

*Year of the Dog* - By Grace Lin

An Interpretation Through Food - Anna Hadjiyiannis

For this piece I picked out the most important parts of the book and saw what foods were associated with them. Each panel is illustrated by a food item, and when put all together, the wheel tells the story of Grace, a Taiwanese-American girl, and her interactions with the world. I used watercolor and an ink pen, trying to match the fun attitude of Grace in this book. The meanings behind the food are:

1. This panel consists of candy. At the beginning of the book, Grace and her sisters are trying to fill the New Year tray with Chinese candy, but they run out and resort to using M&M's. It represents them, Taiwanese-Americans, and introduces the big topic in this book.
2. Here I have painted dumplings and steamed buns. These two foods are a big part of the Chinese New Year meal and I wanted to illustrate just how amazing and yummy they are! Also, in this part, Grace is told her first story of the book and it begins her journey to deciding to become a writer.
3. Number 3 is ginger ale and a plant! Grace starts to explore what she wants to do with her life and wonders if science is the path for her. She has big hopes for her science fair experiment, only to have them crushed when she is criticized. This begins her journey to find herself.
4. Now these are Twinkies. Grace and her family are at camp for the summer and Grace is in a situation where she is made fun of for not knowing Chinese and being "americanized." She begins to doubt herself as she is repeatedly told by her classmates that she is yellow on the outside and white on the inside, just a Twinkie.
5. This is an ugly vegetable. Grace enters a storybook competition and writes about her mother and her planting the ugly vegetables. It wins! Through this, Grace finally finds her identity and decides she wants to become a storybook writer.
6. Finally, we have oranges. At the end of the book, Grace has a New Year dinner with her family and Melody's, her new best friend. They bring a box full of oranges, and as they are all laughing together, they peel their oranges and enjoy the ending of an amazing year.