Because score by Mo Willems; performance by Amber Ren

Celebrate the arts and creativity with this ode to the many people that inspire and contribute to bringing music to life.


Read Across America this month:
Mo Willems dedicates Because to the memory of Charles M. Schultz, who greatly inspired and influenced him. Schultz was his because — because Willems loved reading Shultz’s “Peanuts” comics and then drawing them himself, Willems began his journey to becoming a beloved children’s author. When you read aloud Because, plan to introduce students to who and what inspired those around them. Share your own Because moments with students and invite other special guests to do the same. Seek out and celebrate Because moments in your community from:

- your school: you, your principal, P.E. teacher, or school nurse
- your community: local politician, musician, artist, doctor, park ranger, farmer, banker, or author
- your students: parents, extended family members, and even students who’ve been inspired and found direction thanks to another
Plan ahead for more Read Across America reading fun:

Make Read Across America really sing with student songs inspired by favorite books and authors! Start your musical adventure by exploring some of the basic concepts of songwriting: rhythm and rhyme, song structure (verses, chorus), melody (patterns) and lyrics (story or narrative). Create a song together as a class before having students work in small groups or pursue individual efforts to create songs inspired by favorite titles. Give them plenty of time to write their own lyrics and the opportunity to compose music for their lyrics. Provide musical instruments, online tools, or music apps or have them find existing music that complements the words they’ve written. For Read Across America and Music in Our Schools Month in March, intersperse performances of student songs with special guest readers reading aloud the books that inspired the songs.

Find more titles and resources to celebrate inspiration at readacrossamerica.org