



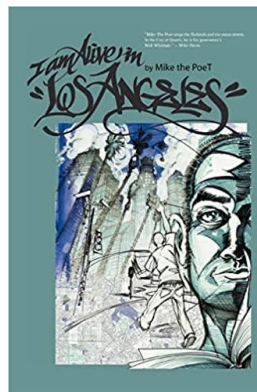
# *I Am Alive in Los Angeles*

Written Mike the Poet

Grades 6-8

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Reading Guide by Dr. Sarah Older Aguilar, 9-12th grade, Vistamar School

## Questions

1. The geography of Los Angeles contains layers of history. Start with your neighborhood. Walk around and document what it is like today. How has the very ground you stand on changed over time? Research the changes that have happened to the land, the buildings, and the people. Read “Window into a LosT Long Beach” to see how Mike the Poet traces the history of Long Beach (19-23).
2. Place and memory have a strong connection. What are some of your strongest memories about Los Angeles? Include all the five senses and the names of places as you put your memories into writing. Interview adults, in your family and community, who have lived in Los Angeles for a long time. What do they remember?
3. From Watts Towers to El Capitan Theater in Hollywood, Mike the Poet celebrates iconic L.A. landmarks. What buildings or structures define *your* L.A.? Whether it’s a famous landmark or a local spot, choose one building to write a story or a poem about. For inspiration, try to find old photos of this building—how do they compare to what it looks like now.
4. To know Los Angeles is to travel its freeways and boulevards. Choose a street like Vermont or Sunset blvd. Trace the street from one end of the city to another. What diverse neighborhoods and communities do you travel through? Whether you make this trip in person or virtually, using a resource like google maps, describe what you see as you go from point A to point B.



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5. Los Angeles murals and graffiti tell the story of our city. Read “Graffiti Writers!” (40-42). Describe the street art that you see every day. How do the words and images speak for your community?
6. This book contains lists of quintessential L.A. books, albums, and films. What would you add to these lists? Make a playlist for our city. What other categories of lists might you make to describe the city?

