



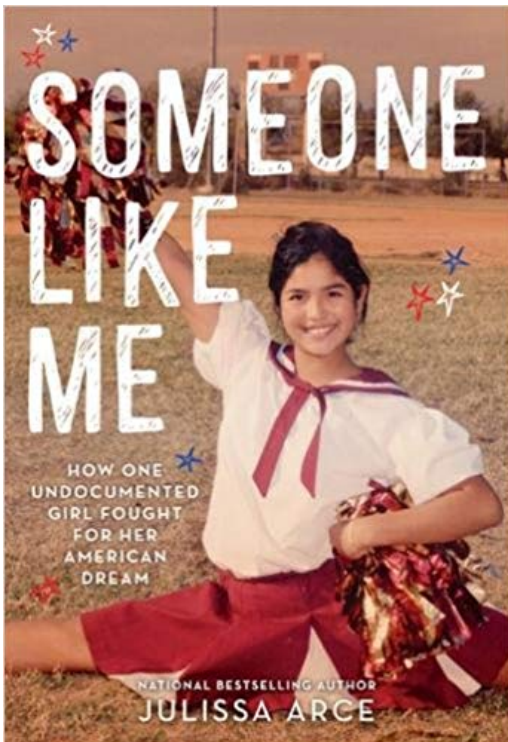
## Julissa Arce



Julissa Arce is a best-selling author of *MY (UNDERGROUND) AMERICAN DREAM*. She was named one of People en Español's 25 Most Powerful Women of 2017. She is a leading voice in the fight for social justice, immigrant rights and education equality. Her second book, "[Someone Like Me](#)," will be her first Young Adult book and was published in September 2018.

Julissa is a contributor for Crooked Media, CNBC, and one of the hosts of [Crooked Conversations](#). Her book, "[My Underground American Dream](#)" is currently being developed as a television series at Twentieth Century Fox Television with producer and actor America Ferrera.

Her commitment to education for all young people led her to co-create the [Ascend Educational Fund \(AEF\)](#) where she serves as chairwoman of the board. AEF is a college scholarship and mentorship program for immigrant students in New York City, regardless of their ethnicity, national original or immigration status. Since its founding in 2012, AEF has awarded over \$320,000 in college scholarships.



Born in the picturesque town of Taxco, Mexico, Julissa Arce was left behind for months at a time with her two sisters, a nanny, and her grandmother while her parents worked tirelessly in the United States in hopes of building a home and providing a better life for their children. That is, until her parents brought Julissa to Texas to live with them. From then on, Julissa secretly lived as an undocumented immigrant, went on to become a scholarship winner and an honors college graduate, and climbed the ladder to become a vice president at Goldman Sachs.

This moving, at times heartbreaking, but always inspiring story will show young readers that anything is possible. Julissa's story provides a deep look into the little-understood world of a new generation of undocumented immigrants in the United States today--kids who live next door, sit next to you in class, or may even be one of your best friends.

## Someone Like Me

### Relevant vocabulary:

- Latinx Literature
- Memoir/ testimonio
- Community Cultural Wealth
- DACA and Dreamers
- Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202
- English (language) learners, emerging bilingual students
- Resilience
- Agency

### RRS connection to TEKS (4-5<sup>th</sup> grade): Please refer to TEKS for English Language Arts and Reading:

1. **Comprehension skills:** listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts.
2. **Response skills:** listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts.
3. **Author's purpose and craft:** listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts.
4. **Composition I:** listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--writing process.
5. **Composition II:** listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres.
6. **Inquiry and research:** listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts.

### Pre-reading engagement:

- What does an author do? How is it different when an author writes their own story? Is it different?
- Think about the author's use of Spanish in her narrative. What do you think of this way of writing a story? How does this writing style make you feel?
- Read Julissa Arce's biography. What questions do you have right away?
- What does it mean to be an American (in the United States)?
- What is the American Dream?
- What does the American Dream mean to the children of migration (Dreamers)?

### While- reading engagement:

**Pg 1-12:** What do we know about Julissa and her family so far? What characteristics can we start giving her? Collaborate with your friends to create an anchor chart.

**Pg 13-25:** What happened to Julissa's parents? Why did they go to the United States?

Think about the important moments of Julissa's story and create a timeline.

**Pg 26-31:** What's happening with Julissa's parents in the United States? How does Julissa feel? How do you know? Select a sentence (or two) from the text to support your ideas.

**Pg 32-40:** Can you describe Julissa's relationship with her parents and sisters? Think about how family separation affects children. What do you think? Write, draw, or share your thoughts.

**Pg 41- 52:** How does Julissa feel about visiting the United States? What character traits can we give her? What's the evidence? Make a prediction about what will happen during the summer. Write, draw, or share your thoughts.

**Pg 53- 63:** What happened to Julissa's parents? What are they doing to try and make it better? What are some ways we can describe her parents? Write a list of words that describe them. What characteristics can we give them?

**Pg 64- 75:** How would you feel if you were Julissa? Pretend to be Julissa and write a journal entry to describe her daily life. You can also make a drawing or share your ideas with a friend.

**Pg 79-86:** How does Julissa feel about moving to the United States? What do you think will happen at her new school? Write, draw, or share your thoughts.

**Pg 87-92:** How does being the new student feel? What type of help does she need? What new skills does she gain as she learns more about her new life in the United States.

**Pg 93-112:** How does life continue to change for Julissa and her family in the United States? Discuss the tough moments she experiences as she tries to fit in while actively holding on to her heritage and language. In a group, compare/contrast life in Mexico and United States. You can use your experiences or find information at your library.

**Pg 113-131:** Children who help adults communicate in English are called language brokers. How does Julissa experience this new family responsibility? Does she like it? Think about how Julissa helps her family as she grows up in San Antonio. How do you help your family? Write, draw, or share your thoughts.

**Pg 132-147:** Define: Illegal vs undocumented. How are these words used? Can you think of other words that better describe people who move to the United States?

**Pg 148-157:** Think about Julissa's family. Create a character chart of any member of Julissa's family.

**Pg 158-183:** Compare and contrast Julissa's private vs public school experiences. What challenges does she face? What personal characteristics help her through these challenges? Pretend to be Julissa and write a journal entry to describe her daily life. You can also make a drawing or share your ideas with a friend.

**Pg 184-190:** Julissa shares her dreams of a college education. Write, draw, or share your thoughts about a profession you would enjoy to learn after you graduate from high school.

**Pg 191-226:** Define the words- resilience and agency and find examples of this throughout Julissa's story. You can also look for information about Texas House Bill 1403 and its impact on young adults in Texas. Julissa closes the chapter by saying, "Someone like me could make it in America (p.219)" and stands up for the rights of all immigrants in the United States. What do you think? Write, draw, or share your thoughts.

#### **Post-reading and wrap-up:**

- Discuss the take-home message and form your own opinion. With your teacher's help, look for reviews of this book. For example, Publisher's Weekly and Kirkus Reviews. Do you agree or disagree with the reviews? Write, draw, or share your thoughts.
- Provide recommendations for future readers: Should other 4-5<sup>th</sup> graders read this book? What do you think?
- Get inspired by Julissa writing her story. Write something that's happening in your life or that has happened. What story do you want to tell?
- Make a Venn diagram and compare yourself to Julissa. What is similar? What is different? Decorate it with pictures and drawings. Hang it up for Julissa to see when she visits!
- Take a story from home: ask your parents to tell you a story from when you were younger. Write it down like a chapter from your own book. Draw or find a picture to go with it. Be sure to post it for Julissa to see!
- Julissa talks about her dreams in her story. What are your dreams? Write down what you aspire to be and draw a picture.
- Make a welcome banner for Julissa! Decorate it with photos and drawings.
- Prepare three questions you would like to ask Julissa during her campus visit.

**Useful links:**

- Author's homepage: <http://julissaarce.com/>
- CNBC: <https://www.cnbc.com/julissa-arce/>
- ABC News: <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/News/grew-undocumented-now-julissa-arce-working-end-immigration/story?id=65985410>
- School Library Journal: <https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=julissa-arce-writing-and-reading-in-the-trump-era-opinion>
- NPR: <https://www.npr.org/2015/03/01/389797026/a-standout-student-a-star-at-goldman-sachs-and-undocumented>
- NPR Latino USA: <https://www.npr.org/2016/09/23/495216731/inside-woman-undocumented-on-wall-street>