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Giant Pumpkin Suite

ONE COMMUNITY, ONE BOOK

Whether it's an "All School Read" or "One Book, One City," communities all over are coming together to have a shared reading experience. Cities and towns, neighborhoods and living communities, places of worship and schools gather around a common book and discuss. You can build the program in your community, no matter its size.

Why would *Giant Pumpkin Suite* make a good community read?

While technically a middle-grade novel, *Giant Pumpkin Suite* is enjoyed by readers of all ages. It makes a great read-aloud and, because there are characters from four generations, those in older generations often enjoy it as well.

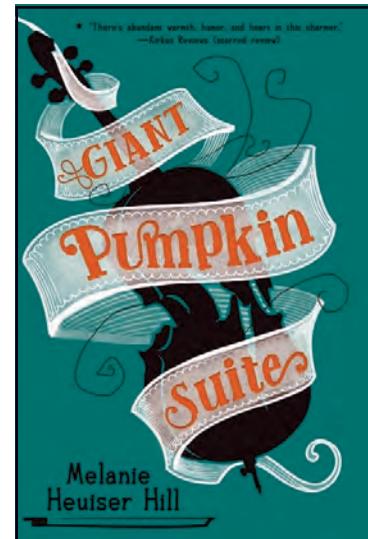
There are many ways to tap into STEM/STEAM/STREAM initiatives for all-school reads, and plenty of interesting topics to explore, learn about, and discuss across generations.

- Anatomy of a cello and the building of stringed instruments
- Math and music (specifically J.S. Bach's music)
- History of J.S. Bach's Cello Suites
- Probability
- Physiology of hands
- Japanese tea ceremonies
- Japanese art of kintsugi
- Seed starting and giant pumpkin growing
- Engineering a giant pumpkin move
- Estimating the growth of a giant pumpkin
- Favorite books you read again and again

The Big Kick-off!

A few ideas for kicking off your One Community, One Book program:

- Start a giant pumpkin seed
- Enlist a "person of note" to read the first chapter – think principal, mayor, program director, news anchor, etc.
- Create a *Giant Pumpkin Suite* tap dance (there's a tap dancer in the book!)
- Invite a cellist to come play the book's theme, J.S. Bach's Suite No. 1 *Prelude*
- Slide-show of giant pumpkin weigh-offs
- Invite me, the author, to visit your school, library, or community group either virtually or in person to kick off the festivities!



At its heart, *Giant Pumpkin Suite* is about community – people getting to know one another and caring for each other. This is just one of the reasons it makes an excellent community read.

“ For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out, and everything changes. To someone who doesn’t understand growth, it would look like complete destruction.”

– Cynthia Occelli

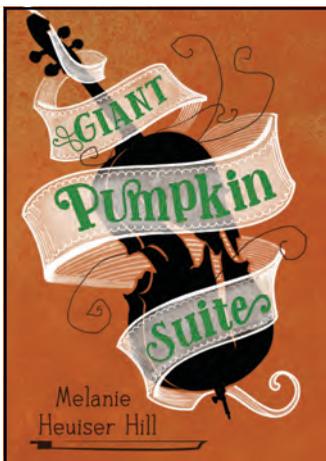
ONE COMMUNITY, ONE BOOK

Find Partnerships

- A One Community, One Book program need not have a large budget, but there are opportunities that can both increase community participation and provide some monetary resources.
- Check out your local Rotary, PTA, bank, state and regional arts and humanities organizations and see if they would provide a grant for something specific like posters, giant pumpkin seeds, copies of books, or a speaker/performer fee.
- Ask for free advertising at local stores and news organizations – local business are often willing to hang up a poster or create a display. And a local newspaper might be thrilled to do an interview with organizers, readers, and the author.
- Involve local libraries and bookstores – they love anything having to do with books!
- The book has musical, dance, engineering, gardening, math, and cultural elements. Are there individuals or organizations in your community who would like to partner with you?
- Would a local cavalcade of well-known community leaders like to read one chapter per week at a community-promoting venue?
- Reach-out to local organizations and invite them to join in on the program – think senior centers, parks and recreation, summer programs, food shelves, places of worship.
- Use social media to build excitement – pictures of people of all ages reading the book, links to articles and videos about kintsugi and the traditional Japanese tea ceremony, pictures of the book at a local business (giving them a little free advertising, too), pictures of giant pumpkins, etc.

You’ll find discussion questions, suggestions for complementary books, music, and videos, and my speaking information on my website: <https://www.melanieheuserhill.com>

About the book



Twelve-year-old Rose Brutigan has grown seven inches in the last eight months. She’s always been different from her twin brother, Thomas, but now she towers over him in too many ways. The gap in their interests continues to widen as well.

Rose, a gifted cellist, is focused on winning the upcoming Bach Cello Suites Competition, while Thomas has taken up the challenge of growing a giant pumpkin in the yard of their elderly neighbor, Mr. Pickering.

When a serious accident changes the course of the summer, Rose is forced to grow and change in ways she never could have imagined. Along the way there’s tap dancing and classic musicals, mail-order worms and neighborhood-sourced compost, fresh-squeezed lemonade, ancient Japanese pottery, and the Minnesota State Fair – as well as an eclectic cast of local characters that you are sure to fall in love with.