

Allie, First at Last

By Angela Cervantes

Annotation

Born into a family of over-achievers, fifth-grader Allie Velasco has never finished first in anything, and lately things have been going badly: her science project is ruined by a well-meaning student, her former best friend is hanging out with another girl—but now she is determined to win the Trailblazer contest with a photographic presentation about her great grandfather, the first Congressional Medal of Honor winner from their town.

Book Talk

Ever feel like everyone but you has won things? Everyone in her family is the best at something – soccer, acting, debate, news anchor. Allie just wants to be the winner as something, anything, for a change.

Book Trailer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXG95fhwZqE>

Author on the Internet

- Website: <http://www.angelacervantes.com>
- Twitter: @AngelaCervantes
- Facebook: AngelaCervantesAuthor
- Instagram: angela_cervantes_writer

Items to use in a library display

- Trophies
- Congressional Medal of Honor
- Baking soda & vinegar volcano
- Pictures of Famous Firsts

Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics

- Explain why Allie wants to be a trailblazer?
- Allie is sad that she is no longer Sara's best friend and seems lost on how to repair their broken friendship. What advice would you give to Allie to help her win her friend back?
- What does Great Gramps (Bisabuelo) mean when he tells Allie that, "the real rewards in life don't fit on a trophy shelf"? What do you think those "real rewards" are?

First Line of the Book

- Blame it on Junko Tabai. Or blame my teacher, Mrs. Wendy. She's the one who puts up a new poster of a famous person each month on our

classroom wall.

Non-Fiction Companion Titles

- Biographies of Junko Tabei, Gwendolyn Brooks, Sonia Sotomayor

What to Read Next

- *Confetti Girl* by Diana Lopez
- *Lou Lou and Pea and the Mural Mystery* by Jill Diamond
- *Emma is on the Air* series by Ida Siegal

Other Books by this Author

- *Gaby, Lost and Found*

Additional Resources

- Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHW-q8oD3gE>, corrido-style Mexican folk music, Dad quotes: Bon Jovi “Living on a Prayer” (p. 28); Berlin “Take My Breath Away” (p.193)
- Art/craft activity: Make medals with ribbons and tin lids. (#1 Best Friend, Debate Champion, science, poetry, etc.)
- Food: horchata, Cosmic Tacos
- Interview with the author: <http://www.angelacervantes.com/author.html>
- Lesson ideas: <http://www.angelacervantes.com/teacher-resources.html>