copies of “Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao” are available in the school library (Room 212). Please visit or reach out to Ms. Keiser at dkeiser@schools.nyc.gov if you would like to borrow a copy." The email address is underlined in red.

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