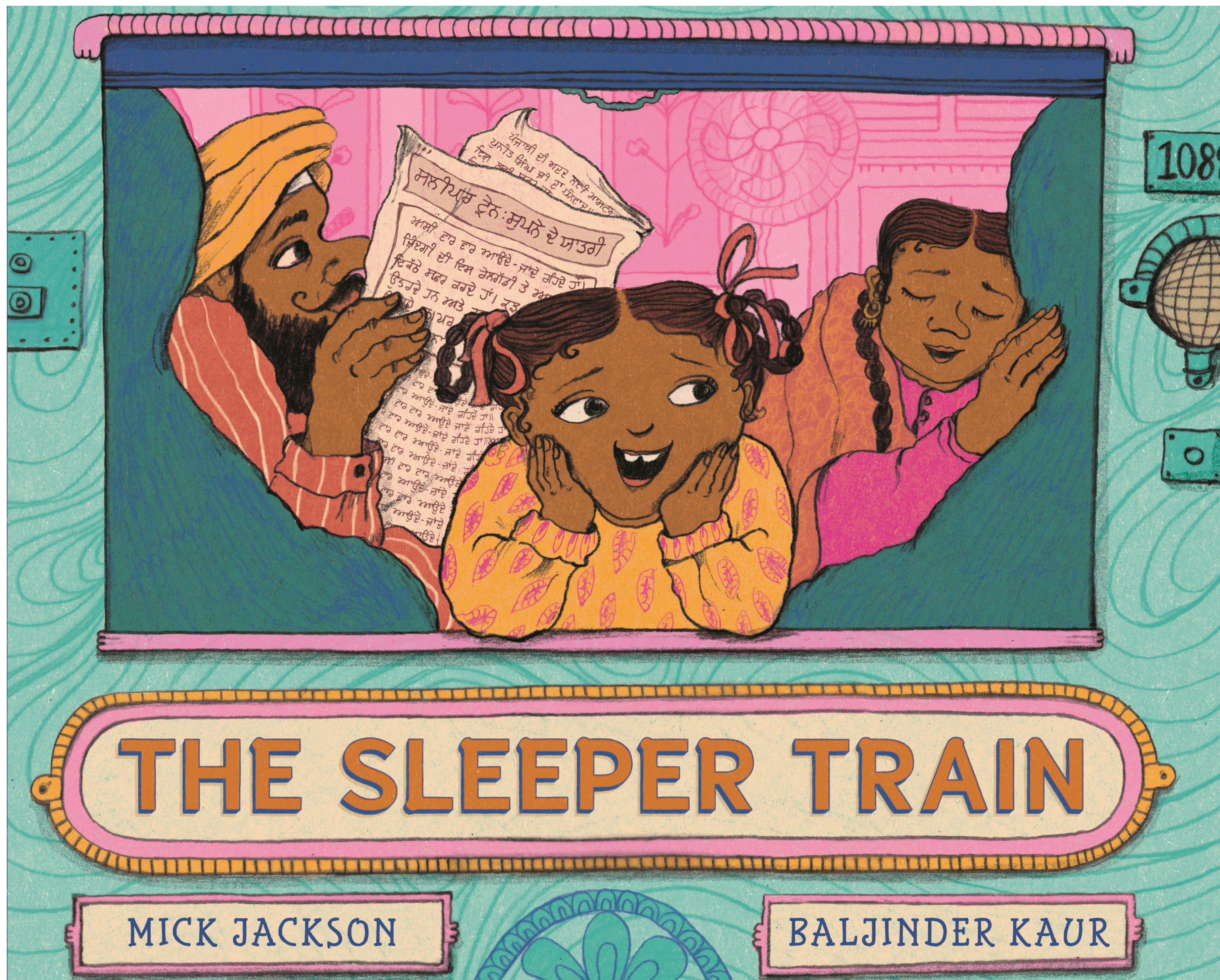


The Carnegies



The Carnegie Longlist 2026 Shadowing Resources

The Sleeper Train

Carnegie Medal for Illustration

Illustrator: Baljinder Kaur

Age range: 3+

Description:

The colours, diverse characters and commotion of a family journey on a night train are vividly brought to life in this vibrant tale. Every character has a distinct identity and facial expressions. The illustrations draw on rich cultural elements and challenge stereotypes. The colour palette adds a sense of warmth and continuity to this tale of an exciting journey!

Themes:

- Family
- Journeys
- Culture
- Nighttime
- Excitement

Shadowing Ideas:

1. The girl in The Sleeper Train has a pink owl toy. Can you spot it in every picture? Play a game of hide and seek using your own favourite toy. Why do you think Baljinder Kaur has chosen to put the owl in every picture?
2. As a group, create a sleeper train which represents the places that are special to you. Allocate a window or carriage to each member of the group and encourage everyone to draw a place that holds special memories. Use it to decorate your classroom or shared space. How far does your collective train travel? Where does it go?
3. There are a lot of intricate patterns and vibrant colours in this book; it's a real feast for the eyes. There are also lots of sounds and smells – the whir of a fan, the squawk of a bird, the scent from a bottle of perfume. Work your way through the story, identifying as many different sounds and smells as you can. Which pages are really noisy? Which are quiet and peaceful? How do you know? You might like to create a multisensory experience with sounds and smells to invoke the scenes in the book.