

# HOLIDAY HOUSE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



Neal Porter Books  
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## *The Plant Rescuer* by Matthew Rivera

A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Manny harnesses love, determination, and a visit to the library to care for his first plant and make his gardener father proud.

Manny comes from a long line of gardeners, and to him, the greatest gardener of all is his dad. Dad always knows what plants need. Even with no yard to garden in, he tends their small apartment into a lush jungle.

One day, the time comes for Manny to get his very own first plant! Dad trusts Manny to care for his new amigo, and Manny is determined to rise to the challenge. But watching Dad's masterful work isn't the same as knowing everything he knows, and Manny's amigo keeps wilting, no matter what he tries!

Luckily, before his new amigo, Manny had another friend: the library! A day of research and a stack of books gets him back on track in no time. Now Manny can proudly say that he is the youngest in a long line of gardeners.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Define rescuer. Discuss the role of a plant rescuer. Look at the cover of the book. Point to the person that you think is the plant rescuer.
- Study the first double-page spread. Using clues from the sign on Romero's truck, explain the job of a landscaper. Point to the tools Romero uses in his work. How are these tools used? Read the text. Debate whether a gardener does more than maintenance and lawn care. Discuss what Manny's dad knows about plants.
- Describe the apartment where Manny lives with his dad and nana. Explain the following: "Dad has a gift for growing jungles in the smallest places" (p. 7). How many different plants do you see in Dad's jungle?
- Manny wants his very own plant. What is an amigo? Why does Manny call his plant an amigo? What happens to Manny's plant? Discuss Manny's ideas for bringing his amigo back to life. Explain how the small pictures surrounded by lots of white space illustrate Manny's effort to keep his amigo alive.
- Point to the illustrations that show how sad Manny is when his plant doesn't perk up. Why doesn't Manny want to ask his dad for help? Discuss Manny's fresh idea. Note the books Manny reads in the library. What information does he need? How does he use the information he finds? Dad is pleased when he sees how well Manny's plant has grown. What is Dad's suggestion to Manny? How does Manny's amigo help change the appearance of the apartment building?

Guide created by Pat Scales, retired school librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina.

## ABOUT THE CREATOR



**Matthew Rivera** grew up in Arizona and worked for many years as an art director for agencies, large corporations, and toy companies. He now lives in Portland, Oregon, and is an author and illustrator of books for children, including *The Plant Rescuer* with Holiday House. He can be found working at his desk with a large cup of coffee while Mavis, his pet rabbit, yanks his shoelaces for extra greens. Learn more at [MatthewDidIt.com](http://MatthewDidIt.com).

