

Literacy Resources for Culturally Relevant and Multicultural Education

Katrina Dillon
UNM Latin American & Iberian Institute
Summer and Fall 2018



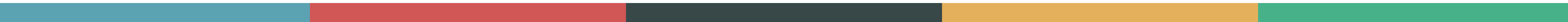
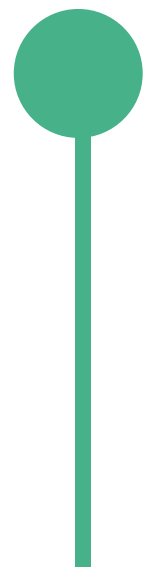
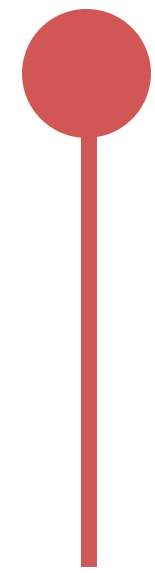
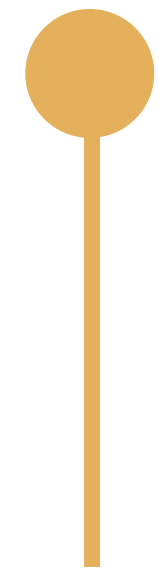
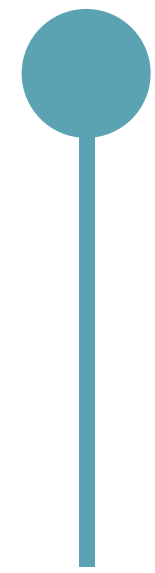
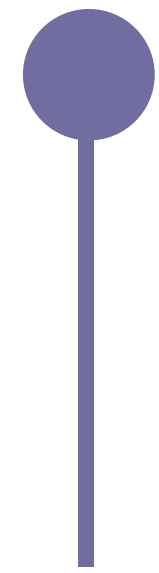
INTRO

ABOUT

THEORY

PRACTICE

CLOSURE



INTRODUCTION

UNM LATIN AMERICAN & IBERIAN INSTITUTE



**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS**



BOOK GROUP & BLOG



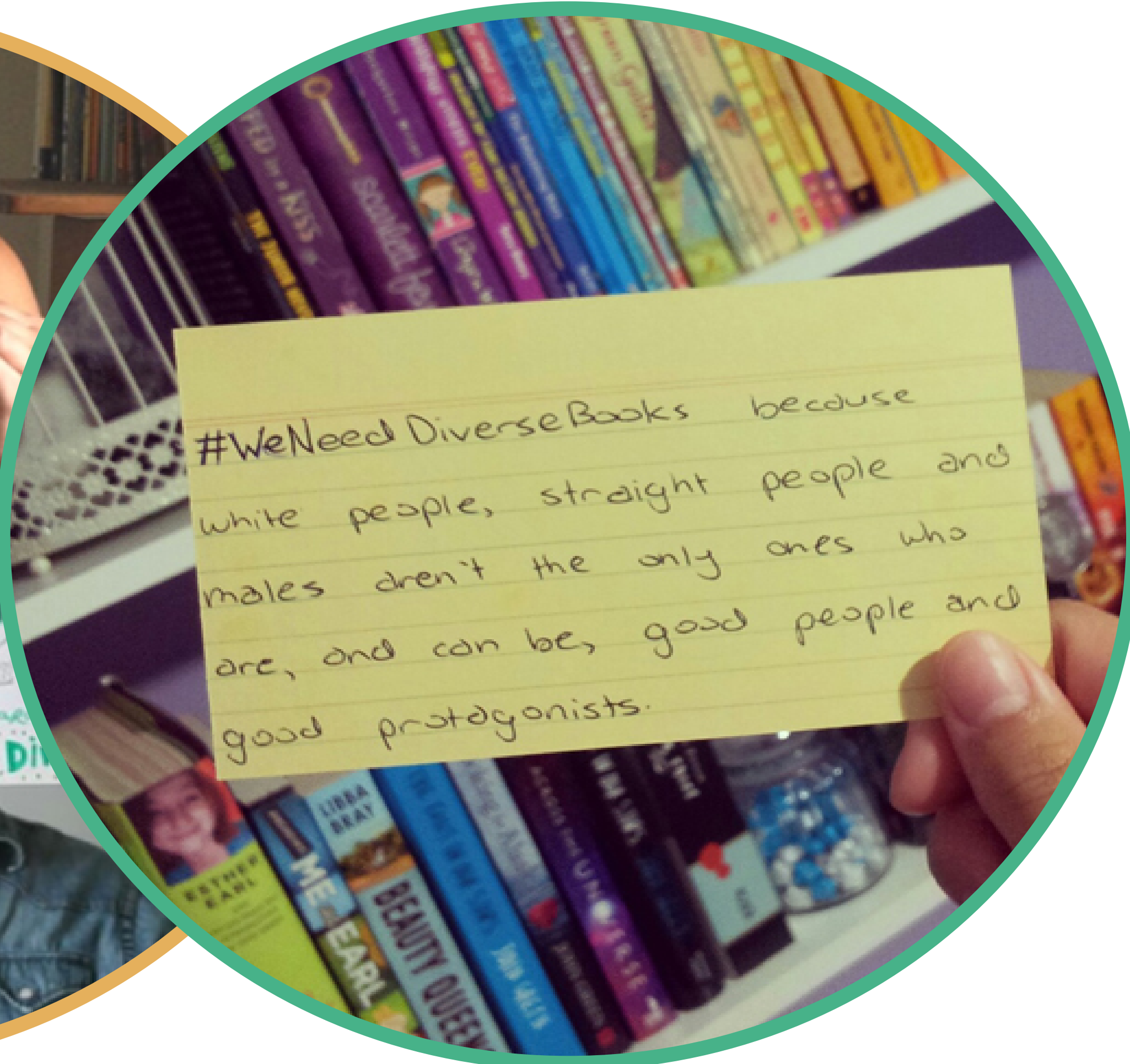
**CULTURE BOXES
&
CLASSROOM SETS**



FREE CURRICULUM



YOUTH EVENTS





BOOKS ARE WINDOWS

They offer views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange.

BOOKS ARE MIRRORS

In that reflection we can see our own lives and experience as part of the larger human experience.





BOOKS ARE DOORS

Readers have only to
walk through them
to become part of
the world the author
has created.



Reading then becomes...
a means of self affirmation
and of seeing the world.



LANGUAGE

HISTORY

GENDER

ORIENTATION

PHYSICAL

ETHNIC

RACE

BELIEF SYSTEMS

VALUES

EXPERIENCES

ECONOMIC

RELIGION

AGE

CULTURE





Gloria Ladson
Billings

In *Dreamkeepers*, an ethnographic account of teaching, Ladson-Billings offers the following insights into how **culturally relevant pedagogy**:

“...**empowers students** intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.”

“...**incorporates student knowledge and experience** into the official content of the classroom and prepares students to effect change.”

“...**produces students** who can **achieve academically**, demonstrate **cultural competence** and can understand and **critique the existing social order**.”



Diversity
 IN
 CHILDREN'S
 BOOKS
2012

OUT OF 3,600 CHILDREN'S BOOKS REVIEWED BY THE CCBC IN 2012

3% WERE ABOUT AFRICAN-AMERICANS

1.5% WERE ABOUT LATINOS

LESS THAN 1% WERE ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS

2% WERE ABOUT ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS

WHICH LEAVES 93% CAUCASIAN!

SOURCE: FIRST BOOK INFOGRAPHIC: TINA KUGLER

37%

of the US population are of color

11%

of children's books in the past 23 years contain multicultural content

<6%

Less than 6% of the new children's books published in 2016 were written by Black Latino, and Native authors combined

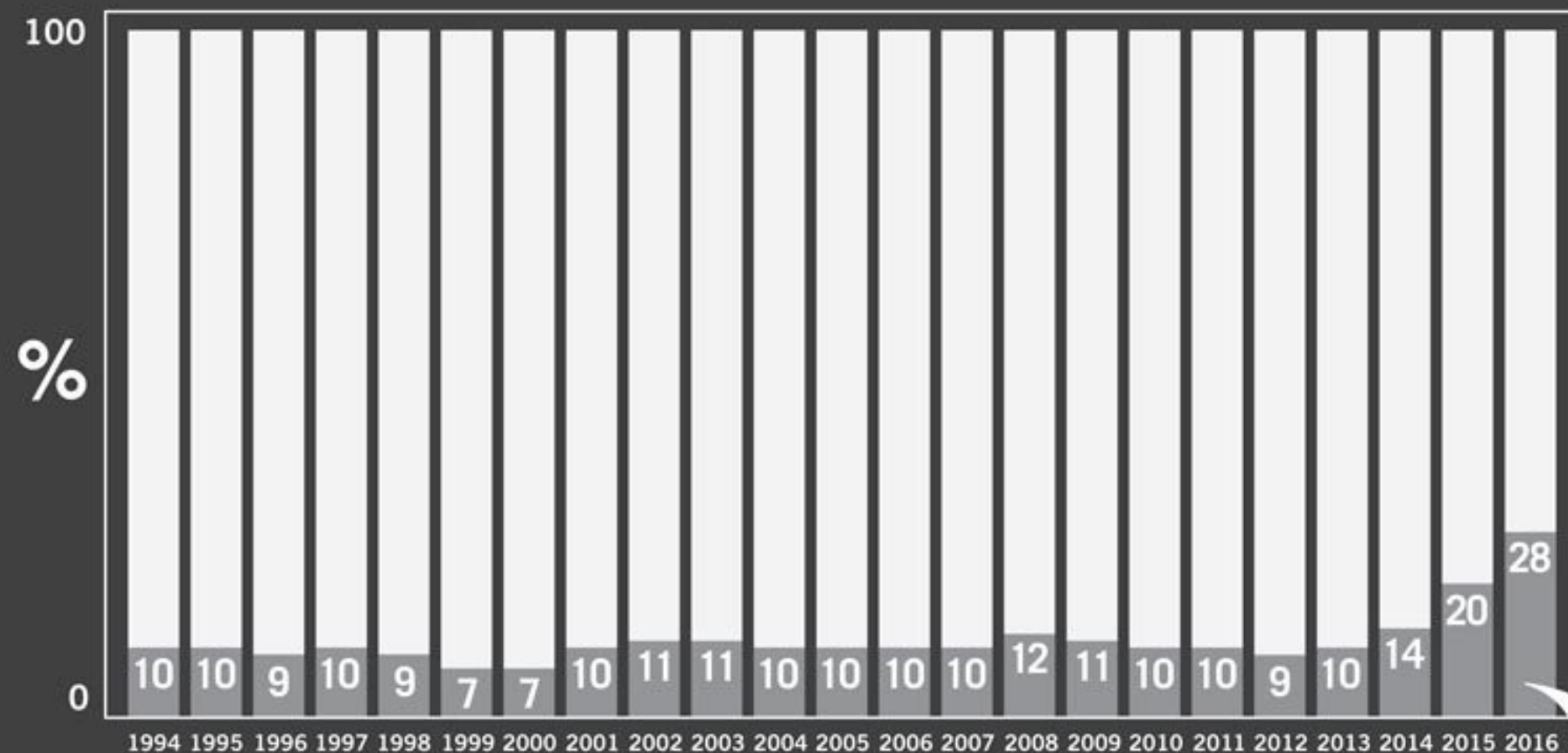
Reprinted/adapted from "The World of Children's Books Is Still Very White," by Amy Rothschild. Illustration by Tomi Um. Blog: fivethirtyeight.com



THE DIVERSITY GAP IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

23 YEARS ★ 1994 - 2016

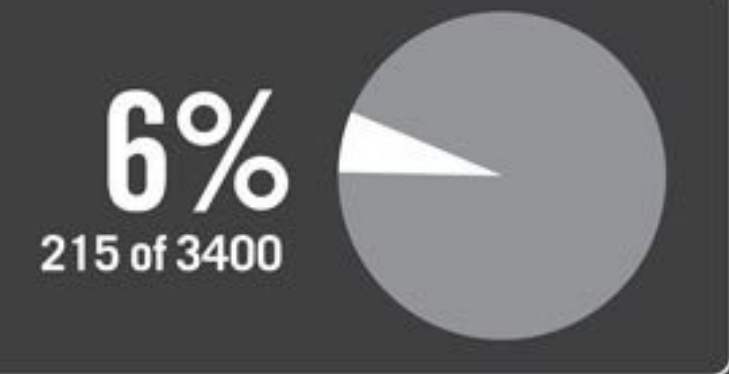
PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS BY AND/OR ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR



37% OF THE US POPULATION ARE PEOPLE OF COLOR 11% OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS IN THE PAST 23 YEARS CONTAIN MULTICULTURAL CONTENT

DID YOU KNOW?

BLACK, LATINO, AND NATIVE AUTHORS COMBINED WROTE LESS THAN 6% OF THE NEW CHILDREN'S BOOKS PUBLISHED IN 2016.



ABOUT EVERYONE • FOR EVERYONE for more conversations on diversity, visit blog.leeandlow.com

Children's Books by and about People of Color Published in the United States. Statistics gathered by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison. CCBC, <http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/booksbycolor.htm>. U.S. Census Bureau Population, Diversity, and Income Center. "United States Census Bureau." U.S. Department of Commerce. December 12, 2012. <http://www.census.gov/persistentrelationships/usbooksbycolor/2012-2013.html>. Produced by Lee & Low Books. Designed by Ben Mautner. © 2016

Issues and questions to ask yourself when reading children's or YA literature



Issues and questions to ask yourself when reading children's or YA literature

- Agency
- Representation
- Culture
- Language
- Purpose

EVALUATING LITERATURE

SUMMARY:	What is the setting of the story? Who are the main characters?
AGENCY:	<p>What causes conflict and how is it resolved? Which characters change? Which ones do not? Why?</p> <p>Who makes the decisions? Who follows orders? Who speaks and who is silent or silenced?</p> <p>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)</p>
REPRESENTATIONS:	<p>What roles are given to women, people of color, the working class and poor, and the differently abled? Is this problematic? Explain.</p> <p>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.</p>
CULTURE:	<p>What areas of the world are illustrated?</p> <p>Are the regions homogenized (i.e. does the book discuss Latin America or Columbia? Africa or Sierra Leone?)</p> <p>Does the text resist romanticizing or stereotyping the cultures?</p>
LANGUAGE:	<p>Does the book mock language?</p> <p>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?</p>
PURPOSE:	<p>What could this book help students understand?</p> <p>What are the limitations of this book? What could the teacher do to move beyond the limitations of the text?</p>

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)

RECOMMENDED

The conflict and agents of change are clearly defined, drawing attention to the reasons for the farmworkers' fight for justice.

- César Chávez and those who worked with him are depicted as intelligent, driven, compassionate, and inspired.
- The importance of family and community are centralized themes throughout the story.
- Lays out the larger social and political context behind why Chávez and other immigrant farmworkers had to travel from one farm to the next; why they did not own property in the United States; why they worked so many hours first on the farms and then in organizing and protesting.

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

TO HIS forty-Acres office.

He sat at his red Formica desk,
built by his brother Richard.

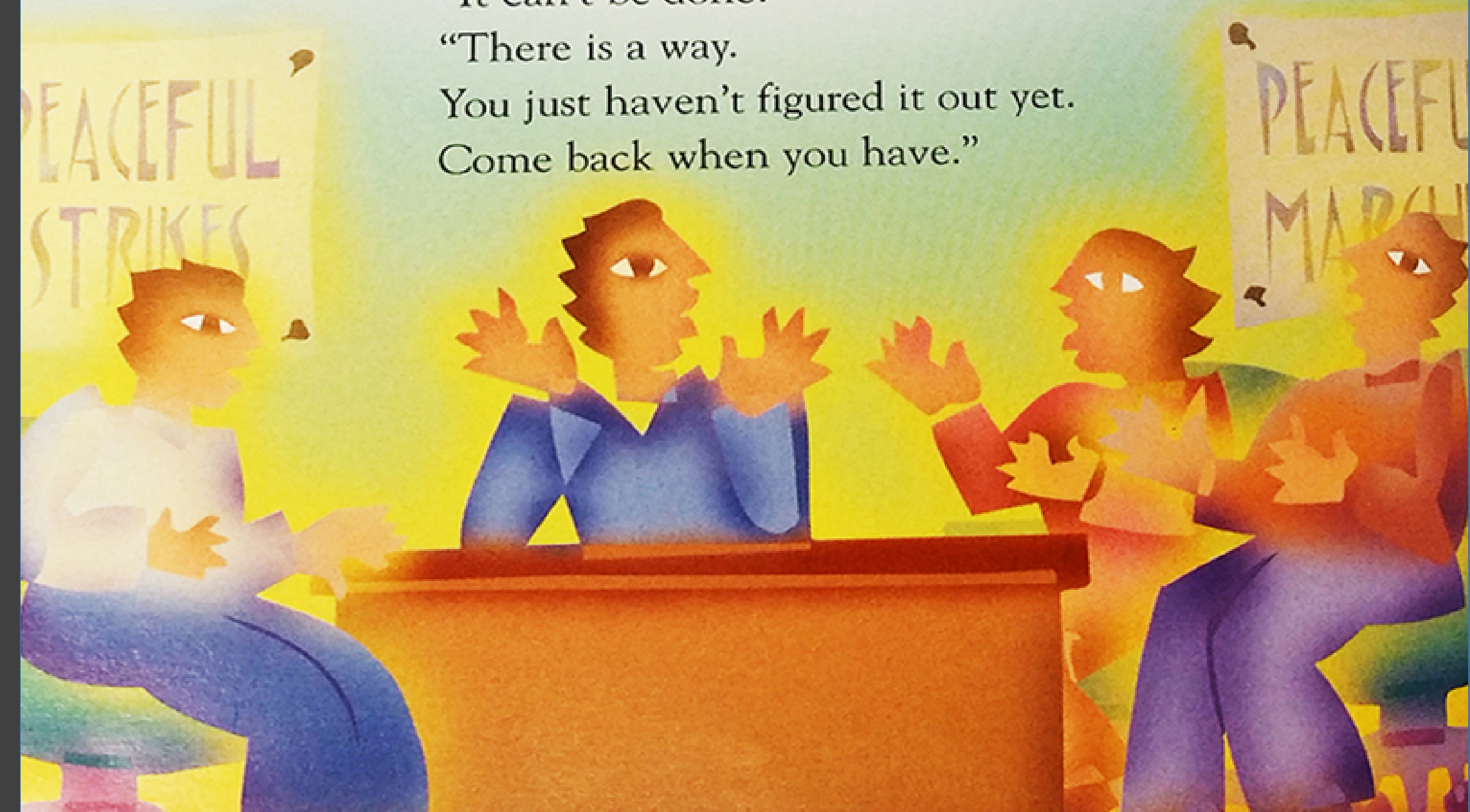
Organizers Dolores Huerta,
Richard, and cousin Manuel came in.
Butcher paper hung on the wall
with an agenda.

Peaceful strikes? Peaceful marches?
“You’re crazy!” they said.

“It can’t be done!”

“There is a way.

You just haven’t figured it out yet.
Come back when you have.”



NOT RECOMMENDED

Reinforces myth of Columbus and the conquest.

- Columbus is shown as towering and benevolent.
- Taíno (not named) are shown as idolizing him as asexualized (childlike?) and en masse (no agency, no individuality)
- Omits reference to violence, enslavement, conquest; looks peaceful
- By portraying the Taíno with their backs turned, they have neither faces nor mouths with which to speak (it's not uncommon for illustrations and book covers to only show people of color as silhouettes, with their faces obscured, or overshadowed by an Anglo character)

Follow the Dream by Peter Sis.

SLJ writes “The 15th century comes alive in this splendidly original picture book about Christopher Columbus.”



What roles are given to women, people of color, the working class and poor, and the differently abled? Is this problematic?

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?

RECOMMENDED

The people in the story represent a range of backgrounds and ethnicities. All are portrayed in a way that:

- emphasize the importance of family
- allows for individuality and variation
- does not reinforce stereotypes

'Twas Nochebuena

by Roseanne Greenfield Thong and illustrated by Sara Palacios

Then back to our houses we happily run,
knowing our *cena* has finally begun,



Smoky Night

by Eve Bunting and illustrated by David Diaz

NOT RECOMMENDED

The roles assigned to people of color:

- Denies their agency (why are the people looting?)
- Reinforces negative stereotypes (people of color are violent, unpredictable looters)
- Reinforces racist, homogenized assumptions (the people of color in the story are afraid even of each other)



What areas of the world are illustrated?

Are the regions homogenized (i.e., does the book discuss Latin America or Colombia? Africa or Sierra Leone?)

Does the text resist romanticizing or stereotyping the cultures?

Does the story present “fakelore,” or, in other words, an “original” story set in the culture of a generalized region?

Or does the story actually have deep roots in the history and traditions of a given people?

NOT RECOMMENDED

Offers a “story of Guatemala,” but homogenizes indigenous cultures within the country.

- Reduces reference to “Mayan language” in the book instead of appropriate dialect; only acknowledges that it’s based on the Mam language in the afterward
- Interspersed Spanish words seem gratuitous and at odds with the authors’ ostensible idea that this family will continue to share the stories of their culture for many years to come.
- Romanticizes Guatemalan culture (only visited Guatemala when daughter was in the Peace Corps); where is the broader extended family, for instance?

Elena’s Story by Nancy Shaw

Booklist writes that “The plot...focuses more on establishing the culture than on the story.”



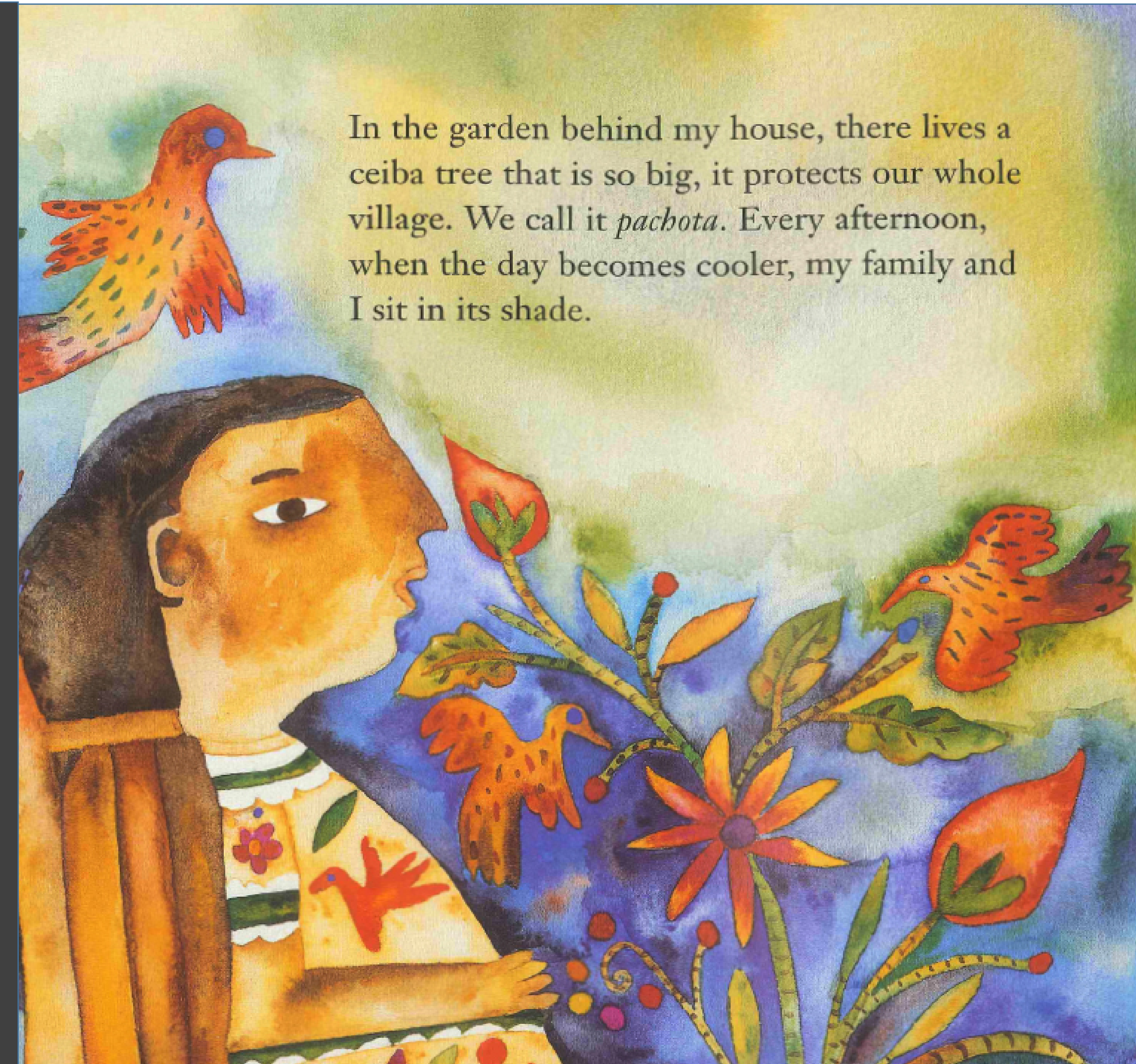
Napi

by Antonio Ramírez and illustrated by Domi

RECOMMENDED

Offers a “story of Mexico” that beautifully invites readers from within and beyond the culture:

- “We are Mazateca Indians,” the text shares. The book flap explains that Mazateca Indians live in the State of Oaxaca in Mexico.
- The illustrations and text offer insight into the experiences of Mazateca people without reducing their culture just to what a tourist might see when visiting a village (as in the last book). Here, the illustrations emphasize the importance of the natural world.
- Extended family have an important role.



In the garden behind my house, there lives a ceiba tree that is so big, it protects our whole village. We call it *pachota*. Every afternoon, when the day becomes cooler, my family and I sit in its shade.

Does the book mock language and culture? In other words, does the language help create a certain image or representation of a people?

Or does the book promote respect for the language and the culture?

Is the dialogue forced and clunky with literal, non-idiomatic translations that would be confusing to a native speaker?

Or does the language flow naturally, in both the original and translation?

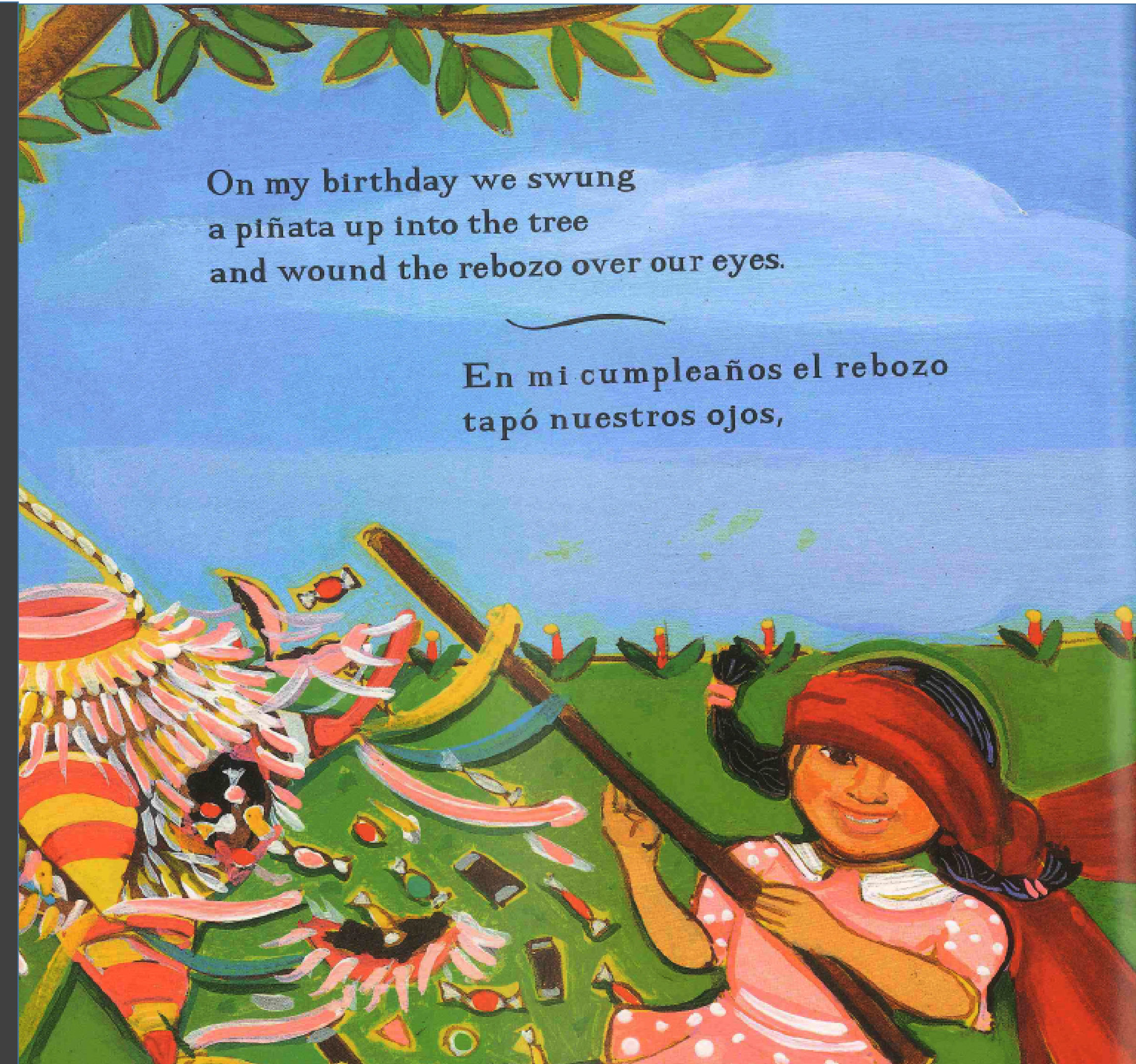
Does the book suggest that fluency in English is more valuable or important than fluency in the native language?

Or is fluency in English presented more realistically as a tool?

RECOMMENDED

- Language reinforces the cultural significance of the rebozo (Mexican shawl) by making its usage almost poetic.
- English and Spanish are presented side-by-side.
- Even in the English version, Spanish words are used fluidly and in context without awkward translations.

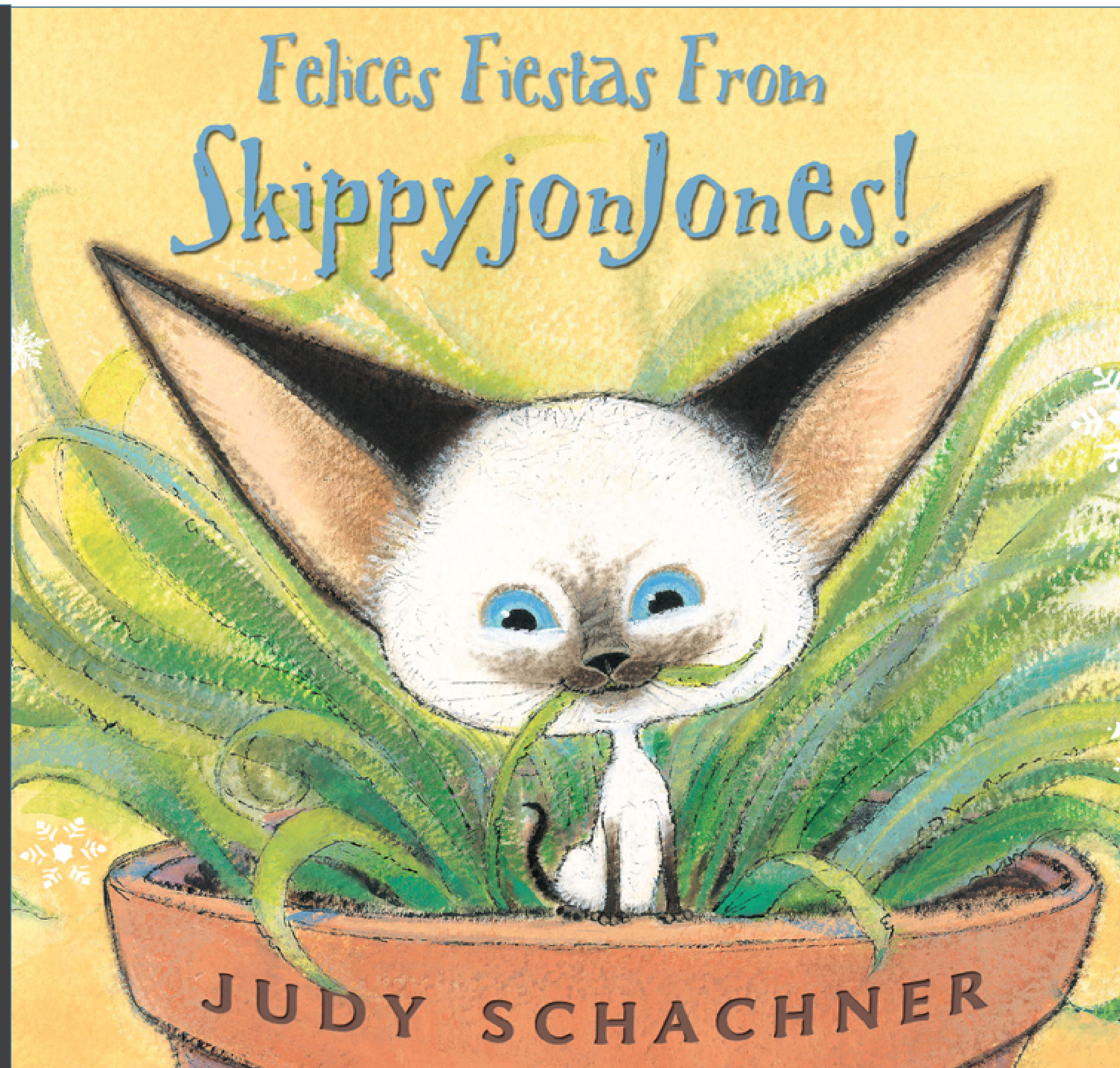
What Can You Do with a Rebozo? / ¿Qué puedes hacer con un rebozo? by Carmen Tafolla and illustrated by Amy Córdova



NOT RECOMMENDED

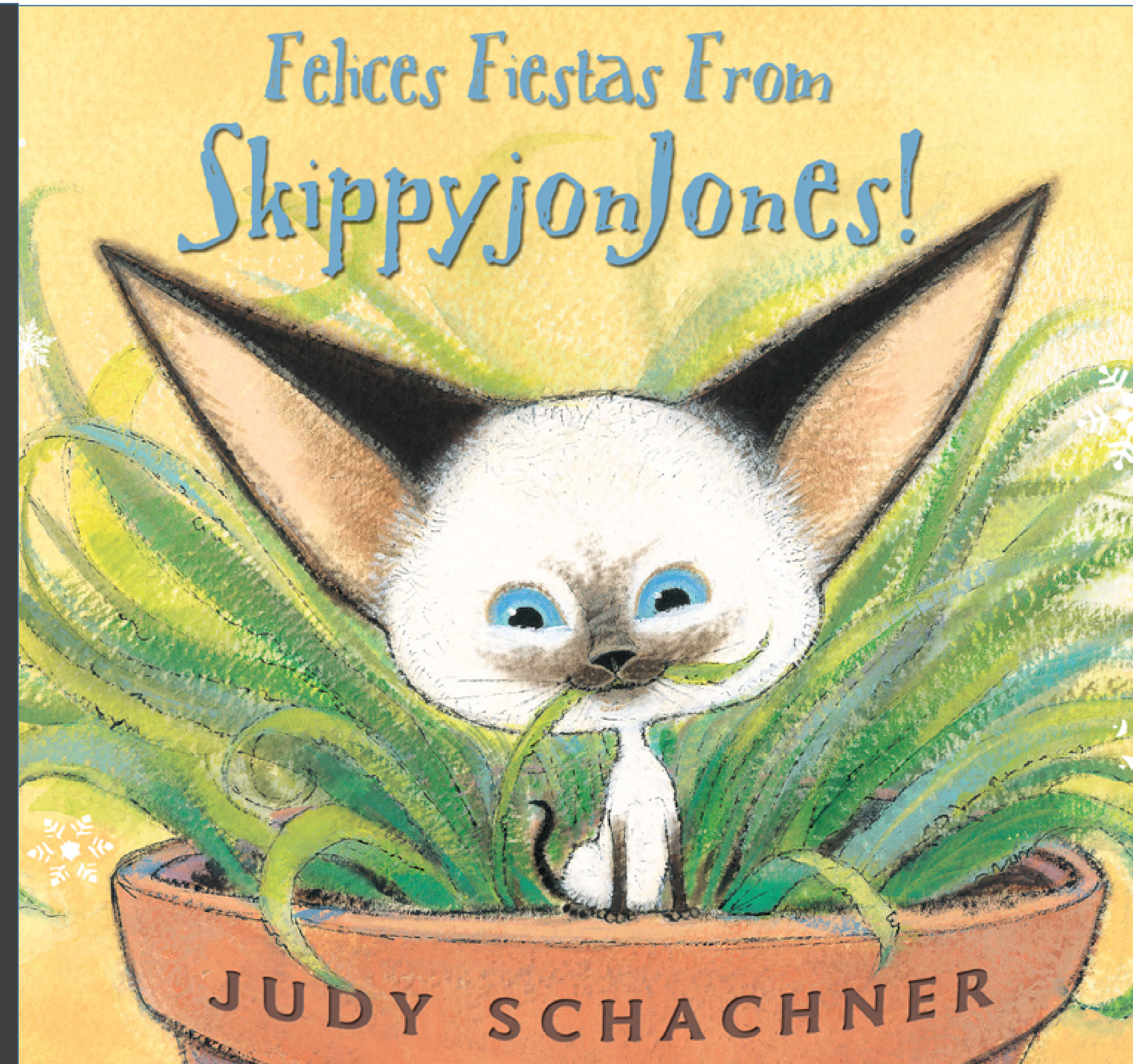
The book mocks language, culture, and community by drawing upon racist stereotypes of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Specifically in regards to the language, though, there are the following deeply troubling issues:

Skippyjon Jones series by Judith Byron Schachner.
Kirkus Reviews writes “Ole to the greatest poco perrito; he’s as full of beans as in the first escapade.”



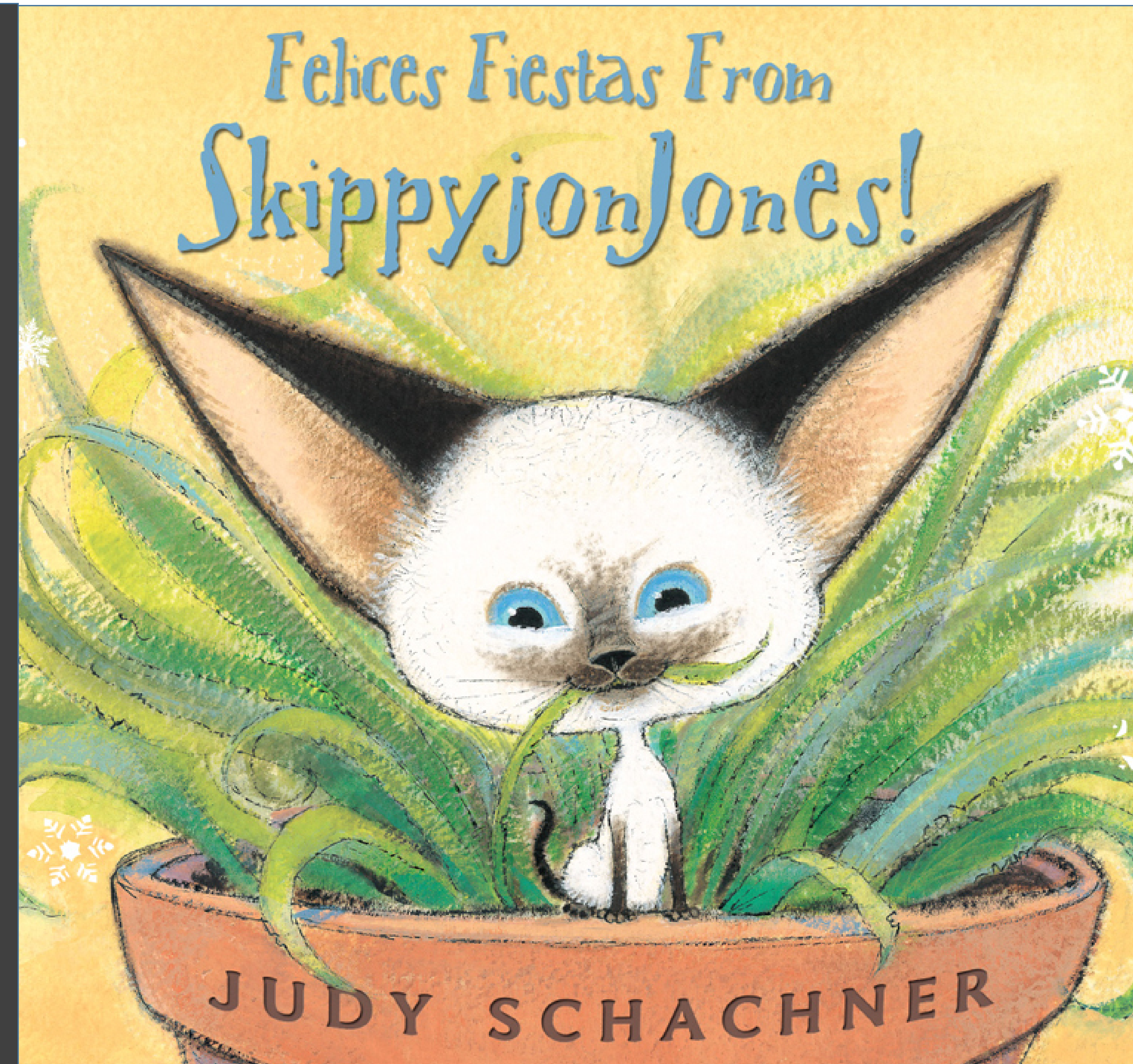
- The text uses **MOCK SPANISH**, which is loosely defined as when an author appropriates certain grammatical elements either by adding them to English words OR by “bold mispronunciation”
 - **APPROPRIATION**: Characters are named “Skippito” or “Poquito Tito” (the latter is inaccurate in Spanish, which would normally reference a person with the adjective “pequeño” (small in reference to an object) and not “poquito” (small in reference to quantity)).
 - **MISPRONUNCIATION**: “*Because, Bobocito,*” said Don Diego, the biggest of the small ones, “*We hear they are reelly, reelly beeg, dude!*”

Skippyjon Jones series by Judith Byron Schachner.
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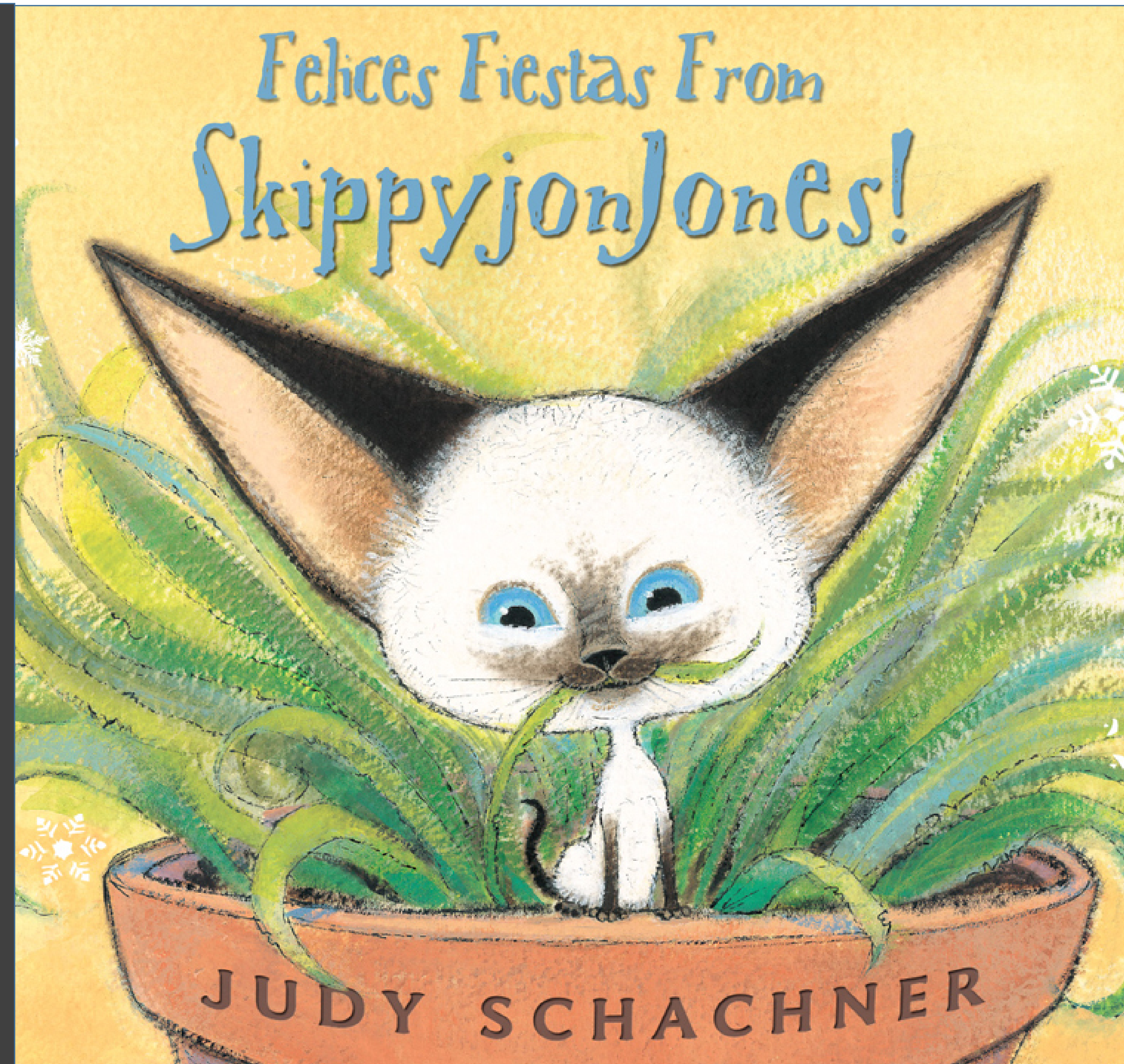
- The text's misuse and appropriation of Spanish **TRIVIALIZES** and reinforces **NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES** about Spanish language and Mexican culture.
 - **TRIVIALIZES**: Through references to “holy frijoles” and “holy guacamole,” for instance, the author dismisses the actual importance of cuisine in Mexican culture. Likewise, by loosely referencing cultural traditions such as the Mexican hat dance, the author dismisses the deeper meaning of long-seated cultural traditions.
 - **NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES**: Both language and text are loaded with portrayals that emphasize the worst stereotypes of Mexican and Mexican-American people: of being poor, lazy, drunk, noisy, and so forth.

Skippyjon Jones series by Judith Byron Schachner.
Kirkus Reviews writes “Ole to the greatest poco perrito; he’s as full of beans as in the first escapade.”



- “In sum, the Spanish words in the series, along with loaded English words used to describe the Chihuahuas, what they eat, and where they live, aren’t used, as Barrera and Quiroa (2003) propose, as symbolic and evocative elements that offer insights into Mexican, or Latino, life and language. Instead, they trivialize Latino people and their language and culture.”
- “The critical content analysis of the Skippyjon Jones series reveals that the author’s use of Spanish language creates negative images of Mexicans, the places they live, and the language they speak.”

Skippyjon Jones series by Judith Byron Schachner.
Kirkus Reviews writes “Ole to the greatest poco perrito; he’s as full of beans as in the first escapade.”



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?



- 1 De Colores: The Raza Experience in Books for Children: <http://decoloresreviews.blogspot.com/>
- 2 American Indians in Children's Literature: <http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>
- 3 Open Book*: <http://blog.leeandlow.com/>
- 4 Rethinking Schools*: <http://www.rethinkingschools.org/index.shtml> or <http://rethinkingschoolsblog.wordpress.com/>
- 5 Teaching Tolerance*: <http://www.tolerance.org/>
- 6 Latin American and Iberian Institute's K-12 Outreach*: <http://www.laii.unm.edu/outreach/index.php>
- 7 LAll Vamos a Leer*: <http://teachinglatinamericathroughliterature.wordpress.com/>
- 8 We Need Diverse Books: <http://weneeddiversebooks.org/>
- 9 Teaching for Change*: <http://teachingforchange>

01

AFRICA:
Children's Africana Book Awards
(CABA)
www.africaaccessreview.org/aar/awards.html

02

AFRICAN-AMERICAN:
Coretta Scott King Award
www.ala.org/emiert/cskbookawards

03

AMERICAN INDIAN:
American Indian Youth Literature
ailanet.org/activities/american-indian-youth-literature-award

04

ASIA/PACIFIC:
Asian/Pacific American Award for
Literature
<http://www.apalaweb.org/awards/literature-awards/>

05

LATIN AMERICA:
Américas Award
claspprograms.org/americanasaward

06

LATINO/A:
Pura Belpré // Tomás Rivera
Mexican-American Children's Book
Award
www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/belpremedal/belpreabout //
www.education.txstate.edu/c-p/Tomas-Rivera-Book-Award-Project-Link.html

07

MIDDLE EAST:
Middle East Book Award
<http://www.meoc.us/meoc/book-awards>

VAMOS A LEER

teaching latin america through literacy



ABOUT **EDUCATOR'S GUIDES** CHILDREN'S LIT YA LIT BOOK GROUP SITES WE LIKE RECOMMENDED AUTHORS CONTACT

ABOUT

Vamos a Leer is overseen by the Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAI) at the University of New Mexico. The LAI is designated a National Resource Center for Latin America by the U.S. Department of Education. The Vamos a Leer blog supports K-12 teaching about Latin America by providing resources to educators, including lesson plans, author + book suggestions, and related materials.

Here you will find Vamos a Leer Educator's Guides, materials that consist of lesson plans and activities meant to accompany the books featured in our monthly book group, Vamos a Leer. Each book is chosen because it engages in some way with Latin America, the Caribbean or Latinos in the United States. Each Educator's Guide includes background on the author and book, thematic lessons and activities, and resources to support or extend the use of the book in the classroom. The lesson plans and activities encourage the teaching of literacy through the content areas and are linked to the Common Core Standards used in New Mexico.

We have also listed books that we will create guides for in the coming year. Those titles are not hyperlinked yet and are marked as "coming soon." We will share those guides as they become available.

Grades 3-5 | Ages 8-11

Alvarez, Julia. *Return to Sender* (Yearling, 2010) | United States/Mexico | Available in Spanish

Dorris, Michael. *Morning Girl* (Scholastic, 1992) | Caribbean

Gonzalez, Christina Diaz. *The Red Umbrella* (Yearling, Random House, 2012) | Cuba

Jiménez, Francisco. *The Circuit* (University of New Mexico, 1997) | United States/Mexico | Available in Spanish

Joseph, Lynn. *The Color of My Words* (HarperCollins, 2001) | Dominican Republic | Available in Spanish

McCall, Guadalupe Garcia. *Summer of the Mariposas* (Tu Books, 2012) | Mexico



Educator's Guide: *Return to Sender*

VAMOS A LEER
teaching latin america through literacy



Return to Sender by Julia Alvarez is the selection for the LAll's Vamos a Leer book group meeting held on February 6, 2012.

The following information comprises a standards-based educator's guide that the LAll has produced to support using to support using *Return to Sender* (Julia Alvarez, Yearling, 2010) in the classroom. The standards are not included here, but are included with each section of the lesson plans in the PDF. The complete guide is available for download at no cost: [Vamos a Leer Educator's Guide: Return to Sender](#).

To read our thoughts on the novel, see our [book review](#).

BOOK SUMMARY

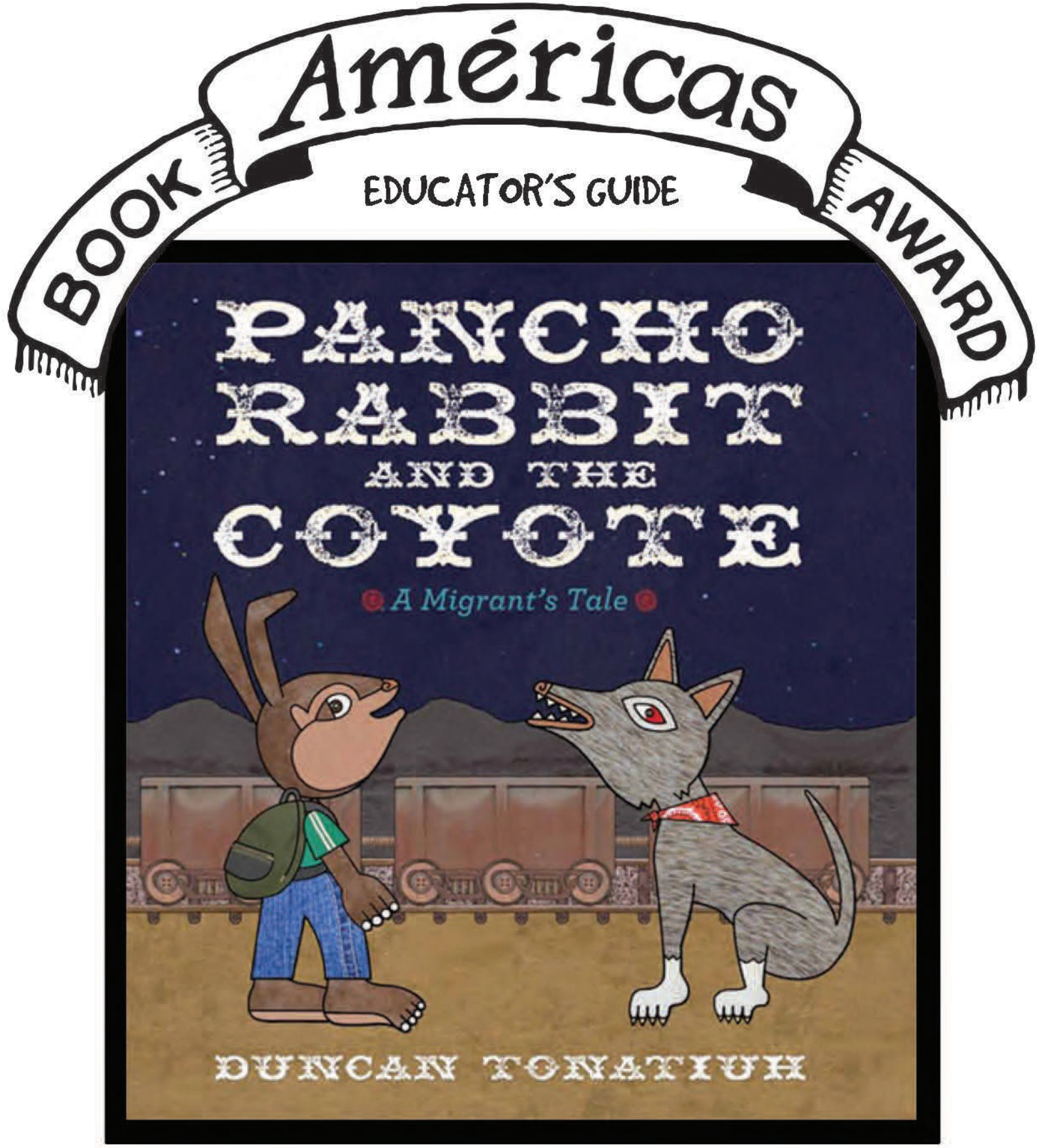
After Tyler's father is injured in a tractor accident, his family is forced to hire migrant Mexican workers to help save their Vermont farm from foreclosure. Tyler isn't sure what to make of these workers. Are they undocumented? And what about the three daughters, particularly Mari, the oldest, who is proud of her Mexican heritage but also increasingly connected to her American life. Her family lives in constant fear of being discovered by the authorities and sent back to the poverty they left behind in Mexico. Can Tyler and Mari find a way to be friends despite their differences?

*Water trickled from crystal ceilings
with a sound like quiet music.*

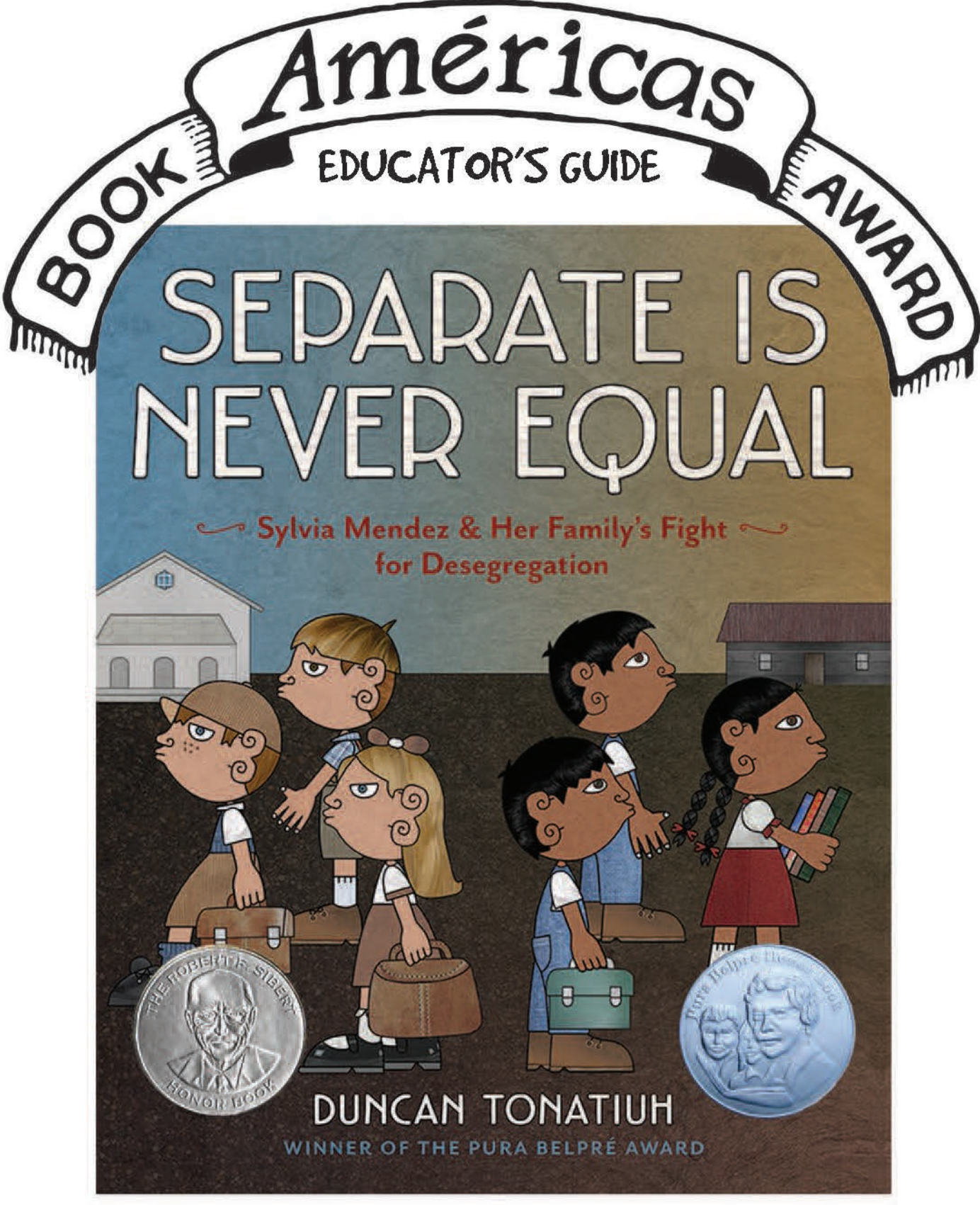
*It was easy to imagine
a peaceful future,
a peaceful past. . . .*

*Now I sleep in a real bed, dreaming
that I am seated on a green, sunny roadside,
selling flowers—cup-of-gold vine, orange trumpet,
coral vine, flame tree, ghost orchid, roses. . . .*

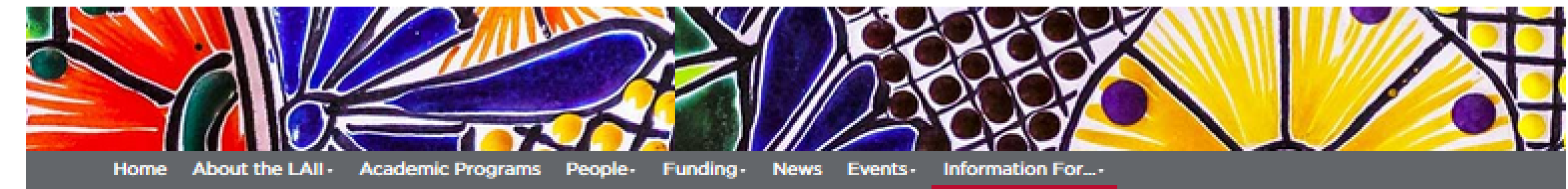
*I dream that I am able to sell all these flowers
because it is peacetime,
and blossoms are*



PRODUCED BY THE CONSORTIUM FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAMS
WRITTEN BY KATRINA DILLON



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Latin American & Iberian Institute

UNM / Home / Information For... / K-12 Educators

K-12 Educators

- Welcome
- Professional Development Workshops
- Book Group & Blog
- Curriculum >
- Local Lending Resources
- Speakers Bureau
- Youth Events
- Teacher Advisory Committee
- Contact Us

Welcome

The Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI) is committed to expanding awareness, knowledge, and understanding of Latin America and Iberia among diverse constituents. As part of that commitment, the LAI strives to create a stimulating and supportive environment for K-12 educators so that they can produce, enhance, and expand knowledge of Latin America within their classrooms. To this end we work with educators across grade levels and subject areas, providing them with the following resources.



PD Workshops

Professional development workshops for K-12 educators are offered throughout the year. These workshops cover a variety of sociocultural topics and bilingual teaching strategies.



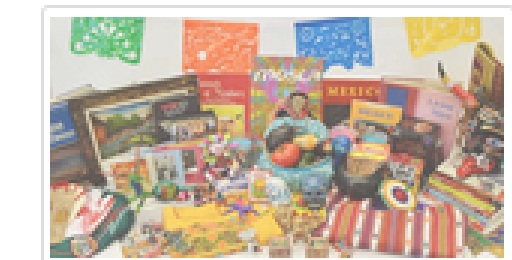
Book Group & Blog

Teaching literacy offers one of the most compelling ways to introduce culturally relevant and informed content into the K-12 classroom. With that in mind, the LAI emphasizes that support the teaching of Latin America through literature.



Curriculum

The LAI offers a range of curriculum materials and related resources to support teaching about Latin America and Iberia in K-12 classrooms. The materials are relevant across grade levels and subject areas, with many activities serving as interdisciplinary introductions to topics.



Local Lending Resources

We know that New Mexico teachers often have difficulty accessing quality multicultural resources for their classrooms. With that in mind, we have begun to acquire such materials and make them available for loan at no cost to educators.



Speakers Bureau

Given our rich connections to the Latin American community within and beyond New Mexico, we frequently host interesting speakers at the university. Many of these guests are equally interested in sharing their knowledge and experiences with K-12 classrooms.



Youth Events

The LAI is pleased to partner with area educators and organizations to annually support the following local events.



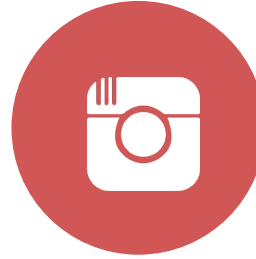
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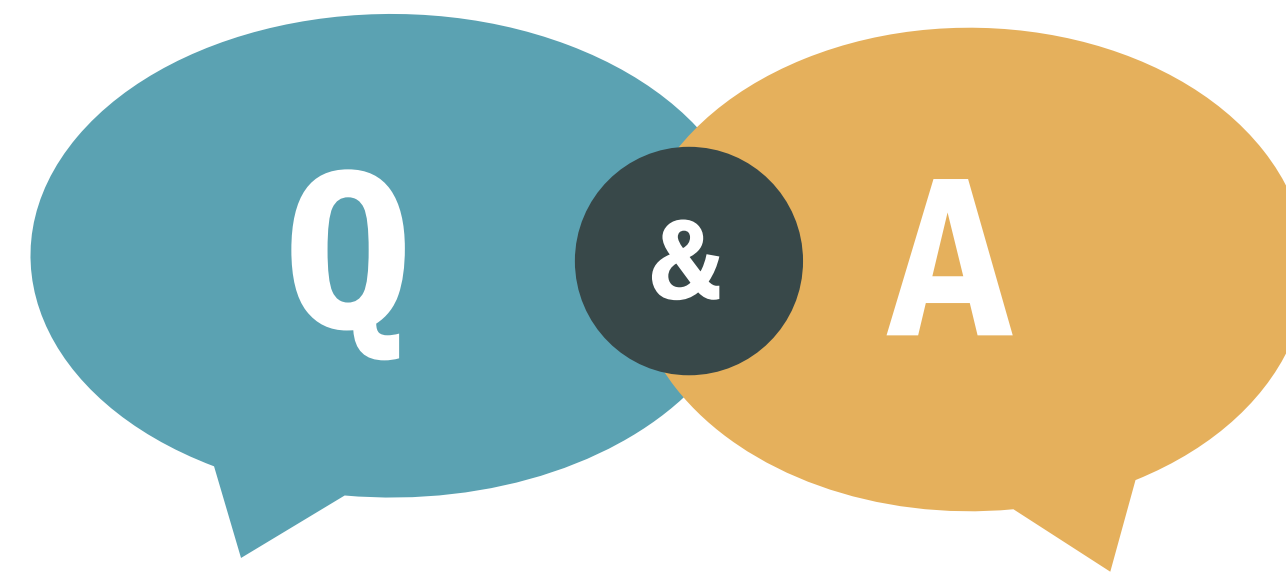
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THANKS FOR LISTENING