

The background is a vibrant orange with a textured, painterly quality. In the upper left, a white, cratered moon is partially visible. A black bird with intricate white patterns on its wings is in flight. The central figure is a woman with dark skin, shown in profile from the chest up. Her hair is dark and voluminous, adorned with stylized purple and blue floral motifs. She is holding an open book with a pink cover featuring a green leaf design. The bottom of the image has a blue and white abstract pattern.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE AMÉRICAS AWARD 1993-2018

**RESOURCES TO HONOR LATINX LITERATURE
WITHIN AND BEYOND THE CLASSROOM**

CONSORTIUM OF LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAMS
WITH COVER ART BY RAFAEL LÓPEZ



CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS GUIDE 5

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER 7

AN EDUCATOR'S PERSPECTIVE 9

BRINGING LATINX LITERATURE INTO THE K-12 CLASSROOM 11

COUNTERING THE SINGLE STORY AND HONORING DIVERSITY 11

HONORING IMMIGRANT FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND SOCIOPOLITICAL HISTORIES 12

MOVING BEYOND HEROES AND HOLIDAYS – TEACHING THE AMÉRICAS ALL YEAR LONG 13

WHOSE STORIES ARE BEING TOLD AND BY WHOM? 15

WRITE A LETTER TO AN AUTHOR 15

HOST AN AUTHOR VIRTUALLY OR IN-PERSON 16

FROM FABLES TO FAKELORE TO CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES 16

READING CELEBRATIONS AND THEATRICAL INTERPRETATIONS 18

APPROACHES TO ENGAGE K-12 EDUCATORS 20

DATA AND RESEARCH: LEARNING FROM THE AMÉRICAS AWARD COMPLETE COLLECTION 20

WEBINARS FEATURING AMÉRICAS AWARD TITLES, AUTHORS, AND ILLUSTRATORS 21

WORKING WITH PRE-SERVICE EDUCATORS 21

BOOK GROUPS 22

PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES 22

DIGITAL CONVERSATIONS 23

PERMANENT AND TRAVELING COLLECTIONS	24
TEACHER WORKSHOPS AND SUMMER INSTITUTES	25
SOLICIT CURRICULUM	26
DIVERSIFYING LITERATURE AND STRENGTHENING LITERACY WITHIN COMMUNITIES	29
COMMUNITY READING CHALLENGE : READ THE AMERICAS	29
COMMUNITY STORY WALK	30
ORAL STORYTELLING NIGHT	31
SELF REPRESENTATION EXHIBIT	32
REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE	33
LOCAL LIBRARIES AND LOCAL BRANCHES OF THE CENTER FOR THE BOOK	33
RESOURCES	34
LATIN AMERICA-RELATED CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES	35
GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE LATINX AND OTHER DIVERSE LITERATURE	36
GLOBAL AND DIVERSE CHILDREN’S LITERATURE RESOURCES	36
CHILDREN’S AND YOUNG ADULT BOOK AWARDS	37
SELECTED SCHOLARSHIP ON GLOBAL AND DIVERSE YOUTH LITERATURE	38
WORKS CITED	39
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	40
APPENDICES	41
RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING CHILDREN’S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE	42
READ ACROSS THE AMÉRICAS CHALLENGE	43
AMÉRICAS AWARD CALENDAR	46
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AMÉRICAS AWARD WINNERS AND HONORABLE MENTIONS, 1993–2018	56

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

CLASP OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Dear Fellow Educators:

This guide was created with you in mind. It was produced by the Outreach Committee of the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP) in honor of the 25th anniversary (1993–2018) of the Américas Award for Children’s and Young Adult Literature.

CLASP is a network of educational institutes across the United States and beyond which engage with Latin American Studies programs. A member-driven organization, CLASP fosters global competency, language proficiency, and cultural awareness of Latin America and the Caribbean by drawing upon interdisciplinary and area expertise. It encourages excellence in teaching and program development; organizes workshops at national and regional conventions; develops curriculum materials; promotes teaching of less commonly taught languages; recognizes exemplary children’s and young adult literature; and supports K-12 and post-secondary professional development.

As part of this broader mission, CLASP founded the Américas Award in 1993 to encourage and commend authors, illustrators, and publishers who produce quality children’s and young adult books that portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinos in the United States, and to provide teachers with recommendations for classroom use.

Up to two awards are given annually in recognition of U.S. published works of fiction, poetry, folklore, or selected non-fiction that authentically and engagingly portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinos in the United States. By linking the Americas, the intent is to reach beyond geographic borders, as well as multicultural-international boundaries, focusing instead upon cultural heritages within the hemisphere.

Books are reviewed by a committee composed of librarians, educators, and outreach coordinators, who evaluate the books according to four criteria:

- 1) distinctive literary quality;
- 2) cultural contextualization;
- 3) exceptional integration of text, illustration and design; and
- 4) potential for classroom use.

In 2018, CLASP looked back to commemorate 25 years of recognizing award-winning literature for the K-12 classroom and community. And with this guide it looks to the future, offering a compilation of resources and materials designed to support educators as they continue to share exemplary Latinx literature with the youth in their lives – both within and beyond the classroom.

In the following pages, the award’s founder, Julie Kline (University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee), shares her perspective on the award’s impact and legacy; Dr. Katrina Dillon (The University of New Mexico) discusses the ongoing and ever-increasing need to provide representative literature in the classroom; and Hania Mariën

(Harvard University), together with CLASP coordinators Denise Woltering-Vargas (Tulane University), Colleen McCoy (Vanderbilt University), and Keira-Philipp-Schnurer (The University of New Mexico), contribute ideas for strategies and resources to share the Américas Award with an array of audiences within and beyond the K-12 community.

Throughout the guide, look for our “More Info” and “Programming Idea” symbols to learn about additional resources and actual examples of the approach in action.



More Info



Programming Idea

We hope that teachers, outreach coordinators, librarians, and others will be strengthened in their confidence and ability to engage with the Américas Award, to honor Latinx children’s and young adult literature, and to increase access to windows, mirrors, and doors for all students in empowering ways within and beyond the classroom.

Please remember to visit the CLASP website for even more resources and related content, including the cover illustration by artist Rafael López provided as an 11x17 poster to print for your classroom or library!

Finally, please let us know if you have any questions, suggestions, or comments. We welcome your input and can be reached by contacting Denise Woltering-Vargas at dwolterietulane.edu.

CLASP Outreach Committee

CLASPPROGRAMS.ORG

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

JULIE KLINE

In his 1998 acceptance speech for *The Circuit* at the Library of Congress, author Francisco Jiménez said:

...For most of my school days, I didn't find in the literature the experiences that I had gone through. So I decided that it was very important to promote in any way possible ethnic American literature and also to contribute to that body of literature...and I thought that it was important to do that because the curriculum—what we study in school—reflects who we are as a people. So if we do not see ourselves as students, if we do not see ourselves reflected in the curriculum, in the literature, in the music, in the art that we study, then we do not arrive at a good understanding of who we are personally and who we are as a nation.

From the start, our goals for the Américas Award were simple: to highlight books that allow children and young adults to see themselves in the literature; to encourage U.S. publication of such books; to showcase the diversity of Latin America, the Caribbean, U.S. Latinx and other diasporic Americas communities in the hemisphere; and to encourage young people to read engaging stories about lives and cultures perhaps new to them.

The Américas Award was inspired by the Children's Africana Book Award (CABA), created by Africa Access with the Outreach Council of the African Studies Association. The book award concept seemed a perfect project to propose to the CLASP Teaching and Outreach Committee. As a graduate student at UW-Madison, I had volunteered at the Cooperative Children's Book Center, benefitting from the opportunity to learn from CCBC staff, including Ginny Moore Kruse and Kathleen T. Horning. I developed a particular interest in international content in children's literature, and it was KT Horning who suggested I pursue a fellowship at the International Youth Library in Munich where I worked on Brazilian children's literature during the summer of 1988. Upon return I longed to design outreach programming involving children's books for the UW-Milwaukee Center for Latin America (previous name), and in 1991 organized with colleagues an event I always think of as seminal to the Américas Award. Reading Latin America was a public program for teachers and librarians held in Milwaukee and at Columbia Teacher's College in New York City. The event served as a marker as to the state of U.S. publishing of books about Latinx heritage in the early 90s, and encouraged conversations with colleagues about the value and potential of a new award.

The CLASP Committee helped shape the award criteria, and in doing so, we decided to focus on the multicultural/ international dynamic, including the Latinx experience within the U.S, and including all of the Americas—not just Spanish-speaking countries and communities. We also determined the award should be more than a recognition of winners, but rather should include an annual annotated bibliography of commended titles to be a guide for classroom use and library collection development. As we refined the award rationale and criteria and discussed what to include and where to draw lines, if any, I best remember the comment by Linda Hahn Miller, former outreach coordinator at the University of Florida. Said Linda, "the world is made up of lumpers and splitters," that is, people who think about commonalities and connections, and those who

think about difference and separation. I think for all of us shaping the early Américas Award, we aimed to be lumpers, through and through.

The award was further refined over the years by the expertise, thoughtfulness and commitment of the national review committee members—librarians, classroom teachers, outreach professionals, children’s literature and bilingual education specialists from throughout the U.S. The Américas Award also matured as other children’s book awards such as the Pura Belpré and the Tomás Rivera were established. Each award makes a contribution, and we have dovetailed with each in a way that, I believe, broadly benefits the field of children’s literature. In the case of the Américas, both the award’s recognition of the diversity of the Americas and the inclusion of an award criterion focused on potential for classroom use, help make its contributions distinct.

I remember writing a letter to the first review committee (Graciela Italiano-Thomas, Linda Hahn Miller, Christi Rentsch de Moraga) after completing our first competition: recognizing Lulu Delacre’s picture book, *Vejigante Masquerader*, as the 1993 Américas Award winner, along with a commended list of six titles. My closing line was something to the effect of “We’ll look back twenty years from now and say proudly, ‘Look what we started.’” And here we are now, celebrating the 25th anniversary, with over 400 titles recognized since 1993 as Américas winner, honor, and commended books. The ongoing relationship with the Library of Congress has given us a remarkable way to truly celebrate the books, authors, and illustrators. Creatively coordinated since 2011 by the Tulane University Stone Center for Latin American Studies and the Vanderbilt University Center for Latin American Studies, the Américas Award is stronger, and more vibrant than ever. Its visibility is enhanced by the innovative outreach programming by colleagues at Latin American Studies centers throughout the U.S.

Diversity in children’s literature still has a long way to go, but we can all appreciate that the Américas Award for Children’s and Young Adult Literature has made a twenty-five years (and counting) contribution to diversity by its recognition of books of distinctive literary quality, cultural contextualization, noteworthy integration of text, illustration and design, and potential for classroom use.

¡Adelante!

Julie Kline

Américas Award founder and coordinator (1993–2011)

Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

AN EDUCATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

KATRINA DILLON

We live in a world rich in cultural and linguistic diversity, which makes global competency all the more significant if we are to ensure that our students are prepared to be successful in and outside of our classrooms. The Américas Award offers a starting point for educators looking for authentic and engaging literature that addresses Latin America and the Latinx experience in the U.S. As educators, it is imperative that we take stock of the literature and curricula we are presenting to our students. When we identify literature for our classrooms or libraries, we must honestly reflect on the following questions:

- For whom does the book represent a window that allows them to learn about or view a world different from the one they know?
- For whom is the book a mirror through which they see themselves reflected and validated in a positive and empowering manner?
- For whom is the book a door, offering an invitation to more deeply understand the world created by an author?

These questions provide the basis upon which we can begin to evaluate the literature our students have access to in our educational spaces, and to ensure that all our students not only see themselves presented in empowering ways, but their peers as well.

The powerful and now popular metaphor of children's literature serving as windows, mirrors, and doors was first presented by African American educator Rudine Sims Bishop. Bishop writes not only of books' potentials to bring about positive, transformative change in young readers, but also their potential to detract and damage. She writes "When children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society of which they are a part" (1990).

We know that not all literature is created equally. Often even literature labeled "multicultural" perpetuates negative stereotypes, presenting overly simplified socio-political analyses and disempowered non-dominant group members. It is essential that we offer counter narratives that challenge these types of marginalization. Culturally relevant literature also provides the means for our students to learn to understand and connect with those who come from different backgrounds and life experiences. As our society becomes increasingly globalized it is essential that our teaching practices expose our students to knowledge that helps them to understand and appreciate cultures, people, languages, and ways of life different than their own. But, this must be done in a way that moves beyond the tourist approach of teaching holidays and heroes, so that our students are given the opportunity to delve past superficial or trite understandings of our diverse world.

As a result of both the need to provide an educational context where all students are successful and the increasing relevance of global competency, the term "culturally relevant pedagogy" has become increasingly popular in education and is often used synonymously with "multicultural education." But, as culturally relevant pedagogy has grown in popularity, its meaning has become less clear and its significance more watered down.

Gloria Ladson-Billings is one of the first to research and write about culturally relevant pedagogy. According to Ladson-Billings, culturally relevant pedagogy:

- “Empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (1994).
- Incorporates student knowledge and experience into the official content of the classroom and prepares students to effect change (1992).
- Produces students who can achieve academically, demonstrate cultural competence and can understand and critique the existing social order (1995).

Our literacy practices provide fertile ground on which to apply the practices of culturally relevant pedagogy. Literature becomes the means to offer mirrors, windows, and doors for all our students. It has the ability to validate both their own lived experiences and those of their peers across the globe.

As the We Need Diverse Books movement continues to reiterate, we all deserve to have empowered protagonists that reflect our own realities. To not provide these for our students is to create a shame of invisibility. According to Brené Brown (2006), “Invisibility is about disconnection and powerlessness. When we don’t see ourselves reflected back in our culture, we feel reduced to something so small and insignificant that we’re easily erased from the world of important things. Both the process of being reduced and the final product of that process—invisibility—can be incredibly shaming.” As if living through racism, sexism, bullying, or abuse isn’t painful enough, we add another layer of shame in erasing these experiences from the literature we use in our classrooms. While we recognize that these are not easy topics to address in an educational space, and certainly believe they must be broached with great forethought and preparation, we still strongly believe that they are worthy of our attention as educators. The Atlantic’s article “How Banning Books Marginalizes Children” offers a more detailed conversation around this topic.

When our students are exposed to literature that functions as mirrors, windows, and doors, we create the space for them to develop the skill of empathy. Empathy is “the ability to perceive a situation from the other person’s perspective. To see, hear, and feel the unique world of the other” (Ivey, Pederson, & Ivey, 2001). Brené Brown’s (2006) research has found empathy to be a key component of shame resilience. Literature that encourages the development of empathy provides not only the ability to counter the shame of invisibility, but the growth of imagination and the power of possibility. As young adult author Kwame Alexander writes, “If we don’t give children books that are literary mirrors as well as windows to the whole world of possibility, if these books don’t give them the opportunity to see outside themselves, then how can we expect them to grow into adults who connect in meaningful ways to a global community, to people who might look or live differently than they. You cannot” (2016).

In the pages that follow, we continue to consider many of these ideas and ways to implement diverse literature in educational spaces. In the appendices we provide a bibliography of *Américas Award* winners and commended and recommended titles. We also have included a one page rubric that can be used to evaluate literature for its culturally relevant content.

Katrina Dillon, PhD

Education Consultant

Latin American and Iberian Institute, The University of New Mexico

BRINGING LATINX LITERATURE INTO THE K-12 CLASSROOM

HANIA MARIËN, COLLEEN MCCOY, KEIRA PHILIPP-SCHNURER, DENISE WOLTERING-VARGAS

As Dr. Dillon writes, “Literature becomes the means to offer mirrors, windows, and doors for all our students. It has the ability to validate both their own lived experiences and those of their peers across the globe.” The following resources start with this premise, offering ideas and resources to K-12 educators who are interested in bringing diverse literature, and particularly Latinx literature, into their classrooms in ways that are meaningful for all students. Many of these strategies can be adapted across grade levels and subject areas, and can be used within the context of other world regions.

► COUNTERING THE SINGLE STORY AND HONORING DIVERSITY

“Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity...the single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”

– Chichamanda Ngozi Adichie, Nigerian author

Américas Award books can help all of us move beyond what author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie calls the “danger of a single story,” an idea she explains in her now well-known [TED Talk on the topic](#). A Nigerian writer, Adichie has grappled with having her country and culture misunderstood because people not personally familiar with it know it only because of one story they’ve heard, one image they’ve seen. And most frequently, that one story or image is negative and denigrating. Her theory that cross-cultural understandings are often at risk from the “danger of a single story” is not confined to African countries, but rather holds true across the world and certainly so for cross-cultural conversations within the Americas.

Too often, countries of the Caribbean, Central America, and South America are reduced, much like those of Africa, to negative stories of trauma – violence, crime, and gangs – if they appear at all in children’s and YA literature. Within the US, stories of Latinx immigrants suffer the same



More Info

At the end of this guide you’ll find a bibliography of all winners, honorable mentions, and commended titles recognized over the course of the Américas Award’s 25-year history. These books can help complicate and expand the “single story,” and honor a wide range of experiences and histories, from the story of the recycled instrument orchestra of Paraguay told in *Ada’s Violin* to the nuanced depiction of contemporary Haitian immigration and coming-of-age shared in *American Street*.

fate. While these negative narratives are not necessarily inaccurate and frequently tell important histories, they offer an incomplete picture. Missing are rich traditions of storytelling, eras of peaceful coexistence with, and respect for, the natural environment, and values around food, friendship, and family -- elements of living that are central to many people across the continent. Missing are the stories of the everyday. This singular, traumatized narrative of Latinx people from across Latin America, the Caribbean and the U.S. is misleading, distorting, and incomplete. Fortunately, we have at least one easy way to dispell the single story: books. Many beautiful books have been written for children and young adults that compassionately honor, celebrate, and depict the complexity of lives across the Americas and around the world. These books can be tools for expanding a singular worldview into one more nuanced, critically-shaped, and empathetic.

► HONORING IMMIGRANT FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND SOCIOPOLITICAL HISTORIES

Numerous titles on the Américas Award list discuss immigration with and without documentation, family separation and deportation, and the history of discriminatory labor practices and organizing within migrant farm worker communities.

Regardless of how the book addresses the topic, all books dealing with these topics may be triggers for students. It is imperative that educators be aware of and attentive to the experiences and backgrounds their students bring into the educational space. Even students who are not themselves directly impacted by the changing and volatile immigration policy and legal landscape may have family members or friends who are. This reminder is not intended to deter from using such books with students. Rather, it serves to encourage the use of these books within a classroom context that embraces the lived reality of students outside the classroom.

The history of these stories is long and complicated, tied to the political histories of the United States and countries throughout the Americas, yet this complexity is often omitted or glossed over in children's books.

For many years, immigrants and their broader communities have been exposed to books in which they did not see themselves or in which they saw only negative stereotypes. Simultaneously, their peers were exposed to the same stereotypes and, as such, became exposed to those misperceptions and misunderstandings. The importance of an authentic immigrant narrative is as much for those students who aren't personally connected to it as it is for those who are – both need to hear a story counter to that offered in the mainstream media.

The past decade has seen this start to change. With significant work on the part of authors, illustrators, librarians, teachers, and publishers, the world of children's literature, also known informally as kid lit, has evolved. While still far from perfect, educators have access to many more titles that offer nuanced depictions of a wide range of experiences – immigration included. Many of the Américas Award books, for instance, address immigration by focusing on the lived experiences and histories of individuals and families who migrate. Many recently published and forthcoming titles offer much more than a single story of immigration; they honor the incredible strengths of undocumented immigrants and DREAMers making their way to this country.

Some of these books address narratives of family separation, unjust policies against migrant farm workers, and adverse experiences of racism within and beyond classrooms. Others go further, and focus on the agency, resilience, and strength that immigrant children, families, and communities regularly practice as they fight for their rights and honor their heritage.



- Anti-Defamation League (ADL): [What is the DREAM Act and Who are the DREAMers?](#)
- Teaching Tolerance: [An Educator's Guide to the Immigration Debate](#) and [other lesson plans on immigration](#)
- National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE): [Talking Immigration in the Classroom and other lesson plans](#)
- » Teaching for Change: [Teaching the Truth About Youth Migration from Central America](#) Undocu + Allies
- » The use of the "I" word
- » Pathways to Immigration
- » About DACA, DREAMers, Undocumented Students, and the Immigration Debate
- » Rethinking Schools: [800,000 Reasons to Teach About DACA](#)
- » United We Dream: [#HeretoStay Toolkit for K-12 and Higher Education Educators and Schools](#)
- » Rethinking Schools: Editorial: [Defending Immigrant Students in the Street and in Our Classrooms](#)
- » Anti-Defamation League (ADL): [What is the DREAM Act and Who are the DREAMers?](#)

► MOVING BEYOND HEROES AND HOLIDAYS – TEACHING THE AMÉRICAS ALL YEAR LONG

As educators, it's vital that teaching about diverse cultures and different histories be integrated into the classroom curriculum throughout the year. Doing so opens up broader spaces for educators to offer richer explanations of language, culture, and history. If discussions of Latinx identity are discussed only during Hispanic Heritage Month, for instance, how is it ever possible to offer students more than a simplified discussion of undocumented immigration or of César Chávez's work with farm workers in California? These topics alone merit much more time.

Integrating diverse knowledge throughout the school year does more than just open up additional spaces for teaching. More importantly, it ensures that students see this diversity of knowledge as authentic, meaningful, and important – it becomes part of the official canon of knowledge, rather than presented as an alternative or break from it. If diverse content is not integrated into the official curricula, then students are encouraged to view the Eurocentric content presented in textbooks (focused on the Western world and English-speaking people) as the only legitimate and sanctioned knowledge. We must create the space to teach the history of the Americas rather than just the history of the United States of America.

Every student in U.S. schools is taught the history of the American Revolution, and is often exposed to some information about the French Revolution. But how much more depth and meaning could we provide to the notion of revolution if we also integrated other significant revolutions of the Americas, such as those in Mexico and Haiti, into our curricula? Our teaching around the civil rights movement continues to be plagued by a self-imposed segregation, but how much more powerful would it be if we expanded it to include the historically overlapping stories such as those of Sylvia Mendez and the United Farmworkers' Association?

Given that many textbooks omit diverse knowledge or include it only as sidebar information, the task of identifying how to integrate such narratives into the curriculum typically falls on the educator. It can be a daunting endeavor. One of the more straightforward ways to do this is to identify periodic events throughout

the year that can be used to prompt conversations on diverse perspectives. Consider how Women's History Month might involve more women of color, for example, or how National Poetry Month might include more voices from languages other than English.

We drew inspiration from author and educator Alma Flor Ada's *Calendario Enriquecedor* (below) to make our own, complementary calendar to help you incorporate a wide range of Américas Award books into your curriculum. We encourage you to use both calendars and find what's most appropriate for your students. Our calendar of Américas Award books is included at the end of this document.



More Info

- [Book] Lee, Enid, Menkart, Deborah, and Margo Okazawa-Rey, Eds (1998). [Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Multicultural, Anti-Racist Education and Staff Development](#). Network of Educators on the Americas.
- Alma Flor Ada: [Calendario Enriquecedor for Teachers](#)



More Info

Hispanic Heritage Month and the Meaning of "Hispanic"

- The Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Gallery of Art, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum join in paying tribute to the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society. Learn more at the website for [National Hispanic Heritage Month](#)
- Consider the term "Hispanic" and interrelated terms of "Latino," "Latinx," "Spanish," and "Chicano," including their history, meaning, who has had the privilege of using the terms, who has not been able to choose, and the relation between it all. The following resources may help decipher those connections, though no one source is considered definitive and may yet have contentious elements:
 - * NPR segment by Maria Hinojosa on ["The Invention of Hispanics"](#)
 - * NPR segment by Lulu García-Navarro on ["Hispanic or Latino? A Guide for the U.S. Presidential Campaign"](#)
 - * Refinery29's articles on ["Coming to Terms with 'Latinx'"](#)
 - * Pew Research Center surveys ["Is Being Hispanic a Matter of Race, Ethnicity, or Both?"](#)

► WHOSE STORIES ARE BEING TOLD AND BY WHOM?

By selecting books written by authors of color and featuring protagonists of color, educators affirm for all students that someone who looks like them is worth writing about, and someone like them has a story worth telling.

By integrating diverse authors and illustrators into the official curriculum, educators are then in a position to invite students to critically analyze whose stories are told, by whom, and how. A review of the classroom, school, or community library can present an interesting opportunity for critique and learning.

Educators might ask questions such as: Whose story is being told? Who is telling the story? Whose voices are absent from the discussion? Students, in turn, can be invited to explore broader issues of injustice, such as the historical erasure of certain stories and points of view from our history, censorship and unequal representation in careers (authorship or otherwise).

This exercise could be further expanded by inviting students to write their own stories, or to write the stories that they saw missing from the shelves. Such an activity could prompt students to develop a stronger sense of self and validate their identities, as well as encourage them to consider careers as authors and publishers. They might become part of the #ownvoices movement, a social media and academic conversation that emphasizes how marginalized protagonists are best elaborated by authors who share the same marginalized experiences.

As part of the #ownvoices movement, the world of children's literature is increasingly opening up to works that represent a diversity of experiences within a culture, rather than simply expressing multicultural difference between cultures. This is critical even within the limited world of Latinx children's literature – where sometimes authentic narratives about immigration only offer minimal insight into the broader culture. As the actor Edward James Olmos observed in *Americanos: Latino Life in the United States*, "Much like a quilt woven intricately with many beautiful fibers, Latinos are a proud and diverse people interwoven with indigenous, Spanish/European, African, and Asian roots...[they] are citizens not only of the United States of America, but also of all of the Americas and of the Latin American countries around the world" (1999, p. 9).

As students look at the voices missing from the books in front of them, they might be encouraged to ask ever more nuanced questions not only about people whose histories have been largely omitted, but about people whose stories have been whitewashed, overly simplified, and stereotyped.

► WRITE A LETTER TO AN AUTHOR

For educators with the time to move beyond reading these titles with their students, writing a letter to an author can promote greater interest on the part of the student. Students can write letters individually, as part of small-group exercises, or as a whole class. The act of writing a letter encourages them to become more deeply invested in the story, and to make text-to-self and text-to-world connections. For books inspired by the author's own life, students can draw connections between the book's storyline and the author's note at the end – an activity that lends itself to encouraging students to think about their own lives and to experiment with writing their own stories.

► HOST AN AUTHOR VIRTUALLY OR IN-PERSON

Beyond writing a letter to an author, educators may want to consider inviting an author to their classroom. This can be done virtually at little to no cost, or in person (in which case, outside subsidies may be needed).

Given that many Américas Award authors are writing about their own cultures, they are personally invested in speaking with young people about the meaning of their work. Whether in person or online, welcoming the author into the classroom can be a learning opportunity in itself long before the conversation ever takes place. Students can learn about a specific book or the range of books published by the author, study the artwork included by different illustrators, create artwork inspired by the books' illustrations or topics, research the author's life and where they come from, create maps inspired by the author's life or the book's storyline, learn songs that connect to the author's background, study different forms of writing presented in the book and practice on their own (e.g., poetry, epistolary writing, autobiographical, novel-in-verse, etc.).

CLASP, which is committed not only to promoting the Américas Award but also to supporting educators who use its books in the classrooms, can help educators identify authors and illustrators and plan a successful visit with them.

► FROM FABLES TO FAKELORE TO CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES

Fables and folklore can provide critical insight into a given culture, and can be broadly conceptualized. As Olson (2011) observes, "folktales reflect people past and present. They answer the who, what, where, why, and how of a people's cultural origins, traits, composition, belief systems and so forth. Folktales are the tales, games, superstitions, dichos (proverbs), riddles, and songs of a culture. They are tools of instruction, collections of wisdom, and examples of core values that are passed down from generation to generation. Simple yet picturesque, folktales convey traditions, medicinal cures, customs, myths, values, and important stories" (p. 273).

Cross-cultural comparisons of fables and folktales can be accessible and engaging for students, offering relatively straightforward opportunities to compare humankind's most intrinsic characteristics, such as its need to pass along knowledge, its desire to connect with one another, and its interpretations of past, present, and future. Moreover, folktales shared as oral storytelling, their most common means of sharing, can allow "the listener's language and literacy skills to develop successfully" (Olsen, 2011).

At the same time, there are two significant drawbacks and areas of concern for educators who turn to folklore in the classroom: the dangers of "fakelore" and the potential to perpetuate romanticized, historical stereotypes.



More Info

- Horn Book Magazine: [Own Voices Movement and Representation of Caribbean Cultures in Children's Books](#)
- Children's Cooperative Book Center (CCBC): [Publishing Statistics on Children's Books about People of Color and First/Native Nations and by People of Color and First/Native Nations Authors and Illustrators](#)
- NMCTE: ["We Are Still Here": An Interview with Debbie Reese](#)



Programming Idea

[Poetry as Peacemaking: Building Bridges, Not Walls](#)

In 2017, author and poet Margarita Engle visited with students at a range of elementary, middle, and high schools in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to discuss “Poetry as Peacemaking: Building Bridges, Not Walls.” She came in her capacity as the Poetry Foundation’s Young People’s Poet Laureate (2017–2019), with the aim of bringing poetry to students of all ages. “I love to write about young people who made hopeful choices in situations that seemed hopeless,” says Engle. “My own hope is that tales of courage and compassion will ring true for youthful readers as they make their own difficult decisions in modern times.”

[Journeys of My Life / Viajes de mi vida](#)

For an example of a collaborative writing project between a public library, public schools and a visiting author, read about the the Journeys of my Life/Viajes de mi Vida project in Virginia, where high school students worked with award-winning Latino artist John Parra to create their own bilingual picture books. Seventy students at Park View High School (PVHS), working with award-winning Latino artist John Parra, met for two full days to produce original stories and illustrations to be made into bilingual picture books. The students developed stories describing their personal journeys, important Latino role models and historical events that support Latino history and culture.

The term “fakelore” refers to spurious adaptations or misappropriations of stories told in traditional communities, most often attributed to Indigenous communities. As Springer (1995) notes, “Although uninformed reviewers and educators praise the changes authors make, scholarly comparisons between picture books and originals invariably show the ‘improvements’ significantly distort native style, characterization, plot, theme, meaning, and belief. These picture books... perpetuate stereotypes” and, in the process, minimize if not implicitly reject the significance and importance of the actual storytelling traditions of a given culture. Much of the fakelore found today on bookshelves is produced by writers not of a given culture, but who claim to have spent time with the people represented in the story.

Certainly not all books that represent folkloric knowledge should be labeled as “fakelore.” Many wonderful books by authors from the culture represented have been shared with readers throughout the years. Dr. Debbie Reese, the scholar and educator behind the blog *American Indians in Children’s Literature*, has a wealth of resources to highlight the books that authentically honor North American (and occasionally Latin American) Indigenous knowledge. Yet even educators who find the examples of folklore that avoids perpetuating misinformation, a second pitfall awaits: that of romanticizing and historicizing a student’s understanding of another culture.

Often depicting animals or a mythical past, folktales and fables risk reinforcing a distorted view of other cultures (typically non-Western cultures), whose populations are very much alive, in the present, and grappling with contemporary and even mundane concerns. To avoid or mitigate this concern, folktales can be complemented with children’s books that focus on real-life and lived experiences, such as Duncan Tonatiuh’s biographical story, *Danza! Amalia Hernandez and Mexico’s Folkloric Ballet*, or Margarita Engle’s young adult memoir, *Enchanted Air*. In pairing folktales with current narratives, students can come closer to making real-world connections in their own lives and understanding both past and present information concerning other cultures.

► READING CELEBRATIONS AND THEATRICAL INTERPRETATIONS

Reading celebrations provide the opportunity to generate school-wide excitement around the act of reading and specific books. Concrete examples are discussed below, but these types of events could involve a school parade where students dress up as their favorite book character or having individual classes create costumes representative of a book used for a class study. These are often excellent culminating activities to wrap up a semester long thematic study.

Theatrical interpretations are incredibly valuable. Beyond bringing a book to life, these provide oral language practice, exposure to public speaking, and kinesthetic activity. Reader's Theater, an exercise in which a book is dramatized with one or more students acting out its characters, can help students connect with stories being told in the classroom, and can be particularly useful for English Language Learners through encouraging oral language fluency.



More Info

For more on Reader's Theater with English Language Learners read:

- TESOL International Association:
[Reader's Theater: A Superfood for Oral Skills](#)
- Colorín Colorado:
Reader's Theater with English Language Learners: [Oral Language Enrichment and Literacy Development for ELLs](#)



Programming Idea

Bring a Book to Life

La Mesa Elementary, a multilingual Title I elementary school in an international neighborhood in Albuquerque, New Mexico, developed a “Bring a Book to Life” program. The celebration encourages students to develop a love of reading, foster their own sense of identity and self, and promote empathy for others. The entire school participates, with each classroom reading a different book that is then shared at the end in a schoolwide event. Students dramatize the plays, hold parades, create art installations, and sing songs. Most recently, the school also invited one of the featured authors, Rene Colato Lainez, to speak at the school.

Plays in the Community and in the Classroom

In Austin, Texas, educator Caroline Sweet has brought the story of *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant’s Tale* to life for an entire community through a collaboration with the Austin Scottish Rite Theater. In 2015 and 2018, the book was adapted for the stage by Susan Gayle Todd, a theater director. The production is family friendly and encourages youth interaction, perfect for families who want to share a love of literature with their children in a dynamic and engaging way. Sweet has also developed curriculum to support teachers who want to use the book with their students.

Reader’s Theatre

In 2015, students at Stonewall Middle School Library in Manassas, Virginia, shared a reader’s theatre adaptation of *Silver People: Voices from the Panama Canal*, a young adult novel-in-verse written by Margarita Engle. These confident young students presented their reader’s theater as part of the Américas Award ceremony at the Library of Congress, with Engle herself present. Strident voices shouted out to represent the howler monkeys whose lives were threatened by the construction of the Panama Canal and alternatively anxious and empowered voices rose out to represent the lives of the novel’s protagonists.

APPROACHES TO ENGAGE K-12 EDUCATORS

HANIA MARIËN, COLLEEN MCCOY, KEIRA PHILIPP-SCHNURER, DENISE WOLTERING-VARGAS

CLASP is a network comprised primarily of Latin American Studies programs within universities and colleges, alongside selective K-12 institutions and individual members. Within the higher education setting, many of its members ascribe to mission statements that involve more than academic programming for their respective campuses: they are committed to public engagement and community education. CLASP itself does the same, promoting Latin American Studies for all levels of education, from kindergarten through graduate studies.

To this end, CLASP-affiliated outreach coordinators (e.g., coordinators who work at universities such as Tulane University, Vanderbilt University, Florida International University, and many more) oversee public engagement programs that serve K-12 teachers. In this capacity, the coordinators may work with a wide array of educators, from pre-service teachers just beginning their careers to veteran teachers with decades of classroom experience. The following resources are intended to be most useful to those coordinators who seek to use and promote the Américas Award among their respective K-12 educator communities across the country.

► DATA AND RESEARCH: LEARNING FROM THE AMÉRICAS AWARD COMPLETE COLLECTION

Given that the Américas Award has been recognizing children's and young adult literature related to the Americas for 25 years, the full span of titles offers a unique opportunity for scholars and researchers to analyze the diversity of children's literature over the span of several decades.

Scholars interested in this topic can find a wealth of information in the The Golda Meir Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), where the Américas Award Research Collection includes over 400 U.S. published children's and young adult books that portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinos in the United



Programming Idea

Research from the Archives

The development of Latinx narratives among children's and young adult literature has inspired a wide range of scholarship. In particular, the corpus of Américas Award-winning titles has led to at least two research publications:

The Américas Award: Honoring Latino/a Children's and Young Adult Literature of the Américas (2016), edited by Laretta Henderson, "shared diverse perspectives on the impact the award has had in community theater, public library communities, education, and...the field of publishing as a whole."

Celebrating Cuentos: Promoting Latino Children's Literature and Literacy in Classrooms (2010), edited by Dr. Jaime Naidoo, highlighted the importance of the Américas Award within the broader field. This publication was an extension of his 2006 dissertation, published by the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, "Embracing the Faces at the Window: Visual and Textual Representation of Latino Subcultures in Américas and Pura Belpre Award-winning Picture Books."

States. The Américas Award was coordinated by the UWM Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies from 1993 until 2011, at which time the award coordination moved to Tulane and Vanderbilt Universities.

The collection, housed in the Curriculum Collection, includes all Américas winners, honor books, and commended titles since the award's inception in 1993, and it will continue to grow with the addition of the annual list of titles. Although the collection is non-circulating, the Library has circulating copies of most Américas titles, purchased for the Library by the UWM Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS).

K-12 educators and researchers interested in using the collection are invited to contact Julie Kline (jkline@uwm.edu), CLACS Associate Director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

► WEBINARS FEATURING AMÉRICAS AWARD TITLES, AUTHORS, AND ILLUSTRATORS

Outreach coordinators can serve as a contact point between interested community members and Américas Award authors and illustrators, facilitating in-person visits or webinars. The latter is often more cost and time effective, and can reach a broader audience.

CLASP can help to publicize and promote such online opportunities, and can suggest different technologies to use for the process.

► WORKING WITH PRE-SERVICE EDUCATORS

Pre-service educators whose teaching careers are still nascent will often appreciate learning about the Américas Award and other book awards that recognize relevant and engaging multicultural literature for their classrooms. By becoming familiar with these awards and their lists of recognized titles, new teachers need not spend precious time on reviewing and evaluating the books they bring into their classroom. Although the ability to critically evaluate children's and young adult literature is a vital skill, practically speaking new teachers likely will not have the time to review each book that passes through their hands. By turning to area studies awards, that work is simplified for them.

One of the most effective ways to reach pre-service teachers and share information about the award is to disseminate materials through faculty, who may decide to include it as part of the official curriculum of their coursework. Outreach coordinators seeking to make this connection might reach out to faculty in nearby schools/colleges of education, community college education programs, and alternative licensure programs.



Programming Idea

Global Read Webinar

In 2018, CLASP co-sponsored a Global Read Webinar series in collaboration with other area children's book awards, including the Children's Africana Book Award (CABA), Middle East Book Award, and South Asia Book Award. The series featured free, monthly webinars that provided a space to interact with, pose questions, and learn firsthand from award-winning authors. All of the sessions featured authors whose works can prompt conversations about social justice in the classroom. Webinar participants came from across the country and included students from an evening College of Education class, along with students, teachers, and general fans. Now an annual spring series.

► BOOK GROUPS

Many educators who would be interested in using the Américas Award with their students are self-proclaimed bibliophiles. As avid readers, they often read a wide range of books with potential for classroom use. Outreach coordinators who want to work directly with teachers can connect with this love of reading by organizing a local book group featuring Américas Award novels for young adults. While not the typical genre for most adult book groups, culturally relevant young adult novels have two advantages that make them suitable in this setting: their content is generally compelling and inspiring, and their reading level simple enough to make them a quick read. Teachers, therefore, can commit to the story and its characters without sacrificing too many evening hours to read the book.



Programming Idea

Immigration in the Americas: Of Dividing Distance, Discrimination, and Dreamers

In 2017, CLASP sponsored Ruth Quiroa, former Américas Award committee member and associate professor of Reading & Language at National Louis University, to attend the annual National Council for the Teachers of English conference (NCTE) in St. Louis, MO. The presentation drew on Américas Award titles to discuss how Latinx stories written from the perspective of immigrant and refugee children can challenge privileged tendencies and attitudes that victimize or vilify the immigrant or refugee “other,” while also having the potential to present familiar narratives to immigrant youth.



Programming Idea

Vamos a Leer

Starting in 2014, the Latin American and Iberian Institute at The University of New Mexico began inviting teachers to participate in a monthly book group featuring young adult novels focused on Latin America and Latinx experiences. A core group of members attend every meeting, while other educators come as their interests align and time allows. Meetings are held at a local brewery, an informal space suited to the after-school time slot of 5:00–7:00 pm. Teachers, librarians, administrators, and LAll staff come together to share teaching experiences and discuss the book’s suitability for classroom use.

► PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

For many years, CLASP affiliates have presented on the Américas Award to librarians, educators, and others through professional conferences and meetings. This might involve organizing an exhibit booth with books displayed alongside accompanying curriculum and, at other times, might include facilitating panel presentations about how Américas Award titles can be used to develop specific themes in the classroom. In either case, outreach coordinators can directly oversee or deliver the content or, alternatively, invite classroom teachers to do so on their behalf, in which case it is helpful and courteous to subsidize registration or travel costs for the teachers. Below is a partial list of relevant conferences:

- American Library Association (ALA)
- Global Literature in Libraries Initiatives
- International Reading Association conference

- Latin American Studies Association (LASA)
- National Latino Children’s Literature Conference
- National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE)
- National Council for Social Studies Teachers (NCSS)
- REFORMA (National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking)
- Shenendoah University Children’s Literature Conference
- United States Board on Books for Young People (USSBBY)

► DIGITAL CONVERSATIONS

There is a rich and growing community of educators, librarians, publishers, authors, and illustrators engaged in the hard fight to enhance diversity among children’s literature. Many individuals in the community are focused explicitly on promoting Latinx narratives. Social media can offer engage with this community. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram are easy ways to connect with other like-minded and passionate individuals, as well as those who nuance the conversation and challenge representations – both important perspectives to have! Twitter, in particular, offers a powerful educational platform.



Programming Idea

[Goodreads](#)

Goodreads, a self-professed “social cataloging” system, is one of the world’s largest websites dedicated to readers and book recommendations. The website is driven by its active membership and serves as much more than a traditional catalog. In 2015, for example, faculty at National Louis University’s College of Education used Goodreads as part of a culminating project to assess diversity in children’s literature. Students in their course created a list of all Américas Award winners, honorable mentions, and commended titles using Goodreads’ “listopia” tool.

[Vamos a Leer Blog](#)

The Vamos a Leer blog, run by the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI) at the University of New Mexico, is another example of an online conversation space. Organized in conjunction with the LAI’s monthly, eponymously named book group, the blog is an open-access Wordpress site run by a team of graduate students and full- and part-time staff. It was created with the intention of compiling resources that teachers could access anywhere at any time, and to provide the space for national or even international dialogue. Most importantly, it aims to encourage educators to use great literature to create globally literate students, to engage in authentic discussions of culture, and to think about social justice issues. Regularly-posted content includes children’s book reviews in English and Spanish, reviews of young adult novels, curated bibliographies, and links to complementary teaching resources.

Those looking to become a part of these online conversations on Twitter and elsewhere might consider following key authors and illustrators as well as organizations such as We Need Diverse Books.

In addition to social media, blogs and other online communities are another rich source of material and conversation. Many individuals who are committed to this field are working in informal venues like these, making their voices heard against or apart from established venues.

Educators and outreach coordinators may find it valuable to connect using these various platforms. Consider joining the conversation using hashtags such as #ReadforChange, #ReadYourWorld, #WeNeedDiverseBooks, #DiverseVoices, #OwnVoices, #WorldStorytelling, #GlobalKidLit, and #WorldKidLit.

► PERMANENT AND TRAVELING COLLECTIONS

Outreach coordinators seeking to make the Américas Award collection more accessible to educators and community members should consider acquiring hard copies of the books. These books can be made available to local audiences or nation-wide. If the latter, shipping fees may need to be calculated as part of the library budget or passed on to the lendee.

While the idea of purchasing enough Américas Award titles to develop a collection may be prohibitive for many, there are a number of opportunities to apply for grant funding to buy children's books, including through organization such as the National Home Library Foundation, Build-A-Bear Workshop for Bear Hugs Foundation, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation,



Programming Idea

National Lending Libraries

The centers for Latin American Studies at Tulane University and Vanderbilt University both have extensive lending libraries of books and related resources. These materials are available with free shipping to educators and librarians across the country.

Local Lending Libraries

In response to teachers who were excited about using Américas Award books in the classroom but whose school libraries weren't able to purchase copies, the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI) at The University of New Mexico coordinates a local lending library for its nearby teachers (shipping not available). Classroom sets of 15 to 30 copies of both children's and young adult novels, though mostly the latter, are housed at the National Hispanic Cultural Center, a cultural pillar of the Albuquerque community, where they are managed by the Spanish Resource Center of Albuquerque.

Local Circulating Sets

In 2016, Maria Sheldon, a teacher with the Santa Fe Public School District in New Mexico (NM) who was at the time a member of the Américas Award Review Committee, worked with the Language and Culture Department of the NM Department of Education to acquire 5 sets of Américas Award titles to serve as circulating libraries among teachers in the district.

The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries, and the Snapdragon Book Foundation.

Apart from grant funding, schools and programs who serve communities in need are eligible to purchase books at a significantly discounted rate from the First Books Marketplace.

Teachers, librarians, and education and community engagement coordinators can collaborate on grant proposals or leverage shared budgets.

► TEACHER WORKSHOPS AND SUMMER INSTITUTES

Many outreach coordinators work for institutions of higher education, where their overarching mission is to foster a deeper understanding of Latin America and Latinx experiences. In this regard, it may not be enough to simply share Américas Award books. An alternative is to organize professional development workshops or summer institutes for teachers, where Américas Award books are paired with speakers who can address the cultural, historical, or political context of the featured book(s). These programs may be offered for credit or not-for-credit, for free or at a nominal cost, may be open to all educators, and/ or restricted to elementary, middle, or high school teachers.



More Info

- [First Books Marketplace](#), which makes books available at low cost to schools and teachers serving children in need.
- CLASP: [Complete list of Américas Award Winners, Honorable Mentions, and Commended Titles](#)
- International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY): [Guías de libros recomendados](#) (2007-present guides to award-winning books published in Latin America and Spain)



Programming Idea

Introduction to Children's Literature

The UW-Milwaukee Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies partners with its School of Education to integrate Américas commended titles into the basic Introduction to Children's Literature course, required for early childhood education majors and recommended for those in middle and secondary education. An Américas book is paired with the weekly genre topic; the online course sections are enhanced by flipbooks, required discussion posts, and an original screencast resource to introduce students to the books, their authors and illustrators, and the Latinx content.

Multicultural Literature and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The Latin American & Iberian Institute at The University of New Mexico collaborates with Central New Mexico Community College (CNM), where many of the state's newest teachers acquire their credentials through CNM's Alternative Teaching Licensure program (ATL). Staff from the LAII coordinate with CNM instructors to find time during ATL classes when they can visit campus and present on multicultural literature and culturally relevant pedagogy. Using the lens of Latinx children's and young adult literature, the evenings lead to discussions of student representation, empowerment, and native languages.

They may be offered over the weekend hours, during the school day, or in the evening during the week. They can last one day, a week, or be part of a semester-long series. They might include curriculum and classroom-strategies, or focus instead on peer-to-peer sharing and discussion. Authors and illustrators might take part in person or via teleconferencing services such as Skype, Zoom, or Google Hangout. Teachers may receive compensation for a substitute teacher or participate on their own time. Variations are countless, and will depend on the specifics needs and interests of the teachers being served.

► SOLICIT CURRICULUM

Inviting teachers to write curriculum on the Américas Award books is a great way to engage teachers in the award. Curriculum can be solicited by inviting specific teachers to write curriculum or running an open competition. Approaching a teacher whose work you know may be the best way to guarantee you receive a strong final product, as developing culturally-informed curriculum is no small feat. Such curriculum requires that the educator be versed in the cultural content and subject matter, and knowledgeable about how to develop curriculum that provides a pedagogical approach, learning objectives, and assessment strategies. Ideally, too, the curriculum will offer ways for other educators to adapt the content to their specific classroom and instructional needs. Alternatively, running a competition that requires applicants to peruse the Américas Award list has the added benefit of familiarizing more teachers with the award.

Thoughts to keep in mind when soliciting curriculum:

- Have clear objectives. If possible, provide examples of specific items that should be included in the curriculum (e.g., country or historical background information for teacher or student; essential learning objectives; alignment to national or state standards; resource lists; materials lists; citations; or bilingual activities/student sections).
- Depending on the goals of the curriculum project, it may be helpful to explicitly ask for engagement in the social studies content (cultural, historical, or social components of a text) in order to encourage teachers to delve deeper into themes of the books rather than just focusing on ELA skills (e.g. plot, characters, etc.).
- Stipends can vary greatly, depending on the length of the curriculum (e.g. a lesson plan or a module). \$200-\$750 is typical depending on what is asked of the teachers. Considerations include variation in the length, number of subject areas, how much editing/graphic design work is asked of the teacher, and if it is done in two languages to facilitate use in dual or ESL classrooms.



Programming Idea

LLILAS Benson Latin American Studies & Collections (LLILAS Benson) at The University of Texas regularly invites teachers to write curriculum on Américas Award books to encourage engagement with the books. In 2017, it held an Américas Award curriculum development competition and selected two teachers to create curriculum. One of the award recipients developed curriculum on Andy Carter's *Margarito's Forest* and a second on José Manuel Mateo's *Migrant*. In 2018, LLILAS Benson asked a local teacher who worked with the institute previously to write a curriculum unit using Duncan Tonatiuh's books in celebration of winning the 2018 Américas Award for his book *Danza!* and to accompany his visit to Austin.

- Make a rough draft deadline and a final deadline, planning on time for the teacher to incorporate suggested edits. Plan on having to do more editing in-house to have it in a publishable format. For many teachers, the summer is the best time for curriculum writing and holding to a deadline before they return to school is ideal.
- If running a competition, possible advertising options are: Colleges of Education (especially bilingual programs); the CLASP listserv; local outreach listservs and social media sites; district or school ELA/Social Studies coordinators; and bilingual teacher associations (they usually exist at university, local, and state levels).



[A Missing Piece of History: Afro-Latinos in the Elementary Curriculum](#)

This workshop looked at Afro-Latino history and culture and how to integrate Afro-Latinos in teaching through the presentation of a curriculum unit (by Dr. Chris Busey and Melissa Adams) that weaves Afro-Latino history and culture into literature, social studies, and math lessons. The workshop was organized in 2017 by the Teresa Lozano Long Institute for Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

[From Trash to Triumph: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay](#)

This workshop brought together teachers from across central Tennessee to watch and discuss the documentary film *Landfill Harmonic*, the true story of the recycled children's orchestra of Paraguay. Alongside the movie, participants also discussed Américas Award winner *Ada's Violin*, a children's book based on the same true story. The workshop was organized in 2017 by the Center for Latin American Studies at Vanderbilt University.

[Modern Codex](#)

This workshop featured award-winning author Duncan Tonatiuh as he shared with teachers his journey to become an author and illustrator of children's books. Tonatiuh gave a reading and discussed his inspiration in the ancient art of Latin America to create books that are relevant to children, and in particular Latino children, and highlighted how children's books can address topics such as social justice, history, and art. The workshop was organized in 2016 by the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Utah.

Civil Rights through the Américas Award

Each year, CLASP partners come together to organize a teacher workshop in conjunction with the Américas Award ceremony. The two events are held annually during Hispanic Heritage Month in Washington, DC. In 2015, the teacher workshop focused on civil rights and featured award-winning authors Margarita Engle and Duncan Tonatiuh, who spoke respectively about *Silver People: Voices from the Panama Canal* and *Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation*. Teaching for Change, a DC-based nonprofit focused on "building social justice, starting in the classroom," co-sponsored the evening, with Executive Director Deborah Menkart speaking on "Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching."

Teaching Latin America through Award Winning Children's Literature

This summer institute introduced participants to award winning titles in children's literature that focus on themes within Latin American Studies such as history, non-fiction, and the experiences of Latinas/os in the United States. Resources and strategies on how to incorporate these award winning titles into the classroom were highlighted, and participants had the opportunity to develop lesson plans and strategize how to implement children's literature into their curriculum. The institute was organized by Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Utah.

DIVERSIFYING LITERATURE AND STRENGTHENING LITERACY WITHIN COMMUNITIES

HANIA MARIËN, COLLEEN MCCOY, KEIRA PHILIPP-SCHNURER, DENISE WOLTERING-VARGAS

Getting to know the community is a key part of any educator's job. Some may approach it by learning about and honoring the lived experiences of the youth with whom they work; others may focus on bringing in outside perspectives and new knowledge. Regardless of the path, educators will find that books are a valuable tool in building bridges within and between communities. Alongside fostering a love of reading and the desire to read the world, community-engaged educators can strengthen the literacy capacity of the community both by acknowledging institutional barriers that may make it difficult for youth and their families to pursue reading and by fostering a love of reading. The following strategies can help with this.

► COMMUNITY READING CHALLENGE : READ THE AMÉRICAS

Hold a community reading challenge to encourage literacy and global awareness. Invite youth and families to explore the broader shared heritage of the Américas through a "Read the Americas" challenge.

The resources included at the end of this guide include a map that can be printed and shared with students and families alike, along with a sample list of countries and books to get started on the challenge. The books listed for the challenge include titles drawn from the Américas Award and beyond. Youth (in the classroom as well as the community) might be encouraged to color in the countries and keep a running list of titles as they read them.

It should be noted that this guide actively avoids the idea of a "passport" program that would give stickers or stamps to youth and their families. While this is a relatively common activity within multicultural or global/international-focused outreach programs, it is particularly problematic when working with communities with immigrant ties – such as within many Latinx communities. Invoking the language of passports invites references to immigration, documentation, and government policies. It can act as a trigger for individuals who have either personally experienced, witnessed, heard about, or otherwise been impacted by forced deportations, family separation, undocumented crossing, or other proceedings.

Also, while every effort has been made to include books for each country, some countries have been omitted for lack of resources. The vast majority of books included in the map were produced by Américas Award authors and illustrators. These limitations can be used to prompt participants to respond to questions such as: Whose stories are included here? Why are some stories missing? Whose stories would you like to have read about? What else would you like to know about this place and its people? Might you be the person to write the story about a place that's missing?

► COMMUNITY STORY WALK

Host a story walk, an outdoor experience that can bring a book to life for an individual or whole family or class. To put together a story walk, find a book that offers compelling, positive representations. Negative representations that may serve as triggers should be avoided at all costs, as the content will be shared publicly where anyone may encounter it without warning.



Programming Idea

[Drum Dream Girl Story Walk: A Literary Stroll Around My Neighborhood](#)

In 2015, Boston librarian Sujei Lugo created a story walk through her neighborhood by featuring the children's book, *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music*, written by Margarita Engle and illustrated by Rafael Lopez. The project fostered literacy among neighborhood residents and helped to bridge the physical area between a library, youth community center, and businesses.

Points for consideration: Who makes up the community? How could a story walk bring different cultural groups in the community together? What organizations or community groups might be represented by choosing a specific story?

In essence, a story walk involves taking different pages from the book, copying them, laminating them, and spacing them out around a path. The path might wander around a single building or might involve multiple

homes or businesses in the area. The latter is preferable, as it encourages greater participation by other residents who might want to become involved in the effort.

Beforehand, the story walk coordinator is responsible for selecting the book and preparing the materials that will go around the path, as well as contacting all building owners to receive appropriate permissions and, hopefully, get their active help with promotion. The pages that will be displayed around town can be cut directly from the book and mounted on cardboard or,

alternatively, copied and mounted. The former might look more vivid; the latter conserves resources. Each page should include citation information about the title, author, and illustrator, along with notes about the story walk's partners in the community. Once the story is mapped, the coordinator should create a map that locates each page of the book (by number, so participants can go in order) and by street address. This is also a nice opportunity to more fully acknowledge the community partners who support the project. Finally, the coordinator should pick a day for the community to participate, and announce that date ahead of time.

On the day of the event, have a central meeting place such as the local library where participants can pick up a map to guide their explorations. Provide a space where individuals and families can come back together to



More Info

[StoryWalk Project](#) created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT

Boston Children's Museum: [Resources to help create a storywalk](#)

Vermont Libraries: [Bringing StoryWalk to Your Community](#)

share their experiences, perhaps through a communal art project or art station where reflective pictures and words can be put on paper and displayed afterward.

► ORAL STORYTELLING NIGHT

The Americas have a rich oral storytelling tradition – from folktales and legends to proverbs and songs. In fact, oral storytelling is such an integral part of Latin American cultures that the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking (REFORMA) has launched a literacy initiative called [Noche de Cuentos/A Night of Stories](#), to “promote and preserve the art of storytelling within our Latino communities in the U.S.” REFORMA’s Noche de Cuentos is held annually during the week of the Spring equinox, March 18–25, in conjunction with World Storytelling Day.

Oral storytelling is more than an *Habia una vez tradition*; it continues today. In his 2018 publication, *Latino/a Children’s and Young Adult Writers on the Art of Storytelling*, Frederick Luis Aldama’s observes that the majority of the Latino/a authors whom he interviewed came to their profession after “listening to stories as children that magically transported them out of their present moment; it was the engagement with oral storytelling in the family that whet appetites to become artists and authors. And these stories went anywhere and everywhere: from past lives in lost homelands to myths and legends” (p. 6).

Inspired by REFORMA, libraries can honor their own communities’ storytelling traditions by hosting an event that elevates spoken stories alongside or above the written word. Such an event would present an opportunity to build appreciation for oral storytelling and strengthen multigenerational ties. It would also acknowledge and honor different forms of knowledge and information sharing. These are all important aspects to keep in mind, particularly for communities whose stories and histories are often omitted from books and other media.



More Info

- REFORMA: [Noche de Cuentos/ A Night of Stories](#)

For further reading about oral storytelling in Latin America:

- The Latino Family Literacy Project: [The Oral Traditions of Hispanics](#)

For further reading and ideas about using poetry and oral language enrichment activities with English Language Learners:

- Colorín Colorado: [Introducing Reading and Poetry with English Language Learners](#)
- Colorín Colorado: [Reader’s Theater: Oral Language Enrichment and Literacy Development for ELLs](#)
- Colorín Colorado: [Writing Poetry with English Language Learners](#)

An evening celebrating spoken storytelling could involve group discussions about the significance and variations of oral storytelling (novels-in-verse and slam poetry being only two examples), and the importance of storytelling as a whole. How are histories shared? Who has the power and privilege to convey histories? Whose histories are heard by others? To go beyond conversation and invite action, youth and families might be provided with different materials to help them share their own stories. The event coordinator could invite them

to tell a story to each other, share a story and write it down, depict it through drawings, create puppets, act out the story, interview family members, etc. Family members and other participants should be encouraged to speak in the language with which they are most comfortable and to share their story only as they like; no one should be pressured to participate or should feel that one language or format is preferred above another. Celebrating different forms and expressions of knowledge is key to this event.

► SELF REPRESENTATION EXHIBIT

One of the most gratifying ways to ensure that all members of a community feel welcomed and respected is to invite them to submit their own representations of self – written or drawn or photographed. Hold a contest, or open call, that invites patrons/community members to share why Latinx histories matter. Include other cultures relevant to the community. Perhaps the theme is “Why I Matter” or “Why My Culture Matters,” which would invite more responses. Posing the exhibit around a question like this will help ensure that the submissions not only affirm identity, but also encourage conversation.



Programming Idea

We Need Diverse Books Social Media Campaign

In 2014, We Need Diverse Books, at the time a social movement and now a nonprofit organization, ran a visual social media campaign to prompt “a public call for action that will spread over 3 days” which asked people to: “take a photo holding a sign that says ‘We need diverse books because _____.’ Fill in the blank with an important, poignant, funny, and/or personal reason why this campaign is important to you. The photo can be of you or a friend or anyone who wants to support diversity.

► REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE

The concept of recycling is important within Latin American and Caribbean countries, where consumerism is less commonplace and many individuals have access to fewer resources to meet basic needs. Recycling in these settings takes on a different connotation than it does in the US, where it is largely viewed as an act of environmental conservation rather than survival. Moreover, in the US, individuals who recycle are often those in positions of privilege. Recycling requires time to sort and separate, a hardship upon those working multiple jobs. Other recycling requires not only sorting, but also driving to a separate location, which involves additional transportation costs on top of time.

Yet in countries where resources are particularly scarce, recycling is more personal and critical. Many Cubans, for instance, have impeccably maintained cars for over 50 years in the face of the US embargo, given that it has been nigh impossible to import new vehicles. While in Paraguay, low-income urban residents may resort to recycling and selling materials gathered from landfills at the city’s edge.

Finally, it’s important to acknowledge that many Indigenous cultures across the Americas consider the Earth and its resources sacred. For individuals in these cultures, the act of reducing, reusing, and recycling may involve more than environmental or economic concerns. In *Agua, Aguita*, for instance, the experience of water

and the importance of water is shared in three languages (Spanish, English, and Nahuatl).

To encourage discussion around reducing, reusing, and recycling, a program coordinator could display some of the Américas Award titles referenced above in a public venue and organize a trash pick-up day around the school or neighborhood. After the pick-up day, a creation station could be provided for students and parents to make something out of typical trash pieces, such as bottle caps, cans, etc. The materials used in the station should be acquired ahead of time, cleaned, and prepared.

Exercises using recycled materials are endless, and encourage youth to think about the stories behind objects. Very young children to high school students can take part in these events.

The activity could be further deepened by inviting participants to think about a need or issue in their own community, and how recycling or recycled objects could help them overcome it.

► LOCAL LIBRARIES AND LOCAL BRANCHES OF THE CENTER FOR THE BOOK

Libraries are the focal point of literacy and literature for their communities, and thus are positioned to provide meaningful collaborations around literacy initiatives. Public libraries and school libraries alike are gatekeepers of knowledge and can help ensure that culturally representative literature, like the books recognized by the Américas Award, reaches the hands of young readers who most want, and deserve, to read it.

Partnership activities between outreach coordinators and educators alongside public libraries, school libraries, and college libraries, can take many forms. They might evolve into lending library partnerships for unusual resources such as traveling suitcases, evening youth and family events, author visits, art exhibits, or story walks, among others.

The Center for the Book at the Library of Congress has a central location in Washington, DC, and branch locations in most major cities. It promotes books and libraries, literacy and reading, and poetry and literature, with programs that include a diverse range of events, series, lectures, partnerships, prizes, contests, and awards. Branch locations are often interested in collaborative partnerships that support programming at the local level.



More Info

- [Center for the Book](#)
- [Center for the Book State Affiliates](#)



Programming Idea

Cross-Campus and Community Programming

The work of Tulane University provides a good example of such a collaboration. In 2004, the university established a partnership with the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL), establishing a special collection of books on Latin America for the public in a NOPL branch. Since 2004, the collaboration has grown and now includes bilingual book readings by international immersion schools, family nights, and after school programs across all nine branches. A local charter school, Lyceé Français, held an after school performance of folktales from Haiti in French, and International School of Louisiana, another charter school, has hosted professional development for Spanish educators utilizing the books in the collection. The collected books represent Latin America and Latino culture, with many highlighted by the Américas Award. The collaboration has supported learning and literacy among children and their families as they explore the Américas through books.

RESOURCES

The following resources have been selected with attention paid to their critical lens, open-access availability, and usefulness to the classroom.

▶ LATIN AMERICA-RELATED CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES

- [Colorín Colorado](#)

A national multimedia project that offers bilingual, research-based information, activities, and advice for educators and families of English language learners (ELLs), Colorín Colorado is an educational service of WETA, the flagship public broadcasting station in DC.

- [Consortium for Latin American Studies Programs \(CLASP\) K-12 Resources](#)

CLASP promotes all facets of Latin American studies nationwide by fostering global competency, language proficiency, and cultural awareness of Latin America and the Caribbean. To serve K-12 educators, CLASP coordinates the Américas Award, compiles high-quality curricula and syllabi, promotes national lending library programs, highlights relevant professional development, and recognizes exemplary teaching with an biennial educator's award.

- [International Social Studies](#)

This site is run by and provides information on university outreach programs focused on international content, including US Department of Education Title VI National Resource Centers that provide K-12 teaching resources to internationalize classroom curriculum.

- [Rethinking Schools](#)

Begun as a local effort to address problems such as basal readers, standardized testing, and textbook-dominated curriculum, Rethinking Schools has since grown into a nationally prominent publisher of educational materials committed to equity and to the vision that public education is central to the creation of a humane, caring, multiracial democracy. An open-access blog and selective free curriculum resources complement a subscription-based magazine and numerous educational guides available for purchase.

- [Southern Poverty Law Center \(SPLC\) Teaching Tolerance](#)

SPLC's Teaching Tolerance project combats prejudice among our nation's youth while promoting equality, inclusiveness and equitable learning environments in the classroom. Its materials include an array of anti-bias resources that are distributed free of charge to educators across the country, including award-winning classroom documentaries, lesson plans and curricula, the Teaching Tolerance magazine, and more.

- [Teaching for Change](#)

Teaching for Change provides teachers and parents with the tools to create schools where students learn to read, write, and change the world. By drawing direct connections to real world issues, Teaching for Change encourages teachers and students to question and rethink the world inside and outside their classrooms, build a more equitable, multicultural society, and become active global citizens. Particularly relevant for teaching Latinx content is their open-access initiative focused on "Teaching Central America."

► [GUIDELINES TO EVALUATE LATINX AND OTHER DIVERSE LITERATURE](#)

- [De Colores: The Raza Experience in Books for Children: Enseñando Respeto / Teaching Respect](#)
- [De Colores: The Raza Experience in Books for Children: How to Tell the Difference: A Guide for Evaluating Children's Books for Honest Portrayals of Raza Peoples](#)
- [Lee & Low Books: Classroom Library Assessment – How Culturally Responsive Is Your Library?](#)
- [Teaching for Change: Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children's Books](#)

► [GLOBAL AND DIVERSE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE RESOURCES](#)

- [American Indians in Children's Literature \(AICL\)](#)
[Founded in 2006 by Dr. Debbie Reese, a Nambe Pueblo Indian woman, this blog publishes critical perspectives and analyses of indigenous peoples in children's and young adult books, the school curriculum, popular culture, and society.](#)
- [Anansem: The Caribbean Children's Literature Ezine](#)
[Founded in 2010 to encourage the writing and illustration of Caribbean literature for and by young people, Anansem is an online magazine that highlights writing by both new and established writers. It fosters a vibrant community around Caribbean children's books and broadens public, literary, and artistic awareness, and critical appreciation of Caribbean children's literature.](#)
- [Children's Book Council \(CBC\) Diversity Committee](#)
[The CBC Diversity initiative was founded in 2012 as part of the Children's Book Council's commitment to promoting diverse voices in literature for young people. CBC believes that all children deserve to see their world reflected in the books they read, and recognizes that diversity takes on many forms, including differences in race, religion, gender, geography, sexual orientation, class, and ability. Its Goodreads bookshelves compile diverse booklists by theme.](#)
- [Cooperative Children's Book Center \(CCBC\) Multicultural Literature Resources](#)
[The CCBC regularly compiles statistics and curates booklists and biographies of children's and young adult books by and about people of color and First/Nation Nations.](#)
- [De Colores: The Raza Experience in Books for Children](#)
[Modeled after the award-winning A Broken Flute: The Native Experience in Books for Children, De Colores reviews and critiques children's and young adult books about Raza peoples throughout the Diaspora.](#)
- [International Board on Books for Young People \(IBBY\)](#)
[This non-profit organization represents an international network of people from all over the world who are committed to bringing books and children together. Its international reading lists and awards highlight exemplary literature worldwide.](#)
- [Latinxs in Kid Lit](#)
[This blog engages with children's and YA works about, for, and/or by Latinxs so as to promote literacy and love of books within the Latinx community, examine the historical and contemporary state of Latinx characters, encourage interest in these books among non-Latinx readers, and share useful resources among a wide array of stakeholders.](#)

- [TeachingBooks.Net](#)
[TeachingBooks.net](#) identifies and compiles resources for anyone who reads, teaches, or enjoys books for children and teens. Its services primarily support those in K-12, university, and public library settings. While many of its resources require a subscription, a user can still peruse titles and materials to see relevant items. Its *Américas Award*, *Pura Belpré*, and *Tomás Rivera* collections are particularly helpful when seeking *Latinx literature*.
- [Teaching for Change Social Justice Booklists](#)
Social Justice Booklists is a project of Teaching for Change, a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide teachers and parents with the tools to create schools where students learn to read, write, and change the world. With this initiative, Teaching for Change provides a social justice lens to reviews of children's literature and selects exemplary books for reviews and lists.
- [Vamos a Leer: Teaching Latin America through Literature \(and Literacy\)](#)
Overseen by the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAll) at The University of New Mexico, this blog supports K-12 teaching about Latin America by providing literature- and literacy-focused resources to educators, including lesson plans, author and book suggestions, and related materials.
- [We Need Diverse Books \(WNDB\)](#).
At first a grassroots social movement and now a non-profit comprised of authors, illustrators, publishers, librarians, and others, WNDB advocates essential changes in the publishing industry to produce and promote literature that reflects and honors the lives of all young people. From its programs to support fledgling creators to resources for educators, the organization provides a plethora of resources for accessing and promoting diverse literature for youth.
- [We the People Reading List](#)
Run by the We Are Kidlit Collective, this initiative critically curates summer reading lists of titles that recognize the humanity of Indigenous and People of Color (IPOC) in youth literature, with a focus on social justice, equity, and inclusion.

► CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT BOOK AWARDS

Note that the following book awards all make bibliographies available for current and past award winners.

- [Américas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature](#)
- [Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature](#)
- [Children's Africana Book Awards \(CABA\)](#)
- [Middle East Book Award](#)
- [CODE Burt Award for Caribbean Young Adult Literature Caribbean](#)
- [International Board on Books for Young People \(IBBY\):](#)
- [International Latino Book Awards](#)
- [Pura Belpré Award](#)
- [South Asia Book Award](#)

- [Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award](#)

- ▶ **SELECTED SCHOLARSHIP ON GLOBAL AND DIVERSE YOUTH LITERATURE***
- Ada, Alma Flor (2016). *A Magical Encounter: Latino Children's Literature in the Classroom*. Transformative Education Service.
- Sims Bishop, Rudine (2007). *Free Within Ourselves: The Development of African American Children's Literature*. Heinemann.
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*for additional relevant readings, see Naidoo's bibliography in *Celebrating Cuentos*.

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APPENDICES

- RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE
- STUDENT HANDOUT: READ ACROSS THE AMÉRICAS
(student map, student list, and suggested bibliography)
- AMÉRICAS AWARD CALENDAR
- BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AMÉRICAS AWARD WINNERS AND HONORABLE MENTIONS, 1993-2018
(for an interactive browsing experience, also see the [Américas Award shelf on Goodreads](#))

RUBRIC TO EVALUATE LITERATURE

Summary	What is the setting of the story? Who are the main characters?
Agency	What causes conflict and how is it resolved? Which characters change? Which ones do not? Why? Who makes the decisions? Who follows orders? Who speaks and who is silent or silenced? Whose interests are served? That is, who is privileged by the story? Does the problem get resolved by assimilating to social norms? Whose broad social interests are served? (i.e. social groups)
Representations	What roles are given to women, people of color, the working class and poor, and the differently abled? Is this problematic? Explain. What roles are given to characters representing dominant groups? Are they shown as being made aware of their privilege and exclusionary practices? Is this problematic? Explain.
Culture	Which areas of the world are illustrated? Which peoples? Are the regions homogenized (i.e. does the book discuss Latin America or Columbia? Africa or Sierra Leone?) Are the people's loosely culturally referenced or specifically identified? (e.g., Native American versus Cherokee)? Does the text resist romanticizing or stereotyping culture and people?
Language	Does the book mock language, with an over emphasis on accent or purposeful errors in grammar or syntax? Is the dialogue forced and clunky, with literal Spanish phrases immediately followed by faulty English translations that are clumsy and confusing to Spanish-speaking children?
Purpose	What could this book help students understand? What are the limitations of this book? What could the teacher do to move beyond the limitations of the text?

READ across the AMÉRICAS



NORTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

- 1 United States
- 2 Mexico
- 3 Belize
- 4 Costa Rica
- 5 El Salvador
- 6 Guatemala
- 7 Honduras
- 8 Nicaragua
- 9 Panama

CARIBBEAN

- 10 Cuba
- 11 Dominican Republic
- 12 Haiti
- 13 Jamaica
- 14 Puerto Rico

SOUTH AMERICA

- 15 Argentina
- 16 Bolivia
- 17 Brazil
- 18 Chile
- 19 Colombia
- 20 Ecuador
- 21 Paraguay
- 22 Peru
- 23 Uruguay
- 24 Venezuela



Read Across the Américas

Name: _____

North and Central America

United States	_____ (title)	by _____ (author)
Mexico	_____	by _____
Belize	_____	by _____
Costa Rica	_____	by _____
El Salvador	_____	by _____
Honduras	_____	by _____
Nicaragua	_____	by _____
Panama	_____	by _____

Caribbean

Cuba	_____	by _____
Haiti	_____	by _____
Dominican Republic	_____	by _____
Jamaica	_____	by _____
Puerto Rico	_____	by _____

South America

Colombia	_____	by _____
Venezuela	_____	by _____
Ecuador	_____	by _____
Peru	_____	by _____
Bolivia	_____	by _____
Brazil	_____	by _____
Uruguay	_____	by _____
Chile	_____	by _____
Argentina	_____	by _____
Paraguay	_____	by _____

Read Across the Américas

- suggested books for an elementary school reading challenge -

North and Central America

United States	<i>Calling the Doves / El canto de las palomas</i> written by Juan Felipe Herrera and illustrated by Elly Simmons
Mexico	<i>Danza! Amalia Hernández and Mexico's Folkloric Ballet</i> written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh
Belize	N/A
Costa Rica	<i>Fernando's Gift</i> written by Douglas Keister
El Salvador	<i>A Movie in My Pillow</i> written by Jorge Argueta and illustrated by Elizabeth Gomez
Guatemala	<i>Abuela's Weave</i> written by Omar S. Castañeda and illustrated by Enrique O. Sánchez
Honduras	<i>Max Loves Muñecas</i> written by Zetta Elliot*
Nicaragua	<i>Rubén Darío</i> written by Georgina Lázaro and illustrated by Lonnie Ruiz
Panama	<i>Grannie Jus' Come</i> written by Ana Sisnett and illustrated by Karen Lusebrink

Caribbean

Cuba	<i>All the Way to Havana</i> written by Margarita Engle and illustrated by Mike Curato
Haiti	<i>Eight Days: A Story of Haiti</i> written by Edwidge Danticat and illustrated by Alix Delinois
D.R.	<i>The Best Gift of All: The Legend of the Vieja Belén</i> written by Julia Alvarez and illustrated by Ruddy Núñez
Jamaica	<i>J is for Jamaica</i> written by Benjamin Zephaniah*
Puerto Rico	<i>Parrots Over Puerto Rico</i> written by Susan Roth and illustrated by Cindy Trumbore

South America

Colombia	<i>Biblioburro</i> written and illustrated by Jeanette Winter
Venezuela	<i>The Streets Are Free</i> written by Karusa and illustrated by Monica Doppert*
Ecuador	<i>Roses for Isabella</i> written by Diana Cohn and illustrated by Amy Córdova*
Peru	<i>Maria Had a Little Lamb</i> written and illustrated by Angela Dominguez
Bolivia	N/A
Brazil	<i>Pelé, King of Soccer</i> written by Monica Brown and illustrated by Rudy Gutierrez
Uruguay	N/A
Chile	<i>Pablo Neruda: Poet of the People</i> written by Monica Brown and illustrated by Julie Paschkis
Argentina	<i>Jorge Luis Borges</i> written by Georgina Lázaro and illustrated by Graciela Genoves
Paraguay	<i>Ada's Violin</i> written by Susan Hood and illustrated by Sally Wern Comport

*Indicates a book not recognized by the Américas Award.

TEACHING THE AMÉRICAS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

JANUARY

January 9	Birthday – Rigoberta Menchú
January 15	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 18	Birthday – Ruben Dario
January 27	Multicultural Children’s Book Day
January 28	Birthday – José Martí

FEBRUARY

February 20	World Day of Social Justice (UNESCO)
February 21	International Mother Language Day (UNESCO)

MARCH

March	Women’s History Month
March	Read Across America Day
March	Music in Our Schools
March 3	World Wildlife Day (UNESCO)
March 8	International Women’s Day (UNESCO)
March 18	Successful ruling in Mendez v. Westminster case
March 20	International Day of Happiness
March 20	World Storytelling Day
March 21	World Poetry Day (UNESCO)
March 24–31	Farmworkers Awareness Week
MARCH 31	César Chávez Day

APRIL

April	National Poetry Month
April	Library Week
April 2	World Autism Awareness Day (UNESCO)
April 10	Birthday – Dolores Huerta
April 22	International Mother Earth Day (UNESCO)
April 23	Spanish Language Day (UNESCO)
April 30	Día del Niño/del Libro

MAY

May	Mother’s Day
May	Jewish American Heritage Month
May	Haitian Heritage Month
May 12	World Migratory Bird Day (UNESCO)

JUNE

June	Caribbean Heritage Month
June	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month

JULY

July 6	Birthday – Frida Kahlo
July 1	Birthday – Pablo Neruda

AUGUST

August 9	International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples (UNESCO)
August 12	International Youth Day (UNESCO)
August 19	World Humanitarian Day (UNESCO)

SEPTEMBER

September	World Kid Lit Month
September 3	Labor Day
September 8	International Literacy Day
Sept. 15 – Oct. 15	Hispanic Heritage Month
September 16	Independence Day in Mexico
September 19	Birthday – Amalia Hernández

OCTOBER

October 2	Indigenous People’s Day (formerly Columbus Day)
October 16	World Food Day (UNESCO)

NOVEMBER

November 2–3	Día de los Muertos
November 13–17	International Education Week
November 20	Universal Children’s Day (UNESCO)

DECEMBER

December	Winter Celebrations
December 8	Birthday – Diego Rivera
December 18	International Migrants Day
December 22	Birthday – Tomás Rivera

TEACHING THE AMÉRICAS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

JANUARY

January 9 Birthday – Rigoberta Menchú

Encourage students to start the year inspired to become changemakers by sharing books written by this Nobel-prize winning human rights activist.

- ▶ *The Honey Jar and The Secret Legacy* written by Rigoberta Menchú and illustrated by Domi (Groundwood Books) (Middle)



January 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Falling on the third Monday of January, this national day of remembrance is held to honor one of our nation's foremost civil rights heroes. Commemorate his life's work by highlighting other civil rights achievements.

- ▶ *Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and her Family's Fight for Desegregation* written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh (Harry N. Abrams) (Elementary/Middle)
- ▶ *Silver People* written by Margarita Engle (HMH Books) (Middle)



January 18 Birthday – Rubén Darío

Celebrate poetry and Central American culture by reading the biographical children's book about this famous Nicaraguan poet, paired with curriculum and related resources from the Teaching Central America website.

- ▶ *Rubén Darío* written by Georgina Lazaro and illustrated by Lonnie Ruiz (Lectorum) (Elementary)

January 27 Multicultural Children's Book Day

Encourage students to #readtheworld by selecting books from across the breadth of the Américas to highlight the shared experiences and differences across the region.



January 28 Birthday – José Martí

Prompt discussions about the history of conquest, colonization, and Latin America's history of fighting for independence by sharing the biography of this beloved Cuban writer, philosopher, and martyr.

- ▶ *Martí's Song for Freedom / Martí y sus versos por la libertad* written and illustrated by Emma Otheguy (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary/Middle)

FEBRUARY



February Black History Month

Celebrate the Black Diaspora across the Américas with books that highlight strong, moving, and empowering protagonists of color across different countries.

- ▶ *American Street* written by Ibi Zoboi (Balzer+Bray/HC) (High)
- ▶ *Drummer Boy of John John* written by Mark Greenwood and illustrated by Frané Lessac (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Dahlia's Wondrous Hair* written and illustrated by Laura Lacámara (Arte Público Press) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Radiant Child* written and illustrated by Javaka Steptoe (Hachette Book Group) (Elementary/Middle)



February 2 Birthday – Pura Belpré

Honor the life of Puerto Rican librarian and writer Pura Belpré, whose groundbreaking Spanish-language programming in mid-20th century New York brought a love of language and books to many Spanish-speaking families who were otherwise excluded from the public library setting.

- ▶ *The Storyteller's Candle / La velita de los cuentos* written by Lucía González and illustrated by Lulu Delacre (Groundwood Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré* written by Anika Aldamuy Denise and illustrated by Paola Escobar (HarperCollins) (Elementary)

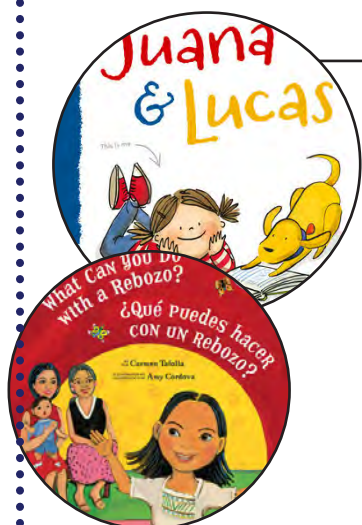


February 20 World Day of Social Justice (UNESCO)

UNESCO has declared this a day for focusing on social justice, or what they define as “an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations,” noting that “we advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.” Explore the importance of this date by featuring books whose protagonists fight for rights across a spectrum of issues.

- ▶ *The Dreamer / El soñador* written by Pam Muñoz Ryan and illustrated by Peter Sís (Scholastic) (Middle)
- ▶ *The Composition* written by Antonio Skarmeta and illustrated by Alfonso Ruano (Groundwood Books) (Elementary/Middle)
- ▶ *Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass / Yaqui Delgado quiere darte una paliza* written by Meg Medina (Candlewick) (Middle/High)
- ▶ *The Surrender Tree / El árbol de la rendición* written by Margarita Engle (Square Fish) (Middle/High)





February 21 International Mother Language Day (UNESCO)

UNESCO declared this day in 2000 “to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism” in recognition of how “languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage” around the world, and how many languages disappear each year. Feature books with multilingual protagonists and texts to inspire students to honor the languages they speak at home and other languages spoken around the world.

- ▶ *Juana y Lucas* written by Juana Medina (Penguin Random House/andlewick) (Elementary/Middle)
- ▶ *A Movie in My Pillow / Una película en mi almohada* written by Jorge Argueta and illustrated by Elizabeth Gómez (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *What Can You Do with a Rebozo? / ¿Qué puedes hacer con un rebozo?* written by Carmen Tafolla and illustrated by Amy Córdova (Tricycle Press) (Elementary)

MARCH

March Women’s History Month

Celebrate women near and far, in roles formal and informal.

- ▶ *The Distance Between Us / La distancia entre nosotras* written by Reyna Grande (Aladdin) (Middle/High)
- ▶ *Drum Dream Girl* written by Margarita Engle and illustrated by Rafael López (HMH Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *The Queen of Water* by Laura Resau and María Virginia Farinango (Ember) (High)
- ▶ *Celia Cruz: Queen of Salsa* written by Veronica Chambers and illustrated by Julie Maren (Puffin Books) (Elementary)



March Music in Our Schools Month

Join the National Association for Music Education as they put music education foremost in the classroom in schools across the country, emphasizing the importance of music and the need for all students to have access to it.

- ▶ *Finding the Music / En pos de la música* written by Jennifer Torres and illustrated by Renato Alarcão (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *The First Rule of Punk* by Celia C. Pérez (Penguin Random House) (Middle/High)

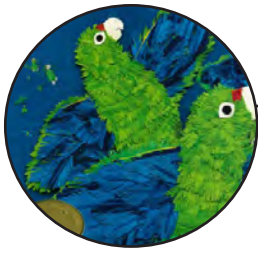


March 2 National Read Across America Day

Join the National Education Associate in their “annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading through our theme: Celebrating a Nation of Diverse Readers. Many schools and libraries celebrate with an annual event on March 2, the birthday of children’s author Dr. Seuss,” but the program emphasizes year-long activities. For this particular day, consider choosing books that offer celebratory stories of diverse protagonists.

- ▶ *Marisol McDonald Doesn’t Match / Marisol McDonald no combina* written by Monica Brown and illustrated by Sara Palacios (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary)





March 3 World Wildlife Day

Share the United Nations' World Wildlife Day with students by finding books that explore the interconnected web of animals and plants throughout the world and discuss the need for sustainable development.

- ▶ *Parrots Over Puerto Rico* written by Susan L. Roth and Cindy Trumbore, and illustrated by Susan L. Roth (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary/Middle)

March 18 Successful Ruling in the Case of Mendez v. Westminster

Expand students' understanding of the history of desegregation in the United States by sharing the story behind this landmark civil rights achievement.

- ▶ *Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and her Family's Fight for Desegregation* written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh (Harry N. Abrams) (Elementary/Middle)



March 20 International Day of Happiness

Use the #InternationalDayofHappiness as an opportunity to highlight diverse books that move beyond stories of historical and personal trauma, sharing instead books with diverse protagonists whose narratives are uplifting and positive.

- ▶ *Malaika's Costume* written by Nadia L. Hohn and illustrated by Irene Luxbacher (Groundwood Books) (Elementary/Middle)
- ▶ *Elena's Serenade* written by Campbell Gleeson and illustrated by Ana Juan (Simon and Schuster) (Elementary)



March 25-31 National Farmworker Awareness Week (NFAW)

National Farmworker Awareness Week (NFAW) is "a week of action for students and community members to raise awareness about farmworker issues on our campuses and in our communities." As NFAW points out, "farmworkers feed the world," and their history and ongoing struggles for labor rights should be acknowledged and supported.

- ▶ *Calling the Doves* written by Juan Felipe Herrera and illustrated by Elly Simmons (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Esperanza Rising / Esperanza renace* written by Pam Muñoz Ryan (Scholastic) (Middle)
- ▶ *Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English* written by Alma Flor Ada and illustrated by Simon Silva (Harper Collins) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Side by Side: The Story of Dolores Huerta and César Chávez / Lado a lado: La historia de Dolores Huerta y César Chávez* written by Monica Brown and illustrated by Joe Cepeda (Harper Collins) (Elementary)
- ▶ *That's Not Fair! Emma Tenayuca's Struggle for Justice / ¡No es justo! La lucha de Emma Tenayuca por la justicia* written by Carmen Tafolla and Sharyll Tenayuca and illustrated by Terry Ybanez (Wings Press) (Elementary/Middle)



APRIL

April

National Poetry Month

Follow the lead of the Academy of American Poets, who inaugurated the National Poetry Month in 1996, and use this month as an opportunity to focus on Latinx poets and poetry.

- ▶ *Talking with Mother Earth: Poems / Hablando con la madre tierra: Poemas* written by Jorge Argueta and illustrated by Lucia Angela Pérez (Groundwood Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Poesía eres tú* written by F. Isabel Campoy and illustrated by Marcela Calderón (Santillana) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Laughing Tomatoes: And Other Spring Poems / Jitomates risuenos: Y otros poemas de primavera* written by Francisco X. Alarcón and illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez (Children's Book Press) (Elementary/Middle)
- ▶ *My Name is Gabriela: The Life of Gabriela Mistral / Me llamo Gabriela: La vida de Gabriela Mistral* written by Monica Brown and illustrated by John Parra (Scholastic) (Elementary)



April 7-13

National Library Week

This annual event highlights the “valuable role libraries, librarians, and library workers play in transforming lives and strengthening our communities. Celebrate the week with biographies about librarian Pura Belpré (whose birthday falls in February – see above) and others for whom the public library was a transformative space.

- ▶ *Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library* written by Carole Boston Weatherford and illustrated by Eric Velasquez (Candlewick) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Tomás and the Library Lady* written by Pat Mora and illustrated by Raul Colón (Dragonfly Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Dreamers / Soñadores* written and illustrated by Yuyi Morales (Neal Porter Books) (Elementary)



April 23

Spanish Language Day (UNESCO)

This day offers the opportunity to highlight the history, culture, and use of Spanish language around the world. Celebrate it by reading in Spanish with your students.

- ▶ *Braids/Trecitas* written by Kathleen Contreras and illustrated by Margaret Lindmark (Lectorum) (Elementary)



April 30

Día del libro / Día del Niño

Founded by writer Pat Mora, “Children’s Book Day, in Spanish *El día de los niños, el día de los libros*, is a year-long commitment to celebrating all our children and to motivating them and their families to be readers, essential in our democracy...[and is celebrated] in libraries, schools, homes, parks, etc., often on or near April 30th. DIA is also used to mean Diversity In Action.”

- ▶ *Book Fiesta! Celebrate Children’s Book Day / Book Fiesta! Celebremos el día de los niños / el día de los libros* written by Pat Mora and illustrated by Rafael López (HarperCollins) (Elementary)



May

Haitian Heritage Month



This nationally-recognized month provides an opportunity to learn about and celebrate the rich culture and distinctive history of the Haitian people.

- ▶ *Eight Days: A Story of Haiti* written by Edwidge Danticat and illustrated by Alix Delinois (Orchard Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Sélavi, That Is Life: A Haitian Story of Hope* written and illustrated by Youme Landowne (Cinco Puntos Press) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Behind the Mountains* written by Edwidge Danticat (Scholastic) (Middle/High)
- ▶ *American Street* written by Ibi Zoboi (Balzer + Bray) (High)



May

Jewish American Heritage Month

Celebrate intersectional identities by recognizing Jewish American Heritage Month and the shared stories from within the Latinx community.

- ▶ *Maya's Blanket / La manta de Maya* written by Monica Brown (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Lucky Broken Girl* written by Ruth Behar (Puffin) (Middle/High)



June

Caribbean Heritage Month

Acknowledge and celebrate the breadth of culture, languages, and people within Caribbean countries and among the Caribbean Diaspora.

- ▶ *Vejiante: Masquerader* written and illustrated by Lulu Delacre (Elementary)
- ▶ *Behind the Mountains* by Edwidge Danticat (Middle/High)

JUNE



June

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month

Celebrated annually in June in honor of the 1969 Stonewall riots in Manhattan, this month presents the opportunity to honor the history of civil rights activism and losses within the LGBTQI community. Books that honor individual stories can be one means of bringing this conversation into the classroom.

- ▶ *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* written by Benjamin Alire Sáenz (Simo & Schuster) (High)



JULY

July 6 Birthday – Frida Kahlo

Encourage students to honor the complicated history of their own lives and to persevere through adversity by sharing books inspired by the life of this iconic Mexican artist.

- ▶ *Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos / Frida Kahlo y sus animalitos* written by Monica Brown and illustrated by John Parra (Simon & Schuster) (Elementary)



July 1 Birthday – Pablo Neruda

This award-winning Chilean poet is known for his passionate poetry and political values. Raise conversations about writing as a form of resistance and expression with students by sharing books inspired by his life's story.

- ▶ *Pablo Neruda* written by Monica Brown and illustrated by Julie Paschke (Henry Holt & Co) (Elementary)
- ▶ *To Go Singing through the World* written by Deborah Kogan Ray (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) (Middle)



AUGUST

August 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (UNESCO)

In the words of UN Secretary-General António Guterres proclaimed, "on this annual observance, let us commit to fully realizing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the rights to self-determination and to traditional lands, territories and resources." One means by which to do so is to highlight books that acknowledge the individuality and sovereignty of the many and diverse indigenous peoples throughout Latin America and the world.

- ▶ *Napí Goes to the Mountain / Napí va a la montaña* written by Antonio Ramírez and illustrated by Domi (Groundwood Books) (Elementary)



SEPTEMBER

September World Kid Lit Month

This day promotes diverse, global, and translated children's books. Celebrate #WorldKidLit day by featuring books that bring diverse authors and illustrators into the classroom.

- ▶ *Mama and Papa Have a Store* written and illustrated by Amelia Lau Carling (Lee & Low Books) (Elementary)





September 3 Labor Day

In the US, Labor Day pays tribute to the contributions of American workers. In many parts of Latin America, the same day is known as *Día Internacional del Trabajo*, and highlights solidarity with the working class. It offers an opportunity in the classroom to call attention to unjust labor practices and highlight the historical achievements of workers fighting for labor rights.

- *Strike!* written by Larry Dane Brimner (Boys Mill Press) (High)
- *Harvesting Hope: The Story of César Chávez* written by Kathleen Krull and illustrated by Yuyi Morales (HMH Books) (Elementary)

September 15-October 15 Hispanic Heritage Month

This month offers an opportunity to highlight the diverse accomplishments and histories of Hispanic Americans throughout the United States and around the world, and Hispanic culture more broadly. Celebrate it with students by highlighting books that offer a varied understanding of *Hispanidad*. To deepen the conversation, learn about the history of the term “Hispanic” and its complicated usage (see footnote at end of calendar).

- *Bravo! Poems about Hispanic Americans* written by Margarita Engle and illustrated by Rafael López (Henry Holt & Co) (Middle)



September 19 Birthday – Amalia Hernández

On the heels of Mexican Independence Day comes this opportunity to highlight an iconic Mexican figure, the renowned choreographer and educator, Amalia Hernández.

- *Danza! Amalia Hernández and Mexico’s Folkloric Ballet* written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh (Harry N Abrams) (Elementary/Middle)



OCTOBER



October 2 Indigenous People’s Day (formerly Columbus Day)

Formerly, and in some places still, known as Columbus Day, this date has been renamed to celebrate and honor the Indigenous peoples of America, commemorating their history and culture. Use this day as an opportunity to critique the common narrative around Christopher Columbus’ explorations and to highlight the lesser-known stories of the people whom he encountered upon landing in the Americas.

- *Hurricane Dancers: The First Caribbean Pirate Shipwreck* written by Margarita Engle (Square Fish) (Middle)

NOVEMBER

November 2-3

Día de los Muertos

Día de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead in English, is an important holiday in many parts of the U.S. and Mexico, and countries throughout Central America. Its syncretic traditions are rooted in Indigenous knowledge and reflect Catholic influences formed throughout centuries. Educators who are interested in acknowledging this holiday in the classroom have a wealth of resources to acknowledge the highly personal nature of this date and an understanding that goes beyond the commercialism surrounding it.

- ▶ *Just a Minute!* written and illustrated by Yuyi Morales (Chronicle Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *Funny Bones: Posada and His Day of the Dead Calaveras* written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh (Harry N. Abrams) (Elementary/Middle)



DECEMBER

December

Winter Celebrations

Welcome the start of the winter season by highlighting cross-cultural stories of winter celebrations honored throughout the Americas.

- ▶ *The Christmas Gift / El regalo de Navidad* written by Francisco Jiménez and illustrated by Claire B. Cottis (Henry Holt & Co) (Elementary)
- ▶ *'Twas Nochebuena* written by Roseanne Greenfield Thong and illustrated by Sara Palacios Claire B. Cottis (Viking Books) (Elementary)
- ▶ *A Piñata in a Pine Tree* written by Pat Mora and illustrated by Magaly Morales (Clarion) (Elementary)



December 8

Birthday – Diego Rivera

Celebrate this iconic Mexican painter whose revolutionary paintings left a lasting impression on the world.

- ▶ *Diego Rivera: His World and Ours* written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh (Harry N. Abrams) (Elementary)



December 18

International Migrants Day (United Nations)

The UN General Assembly declared December 18th a day to celebrate the role of the migrant and the contribution that migration brings to development. To build on that premise, find books that also prompt a greater understanding of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants around the world.

- ▶ *Somos como las nubes / We Are Like the Clouds* written by Jorge Argueta and illustrated by Alfonso Ruano (Groundwood) (Middle/High)



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE AMÉRICAS AWARD

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AWARD WINNERS AND HONORABLE MENTIONS



Bibliography of Américas Award Winners & Honorable Mentions (1993-2018)

2018

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Tonatiuh, Duncan (2017). *Danza! Amalia Hernández and Mexico's Folkloric Ballet*. Abrams Book. Grades 2-5. ISBN 978-1419725326

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Winter, Jonah (2002). *Frida*. New York: Scholastic. Pre K-3. ISBN 0-590-20320-7

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Argueta, Jorge (2001). *A Movie in My Pillow*. Children's Book Press. Pre K -2. ISBN 0-89239-165-0

Jiménez, Francisco (2001). *Breaking Through*. Houghton Mifflin Company. Grades 7-9. ISBN 0-618-01173-0

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Joseph, Lynn (2000). *The Color of My Words*. Joanna Cotler/HarperCollins. Grade 3-7. ISBN 0-06-028232-0

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Irma Pérez, Amada (2000). *My Very Own Room / Mi propio cuartito*. Children's Book Press. Grades K-2. ISBN 0-89239-164-2

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Felipe Herrera, Juan (1999). *CRASHBOOMLOVE: A Novel in Verse*. University of New Mexico Press. Grades 8-12. ISBN 0-8263-2114-3

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Américas Award Winners

Jiménez, Francisco (1997). *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*. University of New Mexico Press. Grades 6-8. ISBN 0-8263-1797-9

Hanson, Regina (1997). *The Face at the Window*. Clarion. Grades K-3. ISBN 0-395-78625-8

Américas Award Honorable Mention Titles

Bloom, Valerie (1997). *Fruits: A Caribbean Counting Poem*. Henry Holt. Grades K-3. ISBN 0-8050-5171-6

Ancona, George (1997). *Mayeros: A Yucatec Maya Family*. William Morrow. Grades 3-5. ISBN 0-688-13465-3

1996

Américas Award Winners

Lomas Garza, Carmen (1996). *In My Family / En mi familia*. Children's Book Press. Grades K+. ISBN 0-89239-138-3

Martínez, Victor (1996). *Parrot in the Oven*. New York: HarperCollins. Grades 9-12. ISBN 0-06-026704-6

Américas Award Honorable Mention Titles

Hallworth, Grace (1996). *Down by the River: Afro-Caribbean Rhymes, Games, and Songs for Children*. New York: Scholastic. Grades K-3. ISBN 0-590-69320-4

Becerra de Jenkins, Lyll (1996). *So Loud a Silence*. New York: Lodestar. Grades 9-12. ISBN 0-525-67538-8

1995

Américas Award Winner

Temple, Frances (1995). *Tonight by Sea*. New York: Orchard Books. Young Adult. ISBN 0-531-06899-4

Américas Award Honorable Mention Titles

Ortiz Cofer, Judith (1995). *An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio*. Orchard Books. Grades 5-8. ISBN 0-531-06897-8

Soto, Gary (1995). *Chato's Kitchen*. G.P. Putnam's Sons. Grades 6-9. ISBN 0-399-22658-3

Talbert, Marc (1995). *Heart of a Jaguar*. Simon & Schuster. Grades 6-9. ISBN 0-689-80282-X

1994

Américas Award Winner

Joseph, Lynn (1994). *The Mermaid's Twin Sister: More Stories from Trinidad*. Clarion Books. Young Reader. ISBN 0-395-64365-1

1993

Américas Award Winner

Delacre, Lulu (1993). *Vejigante Masquerador*. Scholastic. Grades 3-6. ISBN 0-590-45776-4