

Featuring the book
I'm New Here by
Anne Sibley O'Brien

**I'm New
Here**



Creating a Conversation About Welcoming Immigrants & Refugees:

A Classroom or Community Event Kit

ABOUT THE KIT

The book's storyline offers opportunities to:

- Have conversations about the universality of being “new.”
- Explore situations where one feels both “new” and “different.”
- Connect the story of three immigrant children to those feelings.
- Show how being “new” and being “different” as a result of being an immigrant or refugee is a unique experience.
- Discuss how one can be “welcoming” to immigrants and refugees as an individual or community.
- Write and draw the concepts of “new” and “welcoming.”
- Create a photo booth with speech bubbles with “welcome” in different languages.
- Share a coloring sheet and trace words of welcome.



The kit contains:

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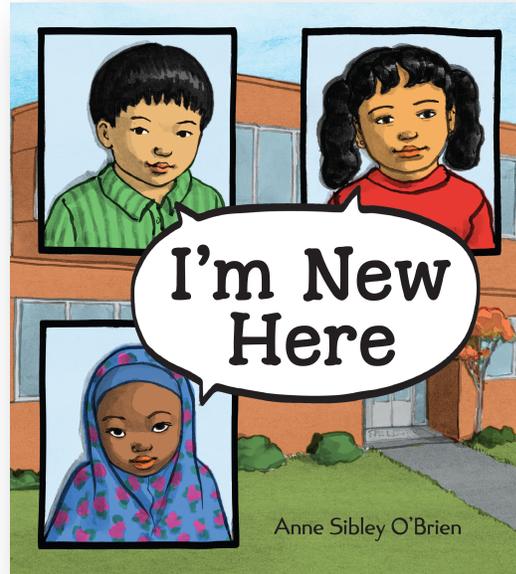
The kit was designed for classrooms, community groups, libraries and bookstores by Anne Sibley O’Brien, I’m Your Neighbor and Curious City DPW.

ABOUT THE BOOK

I'm New Here

By Anne Sibley O'Brien
Published by Charlesbridge
Publishing
Age Range: 5-9

Maria is from Guatemala, Jin is from Korea, and Fatima is from Somalia. All three are new to their American elementary school, and each has trouble speaking, writing, and sharing ideas in English. Through self-determination and with encouragement from their peers and teachers, the students learn to feel confident and comfortable in their new school without losing a sense of their home country, language, and identity.



Young readers from all backgrounds will appreciate this touching story about the assimilation of three immigrant students in a supportive school community.

Anne Sibley O'Brien is one of the founders of I'm Your Neighbor, an organization that promotes children's literature featuring "new arrival" cultures. As the rate of immigration to the United States increases, topics related to immigration are increasingly more important in the classroom and home. *I'm New Here* demonstrates how our global community can work together and build a home for all.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

Kirkus Reviews 100 Best Picture Books of 2015

"Whether readers are new themselves or meeting those who are new, there are lessons to be learned here about perseverance, bravery, and inclusion, and O'Brien's lessons are heartfelt and poetically rendered."

—*Kirkus Reviews*, **Starred Review**

"The simplicity of the narrative combined with vibrant watercolor artwork depicting a wide range of diversity results in a powerful message of empathy for the immigrant experience." —*Booklist*

"This picture book can provide insight to new immigrants, who might find comfort in seeing their experiences reflected on its pages, as well as engender greater empathy and understanding in the youngsters who are meeting New Americans for the first time." —*School Library Journal*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Anne Sibley O'Brien (www.AnneSibleyOBrien.com) is a writer-illustrator of diverse children's books including the "new arrival" picture books **A Path of Stars** and **I'm New Here**. She also illustrated the immigration titles **Moon Watchers**, **Who Belongs Here** and **What Will You Be, Sara Mee?** Her work has been honored by two *Asian/Pacific American Awards for Literature*, the *National Education Association's Author-Illustrator Human & Civil Rights Award* and the *Africana Book Award*. A co-founder of *I'm Your Neighbor*, she is also a diversity educator and has participated in studies on how books can reduce prejudice. She blogs about race, culture and children's books at "ColoringBetweentheLines.com."

Resource: Watch Anne Sibley O'Brien discuss the importance of children's literature depicting new arrival children: <https://youtu.be/u5C8upd7qgo>

ABOUT "I'M YOUR NEIGHBOR"

I'm Your Neighbor is a project which promotes the use of children's literature featuring "new arrival" cultures and groups to engage the entire community in a discussion of commonalities and differences. The project features a recommended list of books and an evolving list of engagement projects for educators, librarians, and community organizations who seek to build bridges. The goal of the project is to both support communities as their cultural makeup evolves and to create opportunities for children's literature featuring refugees, immigrants, and "new" marginalized groups.

Resource: I'm Your Neighbor Books: <http://www.inyourneighborbooks.org>

ACTIVITY PREP & PROCESS: Marketing & Outreach

You will, of course, create your own grand program or lesson plan! Following are simply suggested ways to prepare for an event or classroom experience.

___ Locate a copy of the picture book **I'm New Here** by Anne Sibley O'Brien (Charlesbridge Publishing). Individual copies can be ordered from any bookseller.

If you are a school or library looking for a copy or copies visit: <http://www.penguinrandomhouse.biz/libraries> or email: library@randomhouse.com. If you are a community group or non-profit looking for multiple copies visit: <http://www.penguinrandomhouse.biz/specialmarkets> or email: specialmarkets@penguinrandomhouse.com.

___ Any date is a good date to welcome refugees and immigrants in your community. Two annual holidays are celebrations of welcoming. The UN celebrates "World Refugee Day" on June 20th and Welcoming America celebrates "National Welcoming Week" in September of each year.

Resource: National Welcoming Week

<http://www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/welcoming-week>

___ Add your event date, location and description to the event poster (page 9), reproduce it and display it where your readers will discover it. The font used on the poster is American Typewriter.

___ As part of your marketing and outreach, share the video of 1st and 3rd graders responding to this kit's activities.

Resource: "I'm New Here: Welcoming Immigrant Students" video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sziomv9rp5k>

___ If you are planning a public event, here is some text that may help with newsletter and online calendar listings:

We have all been new. We have all walked into a room or situation where we felt alone or different. While being new is a universal feeling, being an immigrant or refugee in America adds extra layers of challenge, unique to each person and situation. We will be reading and exploring what it means to be "new" and what it looks like to be "welcoming" to new families in our communities with the award-winning book, **I'm New Here** by Anne Sibley-O'Brien (Charlesbridge Publishing). All welcome.

___ Consider inviting local media to the event. The news could use more positive stories, yes?

ACTIVITY PREP & PROCESS: Creating Partners

This event and activity is designed to help members of your community develop ideas on "welcoming." **Think about ways that you can be welcoming in your event planning.**

___ Consider forming a partnership with a local or regional immigrant support group for this event. You can find state-by-state support programs in the resource below.

Resource: Office of Refugee Resettlement: Find State Support Programs

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/state-programs-annual-overview>

___ Consider asking that group for feedback on this event plan, asking them for help inviting new arrival families and even asking if they would be on hand at your event to answer questions about immigration and resettlement.

___ Consider visiting local ethnic food stores or restaurants to order food for your event or classroom. Somali sambusas (both meat and vegetable versions) are absolutely delicious and filling!

ACTIVITY PREP & PROCESS: Conversation Starters

Supplies: Markers, Easel & Pad, White Board or other Writing Surface

___ Following a reading of **I'm New Here** by Anne Sibley O'Brien (Charlesbridge Publishing), we invite you to have conversations with students or community members about the universal experience of being "new" and how as individuals and as a community we can be "welcoming." Look over the Event or Classroom Conversation Starters (page 10) to envision how you might lead that discussion.

___ You can capture individuals' feelings about being "new" and "welcoming" with the activity sheets included in this kit (pages 11-12). The first sheet invites your students or community members to complete the sentence, "Being new feels..." in words, pictures or both. The second sheet asks them to complete the sentence, "Welcoming looks like..." Copy enough of these sheets so everyone can have one of each.

Resource: Watch a video of these activities being done with a group of 1st and 3rd graders: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sziomv9rp5k>

___ Additional children's books featuring new arrivals are also fantastic conversation starters. Consider making a display of "I'm Your Neighbor" books for circulation and study.

Resource: I'm Your Neighbor Books: <http://www.imyourneighborbooks.org>

ACTIVITY PREP & PROCESS: Welcome Signs

Supplies: Markers, Scissors, Camera, Paint Stirrers, Tape, Colored Pencils or Crayons

___ Consider capturing the spirit of the event or classroom experience, by making speech bubbles that say "welcome" in many languages. What are the major languages in your community? Ask the ELL coordinators in your school system or one of the community groups serving new arrivals for this information.

Resource: Office of Refugee Resettlement: Find State Support Programs <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/state-programs-annual-overview>

___ The kit provides blank speech bubbles (pages 13-14) for you or your community to write "welcome" in a language they know or a language they research. These speech bubbles are best printed on cardstock paper. We have also provided a handful of languages as speech bubbles (pages 15-20): Arabic, Chinese, French, Korean, Somali and Spanish.

___ Consider cutting out the speech bubbles and mounting them on some sort of handle. Paint stirrers (available at all hardware stores) make great handles.

I'M NEW HERE: Creating a Conversation About Welcoming Immigrants & Refugees:
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___ Consider setting up a photo booth where students or community members can choose a speech bubble and have their picture taken and shared. A notation on the bubble itself encourages people to share the picture using the hashtag #ImNewHere so events can be connected nationwide. For examples of how the photo booth can be used, look at an **I'm New Here** event in Portland, Maine:

Resource: I'm New Here: Event Photos

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/curiouscity/albums/72157658903794652>

___ Also included in this kit is a B&W coloring sheet (page 21). Words on the sheet can be traced over to experience writing "welcome" in several languages.

ACTIVITY PREP & PROCESS: Next Steps

Now that you've begun a conversation, what might your classroom or community do to continue the exploration? Begin to brainstorm ways your school and/or community can be more welcoming by inviting participants to share their "Welcoming looks like..." sheets. Some possible community actions could be :

___ Display the posters and artwork created to involve others in the conversation. Could words of welcome in many languages become a more permanent part of your building?

___ Read more books to broaden understanding of refugees and immigrants.

___ Share the resource "I'm Your Neighbor Books" and display the featured books. We highly recommend the picture books **Here I Am** (featuring a Korean new arrival), **The Color of Home** (featuring a Somali new arrival) and **Two White Rabbits** (featuring a new arrival family from Central America).

___ Discuss the quote by author Amit Majmudar, *"The true meeting takes place when the book opens, and a stranger reads about – and comprehends – a stranger."*

___ Create a book club reading books featuring new arrivals. Invite a member of that featured community to read the book aloud and/or share a personal or fictional story from their home culture/country.

Resource: I'm Your Neighbor Books: <http://www.imyourneighborbooks.org>

___ Try new tastes and meet new neighbors. Take a field trip to explore the diverse cultures of your community through ethnic stores and restaurants. Or order food to be delivered and invite the owners of a new restaurant to come to your classroom or community event to share the meal and their experiences. You might pair this with a visit from a members of a cultural group - such as Italian, Chinese or Greek - that has been part of the community for a long time, comparing and contrasting experiences.

I'M NEW HERE: Creating a Conversation About Welcoming Immigrants & Refugees:
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___ Find out what kinds of programs are available to assist new immigrants and refugees in their adjustment. Can your classroom or group volunteer to lend a hand, collect clothing, make welcoming visits, or teach English?

ACTIVITY PREP & PROCESS: Sharing Your Event

___ Again, we encourage you to share event photos, online posts or social media using the hashtag #ImNewHere. Using that hashtag will allow Anne Sibley O'Brien to follow and share your local effort on welcoming. International conversations about immigration have also been linked by the hashtag #RefugeesWelcome.

___ Consider sharing some of your event photos and a post-press release with local media. Don't forget photo releases!

QUESTIONS

Author Anne Sibley O'Brien would love to help you with any questions or hear from you about suggestions to improve the event or event kit. You can reach Anne at: <mailto:annieob2@gmail.com>.

AUTHOR VISITS

Anne Sibley O'Brien is available to visit schools and libraries. Her books and presentations (for both children, faculty and the community) feature her immigrant, multicultural and global books and focus on celebrating diversity in communities. Explore more: <http://www.annesibleyobrien.com>.

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Welcoming Immigrants & Refugees

A Community Event

I'M NEW HERE: Event or Classroom Conversation Starters

Here are some ideas for building a conversation around the book **I'm New Here** by Anne Sibley O'Brien (Charlesbridge Publishing). Suggested dialogue is in **bold** type. Keep a list of responses of how it feels to be new, how it feels to be different, what countries your new arrivals come from and what welcoming looks like.

ON THE UNIVERSALITY OF BEING NEW

Who has had the experience of being new? (Show of hands)

"New" can be a difficult concept for some. You can expand on the question by asking any of the following with a show of hands and/or individual answers.

- **Have you ever joined a new club or class?**
- **Have you ever started at a new school?**
- **Who has moved to a new place?**
- **Who has moved here from another country?**

Ask your classroom or community to share examples of being new.

Can everyone think of a time you were new?

What did it feel like to be new?

Did you have any worries? What were they?

ON FEELING DIFFERENT

How many of you have also felt different? How did you feel different? Make a list.

Use examples in the book to see if anyone has shared the experience of the characters, including:

- New language
- New ways of doing things, acting
- Different dress
- Different skin color or features
- Different foods etc.

What did it feel like to be different? What experiences did you have?

Being different makes the experience of being new even more challenging, and the more different you feel, the harder it can be.

ON BEING WELCOMING

Now let's talk about welcoming. First, let's look through the book and notice how Maria, Jin and Fatimah were welcomed.

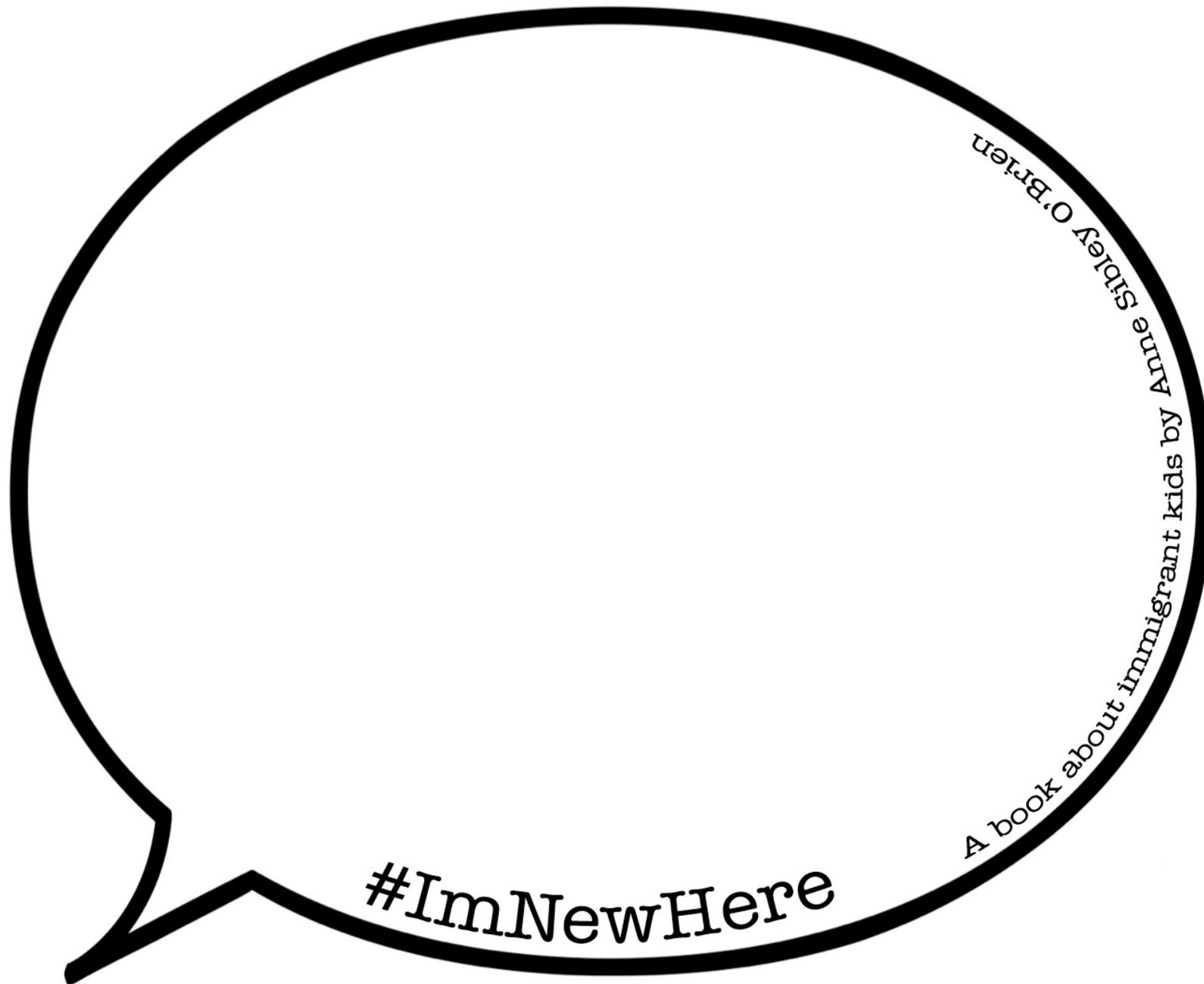
- **Can we think of any other ways to welcome people?**
- **Who can remember an experience of someone welcoming you? How did you feel?**
- **When you are new, how do you wish someone would welcome you?**
- **What if someone new comes to your class or neighborhood? What can you imagine you would do to welcome them?**

Can you complete this sentence with words, pictures or both?

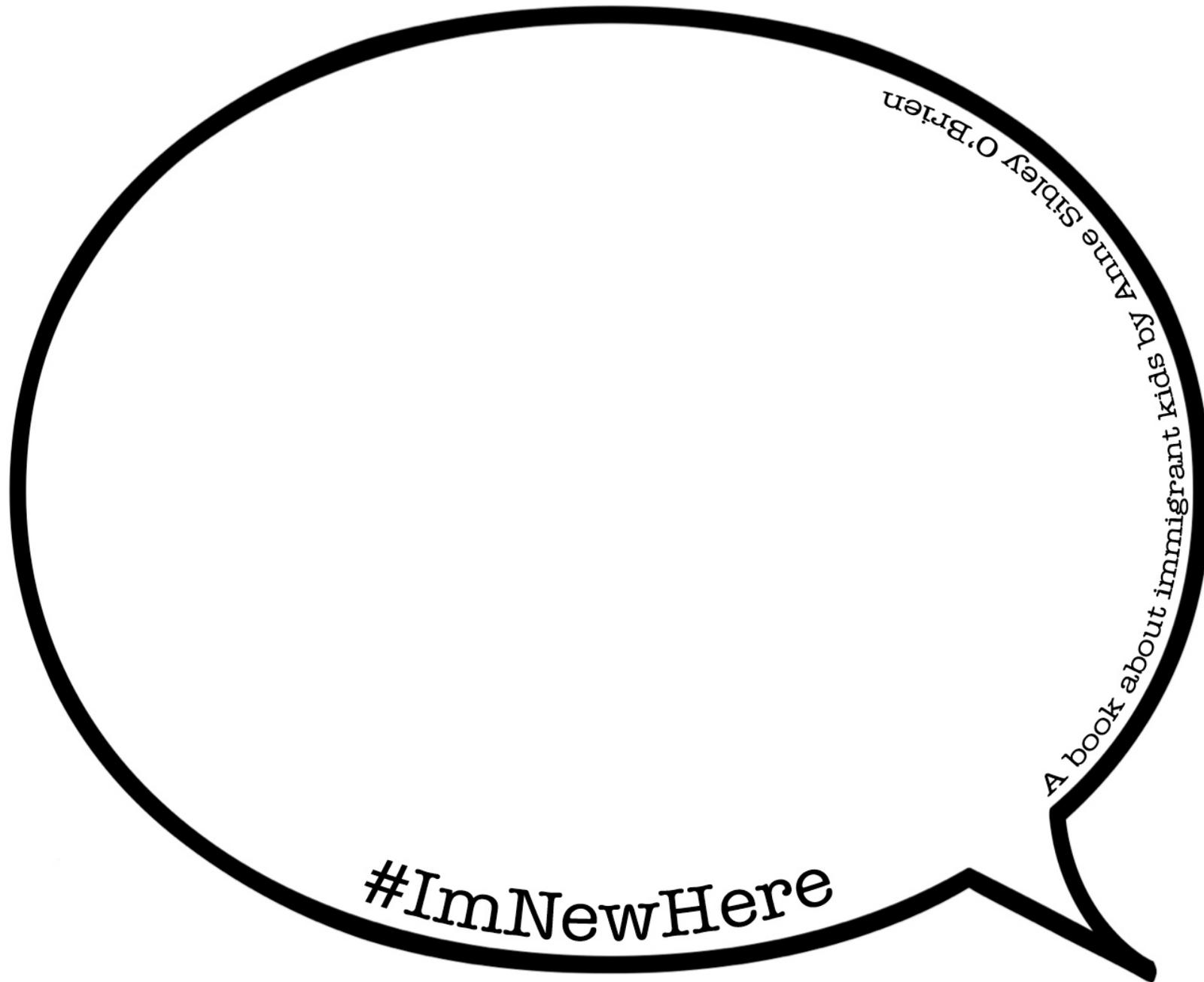
Being new feels...

Can you complete this sentence with words, pictures or both?

Welcoming looks like...

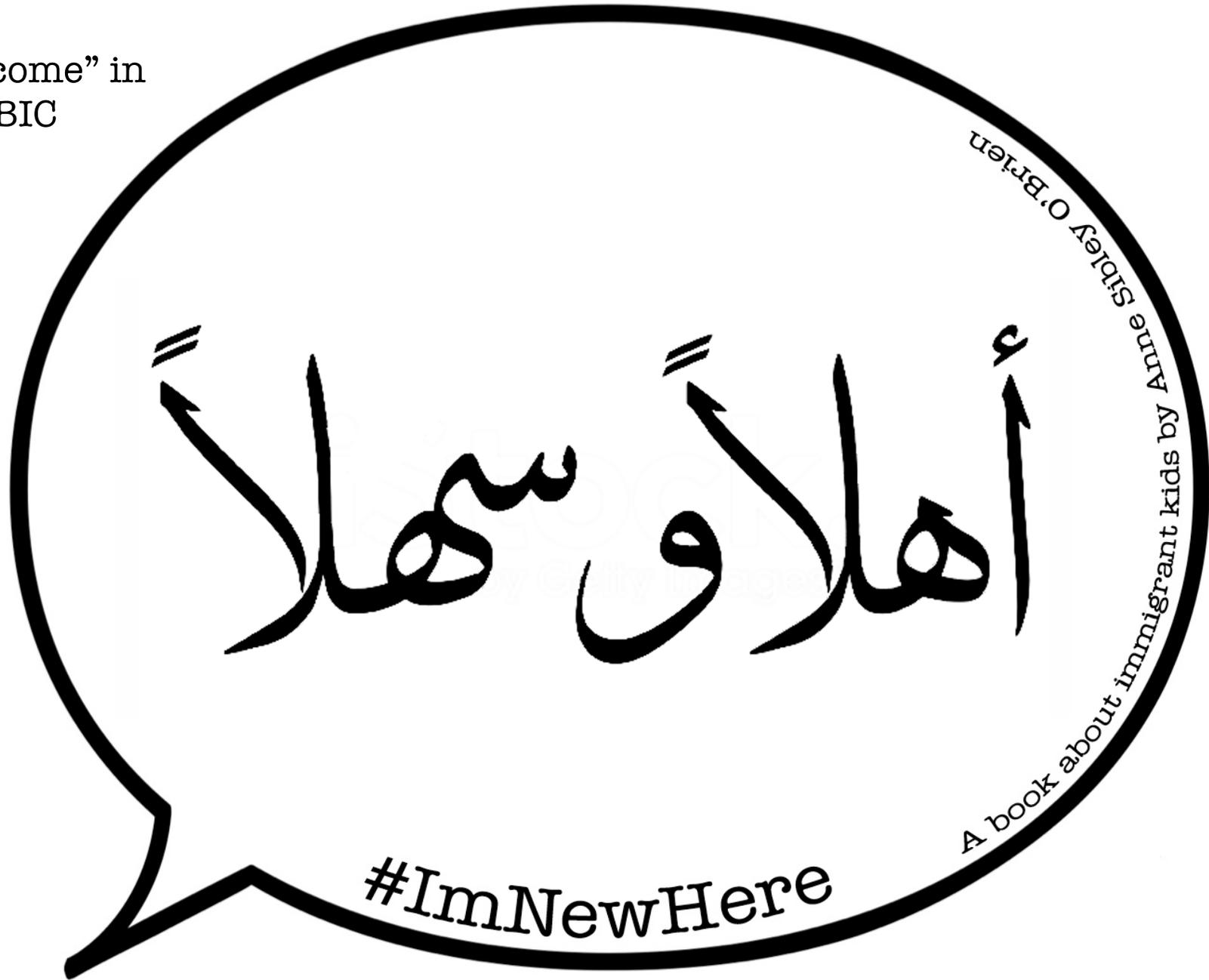


This activity is designed to be used with the immigrant picture book **I'm New Here** by Anne Sibley O'Brien (Charlesbridge Publishers). Share your responses online with **#ImNewHere**. More resources at ImYourNeighborBooks.org or AnneSibleyOBrien.com.



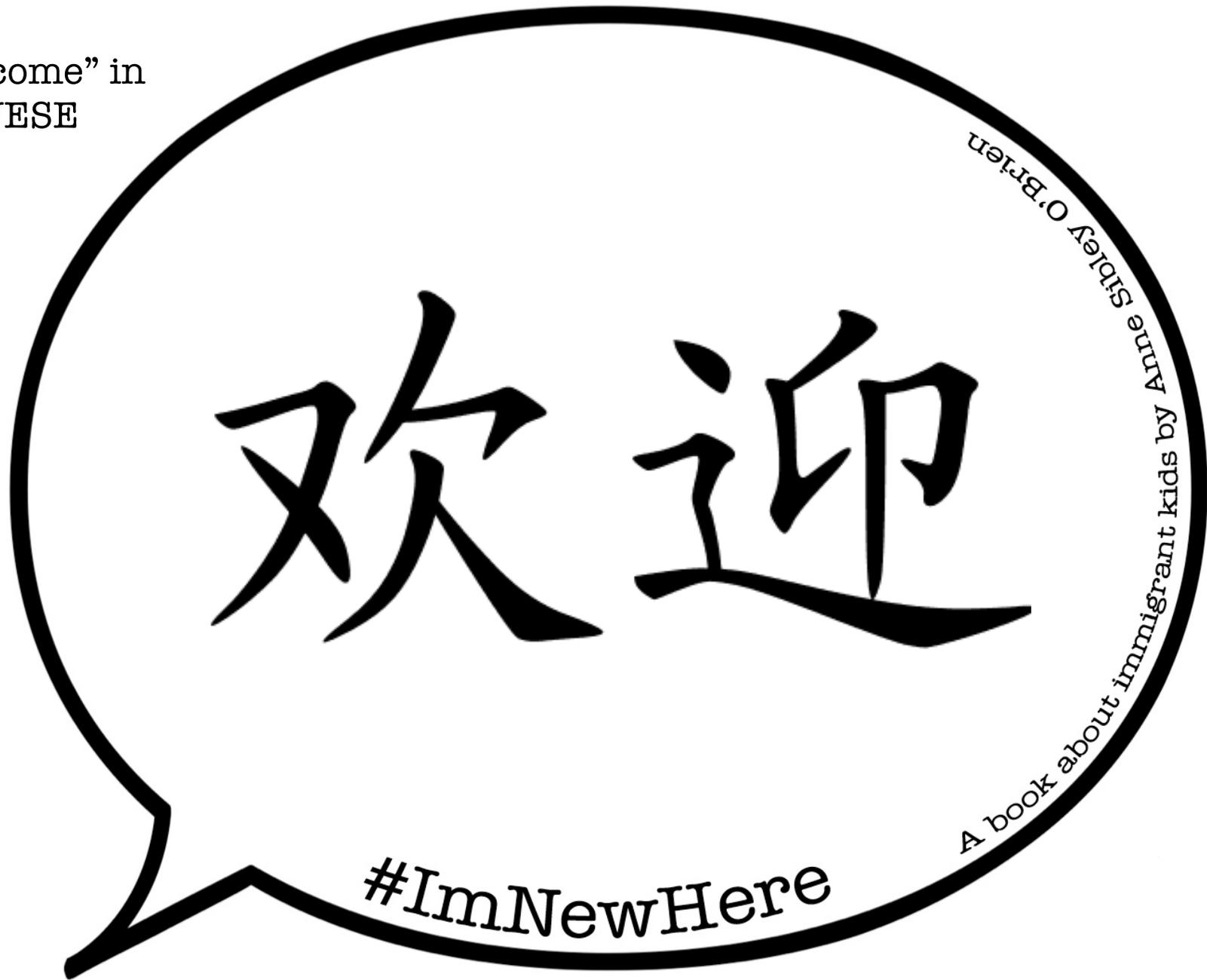
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“Welcome” in
ARABIC



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“Welcome” in
CHINESE



This activity is designed to be used with the immigrant picture book **I'm New Here** by Anne Sibley O'Brien (Charlesbridge Publishers). Share your responses online with **#ImNewHere**. More resources at ImYourNeighborBooks.org or AnneSibleyOBrien.com.

“Welcome” in
FRENCH

Bienvenue

#ImNewHere

A book about immigrant kids by Anne Sibley O'Brien

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Share your responses online with **#ImNewHere**. More resources at ImYourNeighborBooks.org or AnneSibleyOBrien.com.

“Welcome” in
KOREAN

환영합니다

#ImNewHere

A book about immigrant kids by Anne Sibley O'Brien

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“Welcome” in
SOMALI

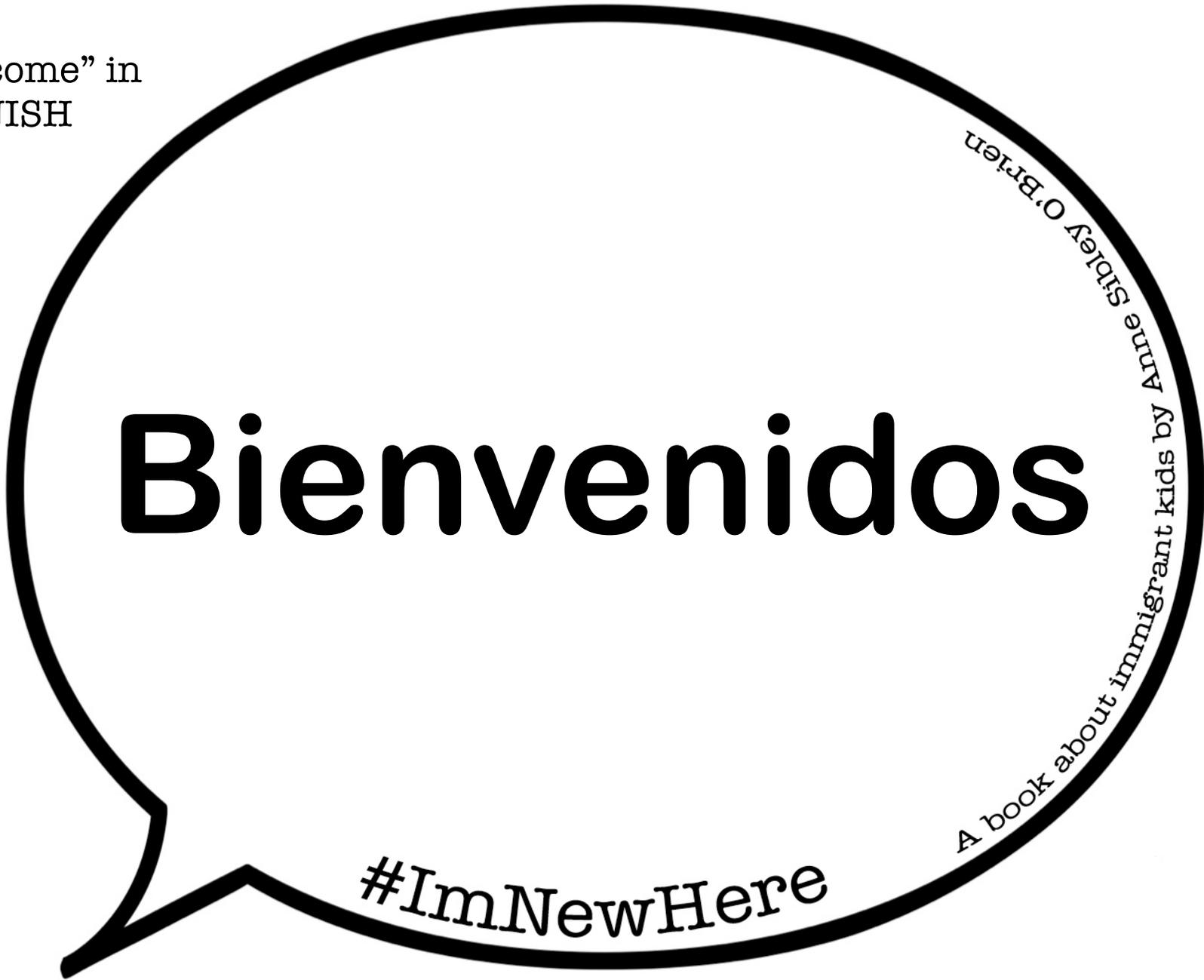
Soo
Dhawoow

#ImNewHere

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“Welcome” in
SPANISH



Bienvenidos

#ImNewHere

A book about immigrant kids by Anne Sibley O'Brien

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BIENVENUE

WELCOME

BIENVENIDOS

환영합니다

SOO DHAWOOW

欢迎



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