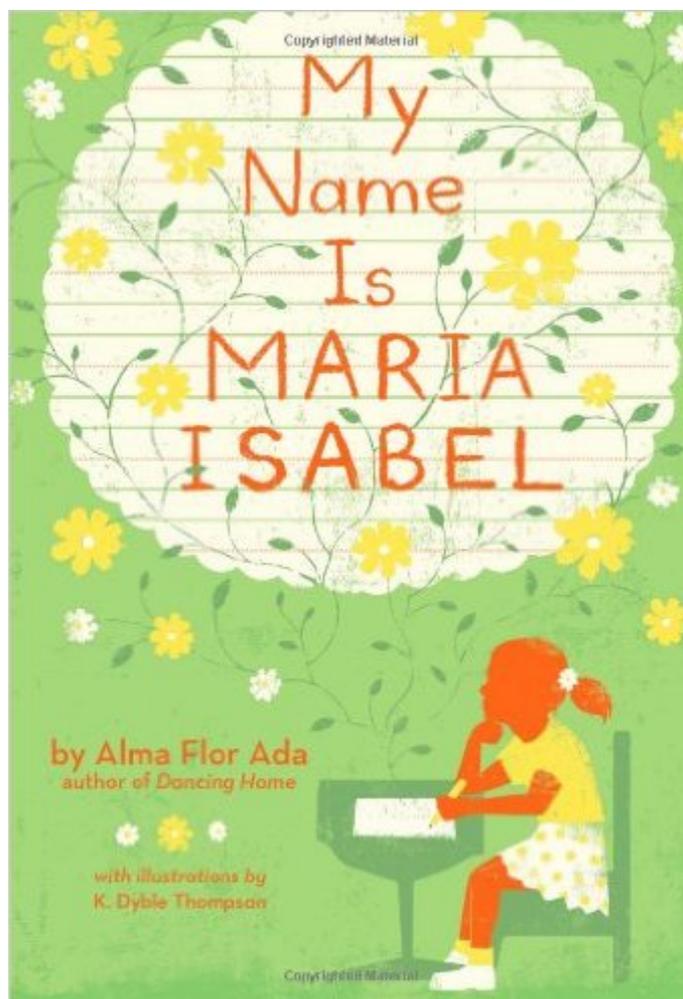


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# My Name Is Maria Isabel



## Synopsis

For Maria Isabel Salazer Lopez, the hardest thing about being the new girl in school is that the teacher doesn't call her by her real name. "We already have two Marias in this class," says her teacher. "Why don't we call you Mary instead?" But Maria Isabel has been named for her Papa's mother and for Chabela, her beloved Puerto Rican grandmother. Can she find a way to make her teacher see that if she loses her name, she's lost the most important part of herself?

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 860L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; Repackage edition (April 30, 1993)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.4 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (34 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #600,483 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #63 in [Books > Children's Books](#)

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[in \[Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Hispanic & Latino\]\(#\)](#)

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

## Customer Reviews

I read this book in college as a part of a book club required by the school. I loved this book as soon as I read it. It can teach teachers how to be culturally sensitive to all their students. A name is a very important possession to most of us. It is an only possession to some children. It is also good for those teachers who are stuck thinking that children "should just learn our language" when in reality it is a long process. I would like to recommend this book to those who are teaching children ESL and those regular classroom teachers who have ESL students in their rooms. I loved it!

My Name is MarÃ-a Isabel is the story of a little girl facing a difficult problem when she is forced to change schools mid-year. At her new school, her teacher decides to call her Mary because there

are already two girls named Mar- a in the class. Mar- a Isabel does not want to be called Mary but she doesn't know how to tell her teacher. She consistently fails to respond when the teacher calls on her in class because she doesn't recognize Mary as her name. This leads to the teacher assuming that she does not want to participate in the school's Winter Pageant. When the teacher has the students write an essay titled, My Greatest Wish, Mar- a Isabel gets her chance to say how she feels. This book would be appropriate for ages 8 and 9. Children in this age group are beginning to develop empathy for others, and an understanding of right and wrong. Most children will be able to relate to facing a problem and not knowing what to do about it. I would use this book for a read-aloud in a school setting as part of a discussion about cultural sensitivity and awareness. I would also recommend it to kids to read for enjoyment. The artwork consists of black and white pencil or charcoal drawings placed sporadically throughout the text. The drawings are placed consistently with the text that they refer to and they are culturally accurate. The illustrator also added elements of Mar- a Isabel's thoughts into many of the pictures. For example, when Mar- a Isabel is reading Charlotte's Web and feeling as if she is caught her own spider's web, there is a drawing of her in bed reading with shadows of a spider's web on the wall behind her.

A sweet story that kids will easily identify with. I found this book very easy for a small child to understand, and I appreciated the theme that any kid can take to heart. Not fitting in and the fear of not being liked by one's superior (in this case, a teacher) is a universal theme. The fact that Maria gets saddled with an incompetent teacher from the start doesn't help matters for her anyway. As much as I'd like to rail against the idea of a teacher changing her student's name because, "We already have two Marias in this class", I know that there is no lack of incompetent, yet well meaning, teachers in the world who'd do this very thing. It isn't entirely clear in the story why it is that Maria doesn't discuss her problems with her parents or her teacher. People reading this book to children should make it clear that Maria would have dealt with a lot less misery if she had simply told someone why she felt badly. And some kids may wish for a more concrete ending than the one offered here. Why doesn't the teacher apologize to Maria? In any case, this book might fit in well with other stories of new kids in school. Even the Ramona Quimby books would pair nicely, as a very different little girl dealing with school and her teacher.

I got this book for my granddaughter who loves to read and she told me it was very good story. I get her book that are for her age or older and that are interesting and teach you something deep about

human beings; morals, learning about self, about giving, about being humble, about being who you want to be, about self respect, etc.

I would recommend reading this book to every child, especially at the beginning of the school year, and for foreign children. It will inspire and it will help those children like Maria Isabel who feel like they are misunderstood or left out.

Maria Isabel by Alma Flor Ada was a joyful book. It made me think of my sister. Maria Isabel has a hard time as school because the teacher called her a new name because her name was too long. I liked the book because it was a delightful book and it always had adventures. I would recommend this book to girls because she they would love this book.

Me Llamo MarÃ- a Isabel (My Name Is Maria Isabel) tells the story of a young girl who moved from Puerto Rico to New York City and how she seeks to adapt to her new society while retaining her cultural identity. On her first day of school, because there are already two girls named Maria in the class, MarÃ- a's teacher introduces the new girl as Mary Lopez. MarÃ- a Isabel, however, does not like the sound of the Anglo name, which sounds strange to her. MarÃ- a Isabel Salazar LÃ pez is proud of her appellation, as she was named after much admired members of her family. She knows that the teacher means no harm, but does not know how to tell her what she wants. While reading Charlotte's Web, MarÃ- a Isabel realizes how her spider heroine conveyed her message and finds an ingenious way to tell her teacher and everyone else how she really feels. Alma Flor Ada tells a beautiful story about dignity without preaching. My only criticism is that, with other Latino and Latina students in her class, she could not have asked them to translate her desire to the teacher, or why MarÃ- a Isabel was not in a bilingual class. The story's central theme, though, is very real. Overall, this story is a gem; if you are looking for a great way to brush up on one's Spanish, try that version, titled "Me Llamo Maria Isabel."

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