

Good Books for Children
By or about Latinos (Some are in English, some in Spanish, and some bilingual)
Compiled by Rose V. Treviño

Ada, Alma Flor. *Abecedario De Los Animales*. Espasa-Calpe, 1998.
Playful animals surround and interact with the letters of the alphabet.

Ada, Alma Flor. *Gathering the Sun: an Alphabet in Spanish and English*. Lothrop, 1997

Ada, Alma Flor. *I Love Saturdays y domingos*. Illustrated by Elivia Savadier. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2002.

A young girl of dual heritage splits her weekends between English and Spanish speaking grandparents. Despite the differences in language and culture, she understands that the love of her grandparents has no boundaries.

Ada, Alma Flor. *The Lizard and the Sun/La lagartija y el sol: A Folktale in English and Spanish*. Bantam Books, 1997.

When the sun disappears from the sky, lizard's persistence pays off when he finds the sun and becomes a hero.

Ada, Alma Flor. *Medio pollito/Half Chicken*. Illustrated by Kim Howard. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers, 1997.

Why do weather vanes have roosters on the top? This traditional folktale explains why and introduces us to Half-Chicken. He has one eye, one leg, and one wing!

Ada, Alma Flor. *Pio Peep!: Traditional Spanish nursery rhymes*. Illustrated by Viví Escrivá. New York: Harper Collins, 2003.

A collection of nursery rhymes from Spain and Latin America in Spanish with English translations.

Alarcón, Francisco X. *Laughing Tomatoes and Other Spring Poems / Jitomates risueños y otros poemas de primavera*. Illustrated by Maya Christina González. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1997.

Mexican-American poet, Alarcón, presents a bilingual collection of poems about family, nature, and tradition based on songs taught to him by his grandmother.

Altman, Linda Jacobs. *Amelia's Road*. Lee & Low, 1993.

Amelia longs to have a place that she and her migrant worker family can call home.

Andrews-Goebel, Nancy. *The Pot That Juan Built*. Illustrated by David Diaz. Lee & Low Books, Inc., 2002

Ayala, Lourdes. *Los Niños Alfabéticos*. Charlesbridge, 1995.

This alphabet book has a rhyme on each page with objects representing letters of the alphabet.

Balzola, Asun. *Munia y la Señora Piltrонера*. Ediciones Destino, 1990.

Munia wakes up in a bad mood and misbehaves all day until she remembers her parents' love for her.

Barbot, Daniel. *A Bicycle for Rosaura*. Illustrated by Morella Fuenmayor. Brooklyn: Kane/Miller, 1994.

This Venezuelan tale tells the story of la señora Amelia who lives with her beloved animals - a dog, a tortoise, a cat, a talking parrot, twin canaries, and a beautiful hen named Rosaura. Rosaura wants a bicycle for her birthday and this preposterous request makes for a delightful story.

Belpré, Pura. *Pérez y Martina*. Warne, 1966. *Perez and Martina*. Warne, 1960.

A sad and funny tale about a too-particular cockroach and her string of suitors.

Belpré, Pura. *Santiago*. Warne, 1971 (Spanish) and 1969 (English).

More than anything else, Santiago wants Ernie to believe his stories about the beautiful pet hen he had to leave behind in Puerto Rico.

Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. *César: ¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can!* Illustrated by David Diaz.

Marshall Cavendish, 2004.

Brown, Monica. *My Name Is Celia/Me Llamo Celia: The Life of Celia Cruz/ La Vida de Celia Cruz*. Luna Rising, 2004.

Castañeda, Omar S. *Abuela's Weave*. Illustrated by Enrique O. Sánchez. New York: Lee & Low Books, 1995.

Surrounded by the colorful terrain of the Guatemalan countryside, a young girl learns the traditional art of weaving from her grandmother.

Chavarría-Cháirez, Becky. *Magda's Tortillas/Las Tortillas de Magda*. Piñata Books, 2000.

While learning to make tortillas on her seventh birthday, Magda tries to make perfectly round ones like those made by her grandmother but instead creates a variety of wonderful shapes.

Corpi, Lucha. *Where Fireflies Dance/Ahí Donde Bailan las Luciérnagas*. Children's Book Press, 1997.

Lucha and her brother Victor love to hear their grandmother's story of San Sebastian, a ghost said to haunt a local house.

Cuyler, Margery. *From Here to There*. Henry Holt, 1999.

Maria Mendoza introduces herself as a member of a specific family and as having a definite place in the universe.

de Anda, Diane. *Dancing Miranda/ Baila, Miranda, baila*. Piñata Books, 2001.

When Miranda discovers that her mom had polio when she was a child, she has a hard time concentrating on her own dance rehearsal.

DeSpain, Pleasant. *The Dancing Turtle: a Folktale from Brazil*. August House LittleFolk, 1998. Wise turtle tricks two small children into releasing her before their father comes home and makes turtle soup.

Delacre, Lulu. *Arrorró, Mi Niño: Latino Lullabies and Gentle Games*. Lee & Low, 2004.

Delacre, Lulu. *Arroz con Leche: Popular Songs and rhymes from Latin America*. Scholastic, 1992.

A lovely collection of traditional music from Latin America.

Delacre, Lulu. *Nathan's Balloon Adventure*. Scholastic, 1991.

An elephant named Nathan takes a trip in a hot air balloon.

Denou, Violeta. *Teo descubre los medios de transporte*. Grupo Editorial Ceac, 1998.

Teo finds out about all kinds of transportation.

Denou, Violeta. *Teo encuentra los errores: Un paseo en barco*. Grupo Editorial Ceac, 2000.

Teo takes a boat trip.

English, Karen. *Speak English for Us, Marisol*. Albert Whitman, 2000.

Marisol wants to hurry home, but she is stopped by neighbors and family who need her to conduct business in English for them.

Eversole, Robyn. *The Flute Player/La Flautista*. Orchard Books, 1995.

When a flute stops playing, a young girl blows into it and releases animals and objects much to the delight of the apartment dwellers in her building.

Galindo, Mary Sue. *Icy Watermelon/ Sandía fría*. Illustrated by Pauline Rodríguez Howard. Houston: Arte Público Press, 2001.

This story portrays a modern Hispanic American family gathered together on a summer night to enjoy icy cold watermelon. The grandparents tell stories and make up riddles to entertain the children.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. *Family Pictures / Cuadros de familia*. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1993.

With expressive folk art, this bilingual book is a tribute to the family and community that shaped Garza's childhood. The pages depict memories of growing up in the traditional Mexican-American community of her hometown, Kingsville, Texas.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. *In My Family / En mi familia*. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1996.

With more endearing folk images, this bilingual book continues to tell the story of Garza's Mexican-American heritage.

González, Lucía. *The Bossy Gallito / El Gallo de Bodas: A Traditional Cuban Folktale*. Illustrated by Lulu Delacre Scholastic, 1994.

Hayes, Joe. *The Day It Snowed Tortillas: Tales from Spanish New Mexico*. Mariposa Pub., 1982. This is a collection of folklore from New Mexico.

Hayes, Joe. *Estrellita de oro / Little Gold Star : A Cinderella Cuento*. Illustrated by Gloria Osuna Pérez & Lucía Angela Pérez. El Paso: Cinco Puntos Press, 2000.

This book offers a special interpretation of "Cinderella" that is popular in the mountain communities of New Mexico. The variations add depth to the original story.

Jimenez, Francisco. *La Mariposa*. Houghton Mifflin, 1998.

Because he can only speak Spanish, Francisco, son of a migrant worker, has trouble when he begins first grade, but his fascination with the caterpillar in the classroom helps him begin to fit in.

Keister, Douglas. *Fernando's Gift/El Regalo de Fernando*. Sierra Club Books for Children, 1995. (P-I)

Fernando searches for the perfect gift for his friend Carmina's eighth birthday, a gift that will thrive in the rain forest of Costa Rica where he lives with his family.

Krull, Kathleen. *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*. Illustrated by Yuyi Morales. Harcourt, Inc., 2003.

Leiner, Katherine. *Mama Does the Mambo*. Illustrated by Edel Rodríguez. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2001.

In anticipation of carnival in old Havana, Cuba, Sophia seeks a dancing partner for her widowed mother who loves to dance the mambo. The tropical mood is set by the colorful illustrations.

Levy, Janice. *Abuelito Eats with His Fingers*. Eakin Press, 1998.

Cristina is uncomfortable around her Spanish-speaking grandfather until she spends the day with him and he helps her begin to understand his culture and her family.

Lomas Garza, Carmen. *In My Family/En Mi Familia*. Children's Book Press, 1996.
The author describes, in bilingual text and illustrations, her experiences growing up in a Hispanic community in Texas.

Machado, Ana María. *Niña bonita: a story*. Illustrated by Rosana Faría. La Jolla, CA: Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1996.

This story celebrates diversity as a very white rabbit falls in love with a dark skinned girl he meets in a Brazilian coastal town. Nominated for the Americas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature in 1996.

Madrigal, Antonio Hernandez. *Erandi's Braids*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1999.

In a poor Mexican village, Erandi surprises her mother by offering to sell her long, beautiful hair in order to raise enough money to buy a new fishing net.

Montes, Marisa. *Juan Bobo Goes to Work*. Illustrated by Joe Cepeda. HarperCollins, 2000.

Mora, Pat. *Confetti: Poems for Children*. Illustrated by Enrique O. Sánchez. New York: Lee & Low, 1999.

Joyful, rhythmic poems, all with Mexican American or Southwestern themes elicit movement, color, and dance.

Mora, Pat. *Delicious Hullabaloo/Pachanga Deliciosa*. Piñata Books, 1998.

It is time for the animals to gather and share in the festivities that a late night snack brings, along with the music of the mariachi band in this poetic journey. This bilingual poem features lizards, armadillos, and other desert animals.

Mora, Pat. *Doña Flor: A Tall Tale About a Giant Woman with a Great Big Heart*. Illustrated by Raul Colón. Knopf, 2005.

Mora, Pat. *The Rainbow Tulip*. Viking, 1999.

A Mexican-American first-grader experiences the difficulties and pleasures of being different when she wears a tulip costume with all the colors of the rainbow for the school May Day parade.

Morales, Yuyi. *Just A Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book*. Chronicle Books, 2003.

Orozco, José-Luis. *Diez Deditos and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America*. Dutton Children's Books, 1997.

Here is a collection of songs and rhymes from Latin America.

Pérez, Amada Irma. *My Very Own Room / Mi propio cuartito*. Illustrated by Maya Christina González. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 2000.

In this bilingual tale, a young girl desperately wants her own space in the family's small house. With her mother's help, a storage room is transformed into a lovely and bright bedroom.

Pérez, Amada Irma. *My Diary from Here to There/ Mi diario de aquí hasta allá*. Illustrated by Maya Christina González. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 2002.

A young girl describes her feelings when her father decides to move the family from their home in Mexico to look for work in the United States.

Pérez, L. King. *First Day in Grapes*. Lee & Low Books, Inc., 2002

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Mice and Beans*. Illustrated by Joe Cepeda. New York: Scholastic, 2001. Rosa María plans a birthday party for her special granddaughter and discovers that she had some help from the sneaky little mice that she could not catch.

Saenz, Benjamin Alire. *Grandma Fina and Her Wonderful Umbrellas*. Cinco Puntos Press, 1999.

After friends and family notice that her favorite yellow umbrella is torn, Grandma Fina gets quite a surprise on her birthday.

Sempere, Vicky. *1 2 3: Un Cuento Para Contar*. Ediciones Ekaré, 1995.

Vengan a la fiesta de cumpleaños con los animales en este libro de contar.

Soto, Gary. *Chato and the Party Animals*. Illustrated by Susan Guevara. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2000.

Soto, Gary. *Chato's Kitchen*. Illustrated by Susan Guevara. New York: Putnam's/Penguin Group, 1995. Chato, the cool cat with six stripes, and his pal Novio Boy, are outsmarted by the familia mice and their friend Chorizo.

Soto, Gary. *Snapshots from the Wedding*. Illustrated by Stephanie Garcia. Putnam, 1997

Stevens, Jan Romero. *Carlos and the Carnival/Carlos y la feria*. Rising Moon, 1999.

Carlos ignores his father's advice about being careful how he spends his money at the carnival, and soon his pockets are empty.

Tabor, Nancy Maria Grande. *El gusto del mercado mexicano/a Taste of the Mexican Market*. Charlesbridge, 1996.

Describes many of the different foods found at a Mexican market.

Tabor, Nancy Maria Grande. *Somos un arco iris: We Are a Rainbow*. Charlesbridge, 1997.

Simple text and illustrations explore some of the similarities and differences that a child recognizes after moving to the United States from a Spanish-speaking country.

Tafolla, Carmen. *Baby Coyote and the Old Woman = El coyotito y la vieja : a bilingual story*. Wings Press, 2000.

When the little old lady's trash blows away into the desert, the little coyote returns it to her doorstep.

Tello, Jerry. *Abuelo y los tres osos/Abuelo and the Three Bears*. Scholastic, 1997.

Here is an adaptation of a traditional tale.

Torres, Leyla. *Subway Sparrow*. Farrar Straus, 1993. Gorrión del metro. Mirasol/Libros Juveniles, 1993.

Although the passengers of the D train speak different languages, they work together to rescue a frightened bird.

Uribe, María de la Luz. *La Señorita Amelia*. Ediciones Destino, 1983.

Here is a story about a lady who keeps birds in her house, and of the three children who become her friends.

Uribe, Verónica. *Diego y el Barco Pirata*. Ekaré, 1996.

Diego and his sister Daniela have an encounter with two friendly pirates.

Velasquez, Eric. *Los discos de mi abuela*. Lectorum Publications, 2002.

The author describes his boyhood summers spent at his grandmother's apartment in Spanish Harlem where she introduced him to the sounds and steps of the merengue and the conga and told him stories of Puerto Rico.

Audio Recordings for Children (Spanish & Bilingual)

Barchas, Sarah.

Piñata! Piñata and more [CD sound recording]: bilingual songs for children. High Heaven Music, 1997.

Del Rey, Maria.

Lullabies of Latin America [CD sound recording] = Canciones de cuna de Latinoamerica. Music for Little People : Distributed by Kid Rhino, 1998.

Graf, Lenny.

Un bosque hecho de espinacas [CAS sound recording] LGM Inc., 1997.

Líscano, Hugo.

Infantiles por Hugo Líscano y Javier Galué, Vol. 1. [CD sound recording] Anes, 1995.

Líscano, Hugo.

Infantiles, Volumen 3. [CD sound recording] Anes, 1997.

Miliki

A mis niños de 30 años [CD sound recording] BMG U.S. Latin, 1999.

Orozco, José-Luis.

De Colores. [CD/cass. sound recording] Arcoiris, 1996.

Orozco, José-Luis.

Lírica Infantil, Volumen 3. [CD/cass. sound recording] Arcoiris, 1995.

Orozco, José-Luis.

Lírica Infantil, Volumen 4. [CD/cass. sound recording] Arcoiris, 1995.

Orozco, José-Luis.

Lírica Infantil, Volumen 5. [CD/cass. sound recording] Arcoiris, 1995.

Paz, Suni.

Alerta sings [CD sound recording] & Canciones para el recreo = Songs for the playground.
Smithsonian Folkways, 2000.

Putumayo presents Latin playground. [CD sound recording] Putumayo World Music, 2002.

Good Books for Teens by or about Latinos
Compiled by Rose V. Treviño

- Ada, Alma Flor. *Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba*. New York: Atheneum, 1998.
- Alvarez, Julia. *Before We Were Free*. New York: Knopf, 2002.
- Anaya, Rudolfo. *Bless Me, Ultima*. New York: Warner Books, 1994. Re-Issue Edition.
- Bertrand, Diane Gonzales. *Trino's Choice*. Houston: Piñata Books, 1999.
- Canales, Viola. *The Tequila Worm*. New York, Random House, 2005.
- Chambers, Veronica. *Mama's Girl*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1997.
- Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. New York: Vintage, 1991. Re issue edition.
- Carlson, Lori. *Cool Salsa*. New York: Fawcett, 1995. Reprint Edition
- González Abraham, Susan and Denise Gonzalez Abraham. *Cecilia's Year*. El Paso: Cinco Puntos Press, 2004.
- Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Crash Boom Love: A Novel in Verse*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000.
- Hobbs, Will. *Crossing the Wire*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.
- Jimenez, Francisco. *Breaking Through*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.
- Jimenez, Francisco. *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1997.
- Lopez, Jack. *In the Break*. New York: Little Brown
- Lopez, Tiffany Ana, Editor. *Growing Up Chicana/o*. Foreward by Rudolfo Anaya. New York: Perennial (HarperCollins) 2003.
- Martinez, Victor. *Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.
- Miller-Lachmann, Lyn, editor. *Once Upon a Cuento*. Willimantic(CT): Curbstone Press, 2003.
- Mohr, Nicolasa. *In Nueva York*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1993.
- Mora, Pat. *My Own True Name: New and Selected Poems for Young Adults*. Piñata Books, 2002.
- Muñoz Ryan, Pam. *Becoming Naomi Leon*. New York: Scholastic, 2004.

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- Muñoz Ryan, Pam. *Esperanza Rising*. New York: Scholastic, 2000.
- Ortiz Cofer, Judith. *An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio*. New York, Orchard Books, 1995.
- Ortiz Cofer, Judith. *The Latin Deli*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1995.
- Ortiz Cofer, Judith. *The Meaning of Consuelo: A Novel*. New York: Farrar, Giroux, 2003.
- Ortiz Cofer, Judith. *Riding Low Through the Streets of Gold: Latino Literature for Young Adults*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1993.
- Osa, Nancy. *Cuba 15: A Novel*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2003.
- Paredes, Americo. *George Washington Gomez: A Mexicotexan Novel*. Houston: Arte Publico Press, 1990.
- Paulsen, Gary. *The Crossing*. New York: Orchard Books, 1987.
- Rice, David. *Crazy Loco: Stories*. New York: Dial Books, 2001.
- Rice, David. *Give a Pig A Chance and Other Stories*. Tucson: Bilingual Review Press, 1996.
- Rivera, Tomás. *Y no se lo tragó la tierra.../And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*. Translated from the Spanish by Evangelina Vigil Piñon. Houston: Arte Público Books, 1987.
- Rodríguez, Abraham. *The Boy Without a Flag: Tales of the South Bronx*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 1992.
- Rodriguez, Luis. *Always Running*. New York: Touchstone, 1994.
- Sáenz, Ben. *Sam and Juliana in Hollywood*. Cinco Puntos Press, 2004.
- Saldana, René. *Finding Our Way*: New York: Wendy Lamb Books (HarperCollins) 2002.
- Saldana, René. *The Jumping Tree*. New York: Laurel-Leaf Books, 200
- Soto, Gary. *Afterlife*. San Diego and New York: Harcourt, 2003.
- Soto, Gary. *Help Wanted: Stories*. San Diego and New York: Harcourt, 2005.
- Soto, Gary. *Jesse*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1994.
- Stavans, Ilan, editor. *Wáchale: Poetry and Prose about Growing Up Latino in America*. Chicago: Crickett Books, 2001.
- Veciana-Suarez, Ana. *Flight to Freedom*. New York: Orchard Books (Scholastic) 2002.

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Américas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature
Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP)

The Américas Award is given in recognition of U.S. works of fiction, poetry, folklore, or selected non-fiction (from picture books to works for young adults) published in the previous year in English or Spanish that authentically and engagingly portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinos in the United States. By combining both and linking the Americas, the award reaches beyond geographic borders, as well as multicultural-international boundaries, focusing instead upon cultural heritages within the hemisphere. The award is sponsored by the national Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP).

The award winners and commended titles are selected for their 1) distinctive literary quality; 2) cultural contextualization; 3) exceptional integration of text, illustration and design; and 4) potential for classroom use. The winning book will be honored at a ceremony on September 16, 2006 at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Américas Award Winner

CINNAMON GIRL: LETTERS FOUND INSIDE A CEREAL BOX by Juan Felipe Herrera. New York: HarperCollins; Joanna Cotler Books, 2005. 164 pgs. ISBN 0-06-057984-6

This is the story of thirteen-year-old Yolanda, “Canelita” (Cinnamon Girl) as her Uncle DJ named her. It is September 2001. Uncle DJ was trapped when the towers fell, and he now lies in a hospital bed, full of tubes. Her uncle has been Canelita’s lifeline, through countless letters they wrote back and forth, precious letters she keeps stuffed inside a cereal box. *Cinnamon Girl* is a coming of age story, poignantly and lyrically told through letters, diary entries and poems that aptly describe the joys and sorrows of Canelita’s life, her struggle to belong and to find the strength to make the right decisions in the face of unbearable tragedy, with the love and support of her Puerto Rican family. (grades 8-12)

Américas Award Honorable Mentions

A SEASON FOR MANGOES by Regina Hanson. Illustrations by Eric Velasquez. New York: Clarion, 2005. 32 pgs. ISBN 0-618-15972-X

Sareen is attending her first sit-up, a Jamaican tradition that celebrates the life of a loved one who has died. She has many memories of her Nana especially related to Nana’s last mango season that she wants to share, but is very nervous. Once she faces her fear, she realizes that what she best remembers is the joy of Nana’s life. This tender story and beautiful illustrations demonstrate the special way that Jamaicans celebrate the life of departed loved ones. (K-3)

THE TEQUILA WORM by Viola Canales. New York: Random House, 2005. 199 pgs. ISBN 0-385-74674-1

Viola Canales takes us on a wonderful voyage filled with rough and calm waters as she describes the life of a young Mexican-American woman. Sofia is caught between two worlds--one filled with the old traditions and folktales from Mexico--the other offering her an opportunity to excel and join a community of more privileged children at an elite

boarding school. Watching Sofia merge these two worlds is a humorous and loving tale of a young woman coming of age. (grades 6-9)

Américas Award Commended Titles

JULIO'S MAGIC by Arthur Dorros. Illustrated by Ann Grifalconi. New York: HarperCollins, 2005. 32 pgs. ISBN 0-06-029004-8

In his rural Mexican village, young Julio learns his craft from master woodcarver Iluminado. This year there is a contest with a big prize for the best carving in the region, and Julio wants to enter. However, Julio has some decisions to make about friendship and generosity when he sees how hard times are for Iluminado due to failing eyesight and poor crops. Through Dorros' sensory descriptions and Grifalconi's collages of photographs and painted surfaces, this intergenerational story places real value on celebrating artistic creation, community and kindness. (K-3)

LUCHA LIBRE: THE MAN IN THE SILVER MASK by Xavier Garza. Illustrations by Xavier Garza. El Paso: Cinco Puntos, 2005. 40 pgs. ISBN 0-938317-92-X

Carlitos is attending his first-ever *Lucha Libre* (professional wrestling) match in Mexico City with his Papá Lupe. While waiting for Tío Vicente, they enter the arena and come upon vendors selling *luchador* masks. Papá Lupe offers to buy Carlitos one, and he chooses the mask of the greatest *luchador* of all time, The Man in the Silver Mask. Vibrant illustrations take us into the ring as fans boo and hiss *los rudos*--the bad guys who will stop at nothing to win--and to cheer *los técnicos*--the good guys who earn their victories fairly. When Tío Vicente shows up after the action is over, readers will be left wondering, "Who was that masked man?" Includes a brief history of *Lucha Libre*. (2-6)

RED HOT SALSA: BILINGUAL POEMS ON BEING YOUNG AND LATINO IN THE UNITED STATES edited by Lori Marie Carlson. New York: Holt, 2005. 140 pgs. ISBN 0-8050-7616-6

Carlson follows up *Cool Salsa* (1994) with another bilingual collection of poetry. In Spanish and English, this collection includes many well known writers such as Martin Espada, Luis J. Rodriguez, Gary Soto and Gina Valdes as well as emerging poets. They speak of the challenges of being bicultural, and of *amor*, neighborhoods, and family moments. Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, Oscar Hijuelos, wrote the introduction. Teen readers of all backgrounds will find connection to the diversity of experiences presented in *Red Hot Salsa*. Includes helpful glossary and biographical notes. (8-12)

RED RIDIN' IN THE HOOD AND OTHER CUENTOS by Patricia Santos Marcantonio. Pictures by Renato Alarcão. New York: FSG, 2005. 186 pgs. ISBN 0-374-36241-6

Red Ridin' in the Hood is a creative collection of upbeat fairy tales retold with a Latino twist. Patricia Santos Marcantonio infuses her Mexican-American heritage by retelling and giving new life to several well-known stories. The *cuentos* are transformed in time and place and sprinkled with charm. For example, three "Chicharrones" end up building homes in Residencias Chicharrones. In "Sleeping Beauty," the *bruja* runs off with the "true love" leaving the "beauty" in her dusty *quinceañera* dress complaining of the

parties she's missed. These *cuentos* will surprise, delight, and engage readers with unexpected outcomes. (4-6)

ROBERTO CLEMENTE: PRIDE OF THE PITTSBURGH PIRATES by Jonah Winter. Illustrated by Raul Colón. New York: Atheneum, 2005. 32 pgs. 0-689-85643-1
Born in Puerto Rico, Roberto Clemente began playing baseball at a very young age. With aspirations of being a great baseball player, Roberto worked his way up through the minor leagues, winter leagues and finally to the major leagues with the Pittsburgh Pirates. In poetic language we are told about the struggles Clemente encountered as a black Latino baseball player. More importantly, we learn about his humanitarian efforts and how he never forgot the poor people of his beloved Puerto Rico. An author's note at the end of the book reminds us that Roberto Clemente was more than just a famous baseball player--he was a caring human being. Raúl Colón's illustrations capture both the rhythm of the text, and Roberto's struggle to overcome dual stereotypes. (2-6)

SAWDUST CARPETS/ALFOMBRAS DE ASERRIN by Amelia Lau Carling. Toronto: Groundwood, 2005. 32 pgs. ISBN 0-88899-625-X English / 0-88899-624-1 Spanish (simultaneous editions)

In Antigua, Guatemala, Holy Week is celebrated with processions re-enacting the story of Christ's death and resurrection. On the streets, neighbors create carpets with colored sawdust, flowers and fruit, featuring elaborate designs. The carpets are offerings, meant to be destroyed as the processions pass over them. This is the setting for Amelia Carling's second autobiographical book (the first, *Mama and Papa Have a Store*, 1998) about her Chinese immigrant family living in Guatemala. The story is imbued with abundant details showing the blending of Guatemalan and Chinese cultures, made the more vivid by the watercolor illustrations. The Spanish version is perfectly translated, a reflection of Carling's immersion in the culture and language. (K-3)

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The Pura Belpré Award



The Pura Belpré Award, established in 1996, is presented to a Latino/Latina writer and illustrator whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth. It is co-sponsored by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA) and the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking ([REFORMA](#)), an ALA Affiliate.

2006 Medal Winners

For narrative:

Viola Canales. *The Tequila Worm*. (Wendy Lamb Books, a division of Random House).

In her debut novel, Canales shows, through a series of vignettes, how a Latina child maintains her cultural integrity with pride and humor while living within another culture. Without sentimentality, Canales develops fascinating characters who provide wonderful insights into the Latino cultural experience.

The Tequila Worm sensitively addresses an issue that faces anyone who lives in a minority culture – how do you bridge the gap between the two worlds in which you live? Canales provides an answer well worth considering – you remain true to yourself and your roots, and you freely bring one world into another,” Award Committee Chair Barbara Scotto said.

For illustration:

Raul Colón. *Doña Flor: A Tall Tale About a Giant Woman with a Great Big Heart*. Written by Pat Mora. (Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Random House).

Colón has created a new tall tale heroine, Doña Flor, whose presence fills the pages of this book. She gazes above the mountains, her eye looks through a doorway, and she dwarfs the mighty puma. The spectacular illustrations perfectly match the story and accurately reflect the culture and landscape of the American Southwest,” said Scotto.

2006 Honor Books

For narrative:

Carmen T. Bernier-Grand. *César: ¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can!* Illustrated by David Diaz. (Marshall Cavendish).

César: ¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can! is an outstanding contribution to the body of literature published for children about Chávez. Bernier-Grand's poems flawlessly intertwine Spanish words into the English text, which includes prayers, folk sayings and César's own words.

Pat Mora. *Doña Flor: A Tall Tale About a Giant Woman with a Great Big Heart.* Illustrated by Raul Colón. (Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Random House).

Impregnated with the flavors, smells and folk ways of the American Southwest, "Doña Flor: A Tall Tale About a Giant Woman with a Great Big Heart" is a captivating tall tale. Mora's poetic language brings to life this original and engaging character whose love and concern for her neighbors and friends fills the story with joy.

Pam Muñoz Ryan. *Becoming Naomi León.* (Scholastic Press)

In *Becoming Naomi León*, Muñoz Ryan writes convincingly about the love that binds an extended family together. Characters are well-drawn and balanced, relationships are honest, and Naomi's growing awareness of her cultural heritage and sense of self will keep readers engrossed.

For illustration:

Selected and illustrated by Lulu Delacre. *Arrorró, Mi Niño: Latino Lullabies and Gentle Games.* (Lee & Low Books, Inc.).

Arrorró, Mi Niño: Latino Lullabies and Gentle Games, a bilingual collection of traditional Latino games and lullabies, is a tribute to motherhood. Delacre's soft and tender illustrations celebrate the Latino family in a wide variety of settings. The combination of delicate and glowing colors make each illustration warm and full of appeal.

David Diaz. *César: ¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can!* Written by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand. (Marshall Cavendish).

In *César: ¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can!* the brilliant and powerful illustrations support the poetic text and bring to life tumultuous historical events. Diaz' stylized folk-art images are strong, opulent and optimistic, matching Chávez' philosophy and message.

Rafael López, Illustrator. *My Name Is Celia/ Me Llamo Celia: The Life of Celia Cruz/ La Vida de Celia Cruz.* Written by Monica Brown. (Luna Rising, a bilingual imprint of Rising Moon).

My Name Is Celia/ Me Llamo Celia: The Life of Celia Cruz/ La Vida de Celia Cruz is as full of movement and excitement as the life of Celia Cruz. Vibrant colors, extravagant illustrations and flowing patterns create a mood of energy in this book. Full of the details of folklore, fashion and music, the book teems with life.

2004 Medal Winners

For narrative:

Julia Alvarez. *Before We Were Free*. (Alfred A. Knopf, 2002)

Cotorrita or little parrot is a nickname given to Anita by her *Papi* because she talks too much and sometimes asks too many questions. But there are many changes occurring and they are happening much too fast for twelve-year-old Anita. Growing up in the Dominican Republic has become uncertain and dangerous and with the help of the American Consul, her extended family is quietly and quickly being swept out of the country and on to the United States. General Trujillo or “*El Jefe*” is a dictator to be feared and when his soldiers arrive at Anita’s house, she gets her first glimpse of the SIM, the *policia secreta* that investigate everyone and are responsible for making them disappear. Where is Tío Toni and did the SIM make him disappear?

For illustration:

Yuyi Morales. *Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book* (Chronicle Books, 2003)

When Grandma Beetle opens her door, *Señor Calavera* is standing there waiting to take her on her journey as her time has come. “Just a minute, *Señor Calavera*” is how Grandma Beetle responds. She is certainly not ready and so begins a series of activities which will annoy, frustrate and confuse *Señor Calavera*.

2004 Honor Books

For narrative:

Nancy Osa. *Cuba 15*. (Delacorte Press, 2003)

Amada Irma Pérez. *My Diary from Here to There/Mi Diario de Aquí Hasta Allá*. (Children's Book Press)

For illustration:

Robert Casilla, Illustrator. Written by L. King Pérez. *First Day in Grapes*. (Lee & Low Books, Inc., 2002)

David Diaz, Illustrator. Written by Nancy Andrews-Goebel. *The Pot That Juan Built*. (Lee & Low Books, Inc., 2002)

Yuyi Morales, Illustrator. Written by Kathleen Krull. *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*. (Harcourt, Inc., 2003)

2002 Medal Winners

For narrative:

Pam Munoz Ryan. *Esperanza Rising* (Scholastic Press, 2000).

Pampered thirteen-year-old Esperanza and her mother are forced to flee Mexico following her father's sudden death and his brothers' takeover of their land. In a California migrant-worker camp, they encounter poverty and racism that are mitigated by the support of family and friends. Esperanza's response to the fall from privileged life into a 1930s, immigrant experience transforms her from a spoiled child into a strong adolescent.

For illustration:

Susan Guevara, Illustrator. Written by Gary Soto. *Chato and the Party Animals* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2000).

Susan Guevara's larger-than-life, mural-like images translate and extend Soto's barrio story with vitality, color, and social commentary. Discovering that his best friend, Novio Boy, has never had a birthday party, Chato the Cat plans a surprise *pachanga*. Everything is set except that Chato forgets to invite the guest of honor. Sly humor and Latino symbolism abound in these innovative, acrylic-on-scratchboard illustrations. "Guevara's vivacious, distinctive artistic style creates a culturally authentic picture book with immense child appeal," Dresang said.

2002 Honor Books

For narrative:

Francisco Jiménez. *Breaking Through*. (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001).

Jiménez's compelling autobiographical stories in *Breaking Through*, sequel to *The Circuit*, combine dramatic social issues of poverty and prejudice in the 1950s with timeless adolescent experiences of family tension, school, and romance. Powerful images of a teenager overcoming crushing poverty and personal challenges while maintaining hope encourage readers to "break through" their own barriers with tenacity and courage.

Francisco X. Alarcón. *Iguanas in the Snow*. Illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez. (Children's Book Press).

Iguanas in the Snow, a collection of seventeen bilingual poems depicting winter in San Francisco and nearby mountains, surprise and delight like peppermint candy on the tongue. Alarcón's rich verbal imagery peppers the pages with Latino children's experiences in a multicultural setting.

For illustration:

Joe Cepeda, Illustrator. Retold by Marisa Montes. *Juan Bobo Goes to Work*. (HarperCollins, 2000).

Juan Bobo Goes to Work carries on Pura Belpré's tradition of retelling traditional Puerto Rican folktales. Cepeda humorously depicts Juan Bobo's determined but disastrous antics through bold brush strokes, expert use of varied perspectives, and vibrant Caribbean colors.

2000 Medal Winners

For narrative:

2000 Medal Winner: Alma Flor Ada. *Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba*. (Atheneum Books, 1998).

Born in Camagüey, Cuba, Ada remembers the daily routine of living in a small town in her family's house, *La Quinta Simoni*. She cherishes the simple rituals of her life – spending time with her grandmother, gathering wild flowers named *maravillas*, and watching bats appear after nightfall. Things were sometimes so routine that perhaps any out of the ordinary occurrences, like getting lost while playing in the fields, stuck in her mind and left a lasting impression.

For illustration:

Magic Windows. (Children's Book Press, 1999).

Lomas Garza used a craft knife technique to make the intricate tissue paper cutout designs in this collection of cut-paper art and stories. Many of the depictions are of Lomas Garza's family, childhood and Mexican heritage. The challenge was to make all the pieces of paper in these "magic windows" connect.

2000 Honor Books

For narrative:

Francisco X. Alarcón. *From the Bellybutton of the Moon and Other Summer Poems/ Del Ombligo de la Luna y Otro Poemas de Verano*. Illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez. (Children's Book Press, 1998).

Juan Felipe Herrera. *Laughing out Loud, I Fly: Poems in English and Spanish*. Illustrated by Karen Barbour. (HarperCollins, 1998).

For illustration:

George Ancona. *Barrio: José's Neighborhood*. (Harcourt Brace, 1998).

Felipe Dávalos. *The Secret Stars*. Text by Joseph Slate. (Marshall Cavendish, 1998).

Amelia Lau Carling. *Mama & Papa Have a Store*. (Dial Books, 1998).

1998 Medal Winners

For narrative:

Martinez, Victor. *Parrot in the Oven: mi vida*. (Joanna Cotler/HarperCollins, 1996).

Poetic, moving and harrowing - these vignettes paint a realistic portrait of a Chicano boy's coming of age in Fresno, California. The graphic realism and lyrical imagery highlight not only familial and societal tensions, but also unexpected moments of humor, insight, and tenderness.

For illustration:

Snapshots from the Wedding, illustrated by Stephanie Garcia. Text: Gary Soto (Putnam, 1997).

Maya, the flower girl, is busy snapping pictures at this lively Mexican American wedding. She captures the groom with his arm in a cast due to a softball accident, the bride with gifts of money pinned to her dress, the mariachis with their instruments, and the younger guests playing in their dress-up clothes. Ingenious in her execution, Stephanie Garcia has created a series of three-dimensional tableaux created with sculpy clay and found objects, such as olives, potato chips, and ribbons, placed against a delicate background of pink and white lace.

1998 Honor Books

For narrative:

Alarcón, Francisco. *Laughing Tomatoes and Other Spring Poems / Jitomates Risueños y otros poemas de primavera* illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez (Children's Book Press, 1997).

Martinez, Floyd. *Spirits of the High Mesa* (Arte Público Press, 1997).

For illustration:

Lomas Garza, Carmen. *In My Family / En mi familia* (Children's Book Press, 1996).

Sánchez, Enrique O. *The Golden Flower: a Taino Myth from Puerto Rico* text by Nina Jaffe (Simon & Schuster, 1996).

Silva, Simón. *Gathering the Sun: an Alphabet in Spanish and English* text by Alma Flor Ada; English translation by Rosa Zubizarreta (Lothrop, 1997).

1996 Medal Winners

For narrative:

Cofer, Judith Ortiz. *An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio* (Melanie Kroupa / Orchard Books, 1995).

Rita is a blossoming, sassy young teen who lives with her parents in the tenement building known as “El Building” in Paterson, New Jersey. She and her girlfriend plot to spend the night at each other’s house, but the plot is foiled as Meli’s little sister reveals to their parents that they have gone to Joey Moleri’s house. Rita is placed under house arrest before being shipped off to the island as punishment. Expecting to serve out her summer in utter boredom, she learns to appreciate her grandparents and their way of life, replete with household roosters and weird motions of spiritual healings for *mala influencia*.

For illustration:

Guevara, Susan. *Chato's Kitchen* written by Gary Soto (Putnam, 1995).

Chato is a “cool, low-riding cat” from East Los Angeles who discovers that a family of mice has just moved in next door. As he glances through the fence to check out his new neighbors, he scares off their wits as they encounter the largest cat they have ever laid eyes on. Careful not to alienate them, yet eager to have them for dinner, he plays the kind neighbor and welcomes them to the *barrio* by inviting them over for dinner, sending a paper airplane invitation flying across the fence. Chato invites his best buddy, Novio Boy, his *homes* to share in his new-found morsels, but not before Novio Boy helps out with the dinner preparations. Together they concoct a delicious home-cooked meal consisting of homemade *tortillas*, *taquitos*, *enchiladas*, *chiles rellenos*, *carne asada* and *salsa*, served with a fresh pitcher of *tamarindo* drink and delicious *flan* for dessert.

1996 Honor Books

For narrative:

González, Lucía. *The Bossy Gallito / El Gallo de Bodas: A Traditional Cuban Folktale* illustrated by Lulu Delacre (Scholastic, 1994).

Soto, Gary. *Baseball in April, and Other Stories*(Harcourt, 1994).

For illustration:

Ancona, George. *Pablo Remembers: The Fiesta of the Day of the Dead* (Lothrop, 1993).

Also published in a Spanish language edition: *Pablo Recuerda: La Fiesta de Día de los Muertos* (Lothrop, 1993).

Delacre, Lulu. *The Bossy Gallito / El Gallo de Bodas: A Traditional Cuban Folktale* retold by Lucía González (Scholastic, 1994).

Lomas Garza, Carmen. *Family Pictures / Cuadros de Familia*. Spanish language text by Rosalma Zubizaretta (Children's Book Press, 1990).

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