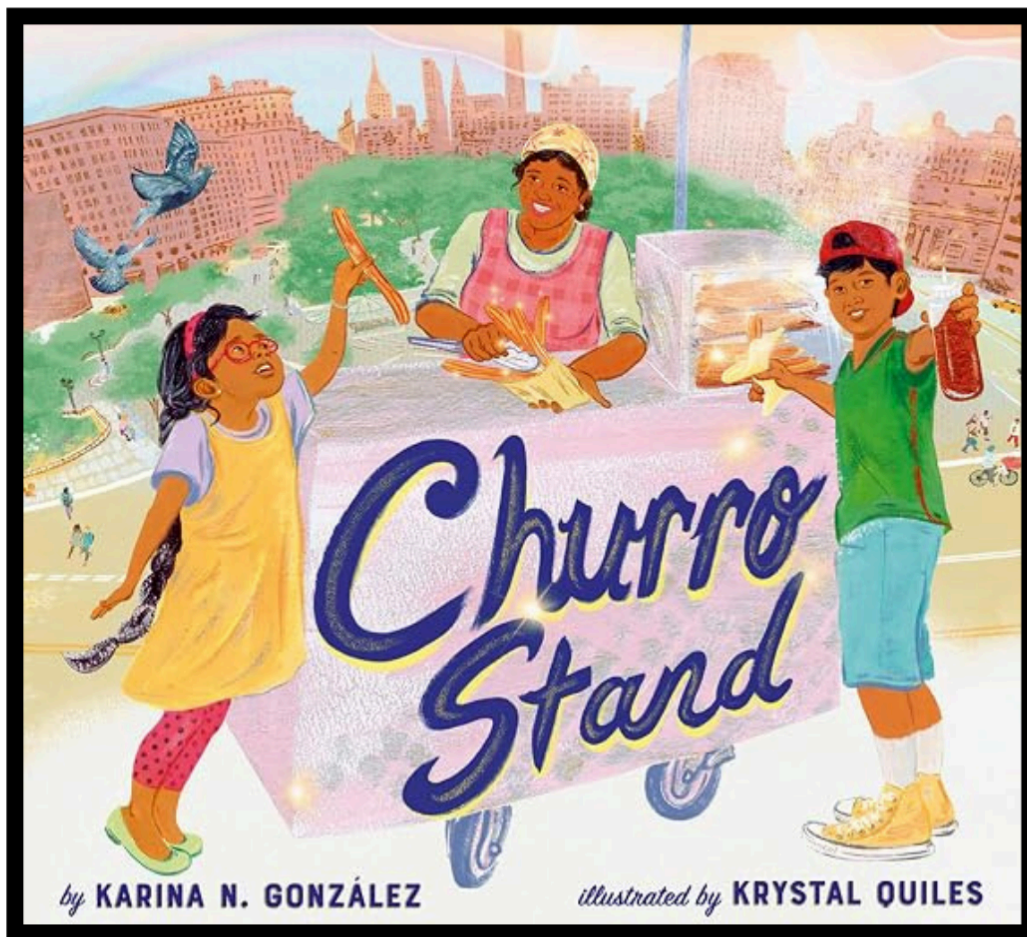


Americas Book Award

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



PRODUCED BY THE CONSORTIUM FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
PROGRAMS
WRITTEN BY KRISTINE WITKO



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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This educator's guide was written to support using *Churro Stand* in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. Produced by the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) at the University of Arizona on behalf of the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP) and the Américas Award, it was written in 2026 by Kristine Witko, Curriculum Consultant, with support from Katrina Dillon, Assistant Director of Outreach at CLAS.

ABOUT THE AMÉRICAS AWARD

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 Latinx communities in the United States, and to provide teachers with recommendations for classroom use. CLASP offers up to two annual book awards, together with a list of honor books and commended titles. For more information concerning the Américas Award, including additional classroom resources, please visit the [CLASP website](#).

The awards are administered by the Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs (CLASP) and coordinated by both Tulane University's Stone Center for Latin American Studies and the University of Arizona's Center for Latin American Studies. Generous support is also provided by Florida International University, Michigan State University, Stanford University, University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Los Angeles, UNC-Duke Consortium in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Florida, University of Michigan, University of New Mexico, University of Texas at Austin, University of Utah, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Vanderbilt University.

ABOUT CLASP

CLASP's mission is to promote all facets of Latin American studies throughout the world. Its broad range of activities include the encouragement of research activities, funding of professional workshops, advancement of citizen outreach activities, and development of teaching aids for the classroom.



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OVERVIEW

Churro Stand

Written by Karina N. González and illustrated by Krystal Quiles

Published 2024 by Abrams Books for Young Readers

ISBN: 1951836952

THEMES

Family, Community, Hard Work, Cultural Pride, Community Helpers

SYNOPSIS

From award-winning author-illustrator duo Karina N. González and Krystal Quiles comes *Churro Stand*, a heartwarming picture book celebrating love, community, and the POP, SIZZLE, and CRUNCH of a perfect churro—inspired by the author's relationship with her own mother.

Everybody loves churros!

On a hot summer's day, Lucía and her brother accompany their mother to sell delicious, sugary churros on the bustling streets of New York City. But when a thunderstorm rolls in, and the customers are chased away, Lucía's mother must improvise with a little bit of magic and lots of amor.

READING LEVEL

Grades K–2 / Ages 5–7



REVIEWS

★ "This tale of a small business succeeding is bolstered by illustrations that use perspective to create an almost 3-D effect that makes the action feel immediate and intimate. Spotlighting the power of community, this sweet (pun intended) story is warm and welcoming." — Kirkus

★ "Delving into family history, this bustling metropolitan story highlights many modes of cooperation and love." — Publishers Weekly

AWARDS

- Américas Award Honor Book, 2025
- New York Public Library's Best Children's Books of 2024



APPLICABLE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

K-12 READING

Key Ideas and Details

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.



K-12 WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: KARINA NICOLE GONZÁLEZ



Taken from [WordsByKarina.com](https://www.wordsbykarina.com):

“My insatiable curiosity of the lives of others and my experiences growing up as an only child to Puerto Rican parents has shaped the person I am today and the stories I feel called to write.

For much of my childhood, my summers were spent with my abuela in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico — la ciudad de melao melao. The breathtaking vistas, unforgettable aromas, and wondrous sounds of Puerto Rico engulfed my spirit and ignited a lasting love for my family, culture, and Mother Earth.

When my magical summers with my abuela inevitably drew to a close, I returned to New Jersey. At age 7, my parents became owners of a boarding house resided by veterans, many of whom suffered from the aftershocks of war manifested through mental illness and PTSD. My interactions with the residents over the span of my childhood years sparked an even deeper love for humanity. This love serves as my North Star, guiding me along my path today.

In my early twenties, I embarked on what felt like an interminable search for a career that aligned with my essence and eventually discovered speech-language pathology — a perfect union of my interests: language, play, and teaching.

After earning my Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology from Brooklyn College, I began working at a Title 1 public school in Bushwick, Brooklyn where I developed a love for storytelling while nurturing my students' narrative skills. Their boundless imaginations inspired this dream to write picture books for them and for us all — stories that spark that same deep love for humanity and nature that was instilled in me as a child. Picture books create learning and healing opportunities not just for children, but also for the adults who read with them.

This is the magic that I relish.

My first picture book, *The Coquíes Still Sing*, received the prestigious American Library Association's Pura Belpré Honor Award for both text and illustration in 2023 and has since sold over 40,000 copies.



It is also featured in McGraw Hill's newest textbook series, *Emerge!*, which will be distributed to millions of students across the United States. My second picture book, *Churro Stand*, was named one of the New York Public Library's Best Children's Books of 2024 and received the Américas Honor Award distinction in 2025.

Writing children's books has transformed nearly every aspect of my life, in both tangible and intangible ways. The artistic genius behind the illustrations of both books is Krystal Quiles.

When I was searching for an illustrator for *The Coquíes Still Sing*, I stumbled upon a book that she had illustrated in a Brooklyn bookstore. As I quietly read her name to myself, it felt instantly familiar — a palpable spiritual connection rooted in serendipity or even destiny. I emailed her and asked to meet. We were both shocked to discover that our families were from neighboring towns in Puerto Rico, that we were born in the same hospital in the Bronx just five months apart, and that we were living only a few blocks from each other in Brooklyn. Although we no longer live in the same city, our monthly phone conversations keep us close. One of the greatest blessings of this journey has been our 6+ year friendship.

Currently, I work as a tele-therapist at an Adult Transition Program in Fresno, California with Presence Learning, where I provide direct speech-language therapy services to adults with Autism and Down Syndrome.

I divide my time between Orlando, Florida and Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. If I'm not at my desk savoring multiple cups of coffee while working on my next manuscript, you can find me soaking up rays on a morning jog or lovingly admiring the sunset at Punta Borinquen Beach in Aguadilla."

IN HER WORDS: THE AUTHOR'S NOTE

Taken from "Author's Note" in *Churro Stand*:

"While on my way home after work, I noticed a mother selling churros inside a Brooklyn subway station with her daughter clutched to her side. In that moment, I saw my mom and me. I remembered accompanying my mother to work on holidays and weekends without understanding that she worked extra hours to pay for my beloved dance classes. Although small in stature, my mother is a *giant* force of positivity in my life and the inspiration of this story. Despite juggling multiple jobs during my childhood, traces of exhaustion on her face were hardly evident. She maintained a steady flow of energy and determination to face the daily demands of life as a mother and underpaid social worker. Here in New York City, I recognize her zeal in the multitude of workers who build the city up and keep bellies full while often going unnoticed and unappreciated. On most city blocks, you will cross paths with a food vendor who is ready to prepare a delicious plate of food or delightful snack for you at an affordable price. In fact, according to the Street Vendor Project, there are more than twenty



thousand street vendors in New York City, many of whom work in unsavory working conditions. They stand on their feet for hours at a time on blustery winter days and sweltering summer nights. *Churro Stand* was written to honor the magical heroism of working parents, grandparents, and guardians. May they be celebrated and recognized for their sacrifices. Mami, although I didn't turn out to be a dancer, I hope to move through life as gracefully as you."

A CALL TO ACTION

Taken from the end of *Churro Stand*:

There are several advocacy groups that are dedicated to educating street vendors about their legal rights while increasing public awareness about the current challenges they face and substantial contributions they provide to our communities.

Several of these organizations are listed below:

The Street Vendor Project: An Urban Justice Center advocacy group that works closely with street vendors throughout NYC. www.streetvendor.org

Inclusive Action for the City: A Los-Angeles-based community-development organization dedicated to uplifting and advocating for low-income communities through economic development initiatives. www.inclusiveaction.org

StreetNet International: A worldwide organization committed to promoting an autonomous and democratic alliance of street vendors in fifty countries. www.streetnet.org.za

Food Chain Workers Alliance: A coalition of worker-based organizations that organizes to improve wages and working conditions for all workers along the food chain. www.foodchainworkers.org



CLASSROOM RELEVANCE AND APPLICATIONS

Karina Nicole González's story *Churro Stand* is a warm and engaging story that can be enjoyed by children (and adults!) of all ages. In the book, a young girl, Lucía, and her brother help their mother run a churro stand in New York city. Her mother spends hours preparing, and the family travels together across the city to set up in Union Square, where they are greeted by other street vendors. Although Lucía has high hopes, unexpected setbacks begin to impact their sales. While she is able to problem-solve with her family, the greatest success comes when they decide to collaborate with another vendor. As people rave about mamá's churros and ask her how she makes them so delicious, she proudly tells them: "With lots of amor." By working together, the children learn the importance of responsibility, perseverance, and contributing to the family business. And through their connections with other street vendors and clients, the reader is able to see the power of community.

Churro Stand shows the dedication and sacrifice often required for family-owned businesses while celebrating the entrepreneurialism found in many communities. In this story, the family members support one another and share responsibilities to achieve success by the end. Through this book, students are introduced to the idea that although work can be challenging, it can also be rewarding. This is especially true when working with family members and providing a service for one's community. *Churro Stand* lends itself well to discussions about community helpers and the ways in which street vendors, local business owners, and public service workers all contribute to the functioning of a neighborhood or a city.

In the author's note, González describes the inspiration that led her to write this story: witnessing a mother selling churros inside a subway station in Brooklyn alongside her daughter. This made González think back to her time as a child accompanying her own mother to work. She recognized that these street vendors often work in grueling conditions—heat, cold, and rain—to make a living for their families even as they often go unacknowledged and unappreciated by many walking past them on the street. She wanted to write this book as a celebration of their hard work and dedication. She ends the author's note with a list of advocacy groups who educate street vendors about their rights and increase public awareness about their contributions. Students can research these organizations, investigate some of the issues faced by street vendors, and collaborate on solutions.

The book has many themes, including family, community, culture, perseverance, and responsibility, meaning it has a variety of different entry points for the classroom. The emphasis on family relationships creates opportunities to discuss the ways family members support one another and how cultural traditions, such as the preparation of foods, are often passed down from generation to generation. Students can interview their parents or extended family members about jobs, traditions, or responsibilities in their households growing up and share what they learn with their classmates.



Churro Stand also allows for many cross-curricular learning opportunities. For instance, students can come up with ideas for their own small businesses, choosing or creating products they would like to sell. For students who choose to create a food stand, they can design their own menus, develop recipes, and come up with a budget for buying ingredients and marketing. These activities help them to understand the planning and logistics required to run a small business.

Moreover, students can reflect on the pride Lucía feels as she contributes to her family's success and think about how they can help their own families and communities. And by discussing the importance of street vendors as community helpers, students can better understand how everyone works together to sustain a community, fostering gratitude and empathy while recognizing the need for fair labor rights and workers' protections. In doing so, students can understand how individual efforts strengthen a community, and collaboration can foster stronger connections among its members.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Before reading the book with students, you may want to introduce some of the important themes, activate any prior knowledge, and generate interest and anticipation through the following activities and/or discussion questions.

VOCABULARY

abuelita

amiga

amor

aquí

avión

blossom

caluroso

chariot

churro

delicioso

hola

pueblo

pushcart

vendor



ACTIVITY 1: PICTURE WALK

Pique students' interest, activate prior knowledge, and introduce the book through a picture walk.

PROCESS:

1. Show students the front and back cover of the book. Ask them to predict what they think the book will be about. Then, slowly flip through the pages of the book without reading any of the words. As students ask questions about each picture they see, guide them to make inferences based upon their observations. Focus on who, what, when, where, why and how questions such as: "What is happening here?" "What will happen next?" "Who do you think this is?" "How does he feel? What makes you say that?"
2. Once students have read the book, return to their thoughts and predictions, comparing them to the actual events of the book.

ACTIVITY 2: OBSERVATION CHARTS

Observation charts offer one way for students to pique their interest about a book they will begin to read. As students will be analyzing illustrations from the book, it is helpful to select pages in advance that may spark some interesting conversations. Examples include the following:

- pages 1–2 (Mamá prepares the churros)
- pages 5–6 (the family travels by subway and arrives in Union Square)
- pages 9–10 (churros are made around the world)
- pages 11–12 (advertising for the churro stand)
- pages 15–16 (thunderstorm)
- pages 19–20 (everyone eating the churros)

PROCESS:

1. Explain to students that they are going to be working in small groups. Each group will rotate around the room to view and discuss each image. One person will be the recorder at each table. When looking at an image, students will spend at least one minute silently reflecting on what they see and thinking about the questions "What do you see?" "What do you think is happening?" "How does this illustration make you feel?" Then, students will discuss their thoughts in the small group. The recorder will write down their reflections and answers to the questions on the observation chart. Sticky notes can also be used to record the group's thoughts. Explain to students that they will have a set amount of time at each image. When time is up, the teacher will give a signal and each group will move to the next image.



2. Divide students into small groups. Place an image and marker at various tables or stations in the classroom. Direct each group to the table or station where they will begin. Begin the activity. Continue rotating groups through the images until each group has seen each image.
3. Hang up all of the observation charts with comments. As a whole group, discuss each illustration, giving students time to share and respond to what they posted. Keep the charts posted throughout the reading and discussion of *Churro Stand*. Allow students to revisit them and discuss them as they think more about what the images represent.

ACTIVITY 3: COMMUNITY HELPERS

This activity helps students understand the important role that workers and business owners play in a community, connecting with Lucía's experiences in *Churro Stand*.

PROCESS:

1. Explain to students that soon, they will read a story about a girl who helps her family operate a churro stand. In preparation for reading this book, ask them to think about the people they see every day who help the community, such as providing goods or services. These people are referred to as community helpers.
2. Ask students to brainstorm different community helpers while recording their responses on the board. Encourage them to think beyond "traditional" examples like firefighters, police officers, and teachers, and include delivery drivers, food service employees, small business owners, and street vendors.
3. Tell students that they will participate in their own classroom marketplace! Divide the class into small groups. Each group can choose or be assigned a business or service, such as a fruit stand, flower stop, bookstore, bakery, or food cart.
4. Each group can have art supplies to create a sign advertising their business.
5. Next, give the groups time to collaborate and discuss how this business helps the community. Guiding questions for this discussion may include: What service do you provide? Give some examples. Where is this service typically offered? Why is this service important?
6. Each group will have time to present to the class. Their classmates can ask questions about individual products, services, and/or prices.
7. After every group has presented, lead a whole-group discussion: How do these businesses help the community? What type of work goes into running these businesses?
8. They can also have a discussion about family: Do you have family members who work hard? What do they do? Have you ever visited them at work or helped them? How did that feel?
9. Explain that this activity helped them to better understand Lucía, the main character in *Churro Stand*, who helps her mother and brother the family business by selling churros.



10. As they read the book, students can think about the ways family businesses positively contribute to a community.

ACTIVITY 4: REVIEW OF GENRE

Prepare students to read *Churro Stand* by introducing or reviewing the genre of fiction.

PROCESS:

1. Write “fiction” and “nonfiction” on the board. Ask students, “How would you define a fiction book?” Have them turn and talk then select a few to share with the class.
2. Write down the shared class definition. (Ex. Fiction is a story or poem created from the author’s imagination. It may have characters, a setting, a problem, a solution, and a lesson learned.)
3. Ask, “How would you define a nonfiction book?” Have them turn and talk then select a few to share.
4. Write down the shared class definition. (Ex. Nonfiction is based on facts, real events, or real people. It explains, informs, or persuades by giving information).
5. Ask students to point out examples of fiction around the classroom. Then, ask them to point out examples of nonfiction. (Have some examples ready to use in case students need guidance.)
6. Hold up *Churro Stand* and ask: What genre do you think this book is? Why do you say that?
7. Say, “This is a fiction book because it was created from the author’s imagination. This story will have characters, a setting, a problem, a solution, and a lesson learned.”
8. If time allows, read the blurb aloud to the class.

GUIDED READING QUESTIONS

Before reading

1. Do you think this is a fiction or nonfiction text? What makes you think that?
2. This book is fiction. It has characters, a setting, a problem, a solution, and a lesson learned.
3. Based on the title and the illustration, what do you think this story will be about?
4. Read the blurb on the front cover. Who are the characters? What do you predict will happen in this story?

During reading

Transferable Questions

1. (Every few pages) What is happening?
2. Who are the characters? What do we know about them?
3. How does the character feel? How do you know?



4. What lessons can we learn from this book?

Text-Based Questions

1. What do you notice Mamá doing at the beginning of the book?
2. What does Lucía's mother do for work?
3. Where does the family travel to? Why?
4. What do the children do when people walk past and ignore their food stand? How do they try to solve this problem? What happens as a result?
5. Why is the thunderstorm such a problem?
6. After the storm, what does the family do in an effort to sell more churros? Does it work?
7. How does the family feel at the end of the story? Why?

After reading

1. Have you read any other books about similar themes? Examples can be family, hard work, community, and cultural traditions. What happened in those books? How were they similar or different?
2. Have you read other books by the same author or illustrator? What were those books about and was this one similar or different?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

There are so many different ways one can approach a unit on the themes discussed in *Churro Stand*. The context in which one is teaching is of paramount importance. Not only do we need to consider the age/grade level of the students, but also students' own personal backgrounds and family histories. As with any lesson, it's important to consider the needs of your students and plan accordingly. With this in mind, we've provided a variety of extension activity ideas and resources below that can be used in conjunction with the book.

APPROACH 1: LITERACY CONNECTIONS

To expand the literacy connections made when using *Churro Stand*, consider including the readings discussed below.

“Growing an Artist”

Similar to *Churro Stand*, this children's book connects with the themes of community helpers, family, and pride in one's work. *Growing an Artist*, written by John Parra, tells the story about Juanito and his father. Juanito helps his father with the family's landscaping business. Although Juanito loves working outside with the plants and flowers, when he sees a classmate from school, the student turns away from him. Juanito is surprised and dismayed that not everyone understands or appreciates the work his father does. However, he loves the opportunity to express himself creatively and design gardens for others. Throughout the book, he learns the



importance of family, hard work, perseverance, creativity, and being yourself. He respects and appreciates his father's work, which is much more complex than others may understand. Students can make various connections to *Churro Stand* and can discuss the importance of different roles in the community, including workers whose roles have not always been respected or showcased.

PROCESS:

1. Begin by asking students open-ended questions, such as, "What are some examples of community helpers?" "Who are some community helpers that we do not often hear about?" "Why are they important to our community?"
2. Explain, "Today, we will read a fiction book called *Growing an Artist* by John Parra. Look at the cover. What do you notice? What do you think this story will be about?"
3. State, "As we read today, we'll meet our characters, Juanito and his father, as they work for the family landscaping business. While we read, we'll think about the problem in the story and how it is solved. We can notice how the characters solve the problem by paying attention to what they say and do."
4. Read the book. Occasionally stop to ask comprehension questions: "Who are our characters? What do we know about them?" "Where does the story take place?" "What is happening here?" "What will happen next? Why?" "How does this character feel?" "How do you think the story will end?"
5. Upon finishing the book, ask students to turn to a partner and re-tell the key parts of the story. Then ask them: "What was the problem in the story? How do the characters solve the problem?"
6. Make the connection to *Churro Stand*: "How are these two books similar? How are they different? What do they teach us about community helpers? What can they teach us about work?"
7. As a post-reading activity, teachers can choose from a range of choices. Students can select a community helper and research online to learn more about their role, compiling the information into a brief presentation that can be shared with their classmates. Students can also design their own garden, selecting plants, flowers, trees, and artistic designs, as well as creating a daily budget.

"Alma and How She Got Her Name"

Similar to *Churro Stand*, *Alma and How She Got Her Name*, written by Juana Martínez-Neal, is an enjoyable story that highlights themes of family and identity. It also highlights a strong relationship between a child and a parent. This book is about a little girl who has 6 names: Alma Sofía Esperanza José Pura Candela. One day, she asks her father why she has so many names, and he tells her the rich history of each one and the people that they honor. Alma ultimately feels a sense of pride regarding each of her names.



PROCESS:

1. Ask students several open-ended questions, such as, “Why are names important?” “Do you have any special names that repeat in your family?” “Are you named after anyone?” Give students time to turn and talk and choose some to share with the class.
2. Explain, “Today, we are going to read a fiction book about a girl with many names. As we read, pay attention to how Alma feels about her name by noticing what she says.”
3. Read the book. Occasionally stop to ask comprehension questions: “Who are our characters? What do we know about them?” “Where does the story take place?” “What is happening here?” “What will happen next? Why?” “How does this character feel?” “How do you think the story will end?”
4. Upon finishing the book, ask students to turn to a partner and re-tell the key parts of the story. Then ask them: “What lesson did Alma learn at the end? What lesson can we, as readers, learn from this story?”
5. Make the connection to *Churro Stand*: “How are these two books similar? How are they different? What do they teach us about family?”
6. Students can engage in a variety of activities related to their names. They can create an acrostic poem, in which they write their name vertically and choose an adjective to describe themselves for each letter. They may conduct an interview with their parents or guardians to learn why their name was chosen. They may also conduct an internet search to look up the meaning of their name, its origins, and where it is commonly used.

“*The Circuit*”

The Circuit by Francisco Jiménez is an autobiographical young adult book that describes the experiences of Panchito, a Mexican immigrant boy, and his family as they travel throughout California working as migrant farm laborers. Jiménez tells the experience of crossing the border and the constant movement as they search for work. They spend long hours picking crops and must relocate to follow the harvest seasons. Panchito struggles to attend school long-term, as work must take priority. At one point, Panchito is able to attend school for a longer period of time. His teacher recognizes his potential and encourages him. Just as Panchito begins to feel hopeful, he is once again pulled out of school to follow the available farm work. This story shows the sacrifices that migrant families may need to make when they have to choose between educational opportunities and economic survival. *The Circuit* connects to *Churro Stand* because it describes Panchito working alongside his family; however, it contrasts from *Churro Stand* because Panchito must make extreme sacrifices to support the family. Although Lucía and her brother help their mother, they do so in more of a supportive role.

PROCESS:

1. Ask students, “Have you ever helped a family member with a job? Or have you ever helped out your family at home by doing chores? How did it feel to contribute?”



2. Explain, “Today, we’re going to begin reading *The Circuit* by Francisco Jiménez. This is a story about a young boy named Panchito whose family travels throughout California as migrant farm workers. Like Lucía in *Churro Stand*, Panchito works alongside his family. However, their experiences may be different. As we read, let’s think about the similarities and differences between the two characters, as well as what lessons we might learn from their experiences.”
3. As students read sections of the book, continually make connections to *Churro Stand*. Some questions include: “How are Lucía and Panchito’s experiences similar? How are they different?” “What sacrifices does Panchito make? What sacrifices does Lucía make?”
4. Students can write a compare and contrast response analyzing the experiences of the two characters.
5. Ask questions to consider the broader implications of books like *The Circuit* and *Churro Stand*: “What have we learned from the experiences of the characters in these two books?” “What do these books tell us about the contributions of Latinos?”

APPROACH 2: CONTRIBUTIONS OF LATINOS TO THE UNITED STATES

In the author’s note of *Churro Stand*, González reflects on her mother’s dedication to working hard to support her family. She also discusses the many street vendors and workers whose labor helps to sustain communities, even though they may often go unnoticed. *Churro Stand* describes just one example of the important contributions made by Latinos to their communities, and more broadly, to the United States. In this activity, students can research other Latinos and discuss their long-lasting impacts.

PROCESS:

1. Begin by reading the author’s note at the end of *Churro Stand*. Ask students questions like, “What did you learn about the author’s mother?” “What were some of her positive impacts on the community?” “How did these impacts help people over time?”
2. Explain that many Latinos have had positive impacts on the United States through their work, art, activism, and more. Consider reading the following article: [“8 Latinos Who Influenced American Life”](#) written by Sevanny Campos. Discuss: “Have you heard of any of these individuals before? What did you learn about them? What were some of their contributions?”
3. Explain that for class today, each student will have the opportunity to research the contributions of Latinos. Students can work in pairs or individually and can choose one Latino who has played a key role in society. They will research important facts about the individual’s upbringing, key influences, major contributions, and their long-lasting impacts. Once completed, students can present to the class.



APPROACH 3: FAMILY INTERVIEW

During Lucía's experience selling churros, she and her family problem-solve together, support each other, and see how their business connects with the broader community. A family interview activity can similarly serve as a bonding activity that allows students to learn more about their family. The questions related to work and labor can shed light on the ways that their family members contribute to their household, the community, and beyond.

PROCESS:

1. Tell students, "In the story, Lucía bonds with her family by working with them. Now, you have a chance to learn more about someone in your family."
2. Ask students to choose someone in their family who they would like to learn more about.
3. In class, students will take 10-15 minutes to develop interview questions for this family member.
4. Students will go home and record their interviews with family members.
5. Afterward, students can create a visual presentation of their interview. Options include a poster or a PowerPoint presentation. They can share key findings from their interviews with the class.

APPROACH 4: RESEARCH THE RIGHTS OF STREET VENDORS

The author's note of *Churro Stand* highlights the importance of street vendors as active contributors to the community and highlights a variety of organizations that educate vendors about their legal rights.

PROCESS:

1. As a class, re-read the author's note and the call to action at the end of *Churro Stand*. Ask students questions like, "Why do you think organizations have been created to support street vendors?" "What challenges do you think street vendors face?" "Why do you think it is important for workers to learn about their rights?"
2. Explain that while street vendors provide valuable goods and services to their communities, many of them still face challenges related to working conditions, financial stability, and legal protections.
3. Together, gain context about this issue by reading through the blog post, "[We Keep Us Safe.](#)" Ask students to share reactions and what they have learned.
4. Divide students into small groups and assign each group one of the organizations listed in the book. Teachers can also decide to research and select local advocacy organizations instead. Ask students to research their organization's mission, the population it serves, the issues it focuses on, and the actions it takes to support workers.
5. Next, students can create and share a visual presentation through a PowerPoint, poster, or infographic.



6. Once presentations have concluded, ask students as a whole-group: “Why are workers’ rights important?” “How do fair working conditions benefit workers and the larger communities that they serve?” “How can communities support street vendors?”

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

To complement and enhance teaching about *Churro Stand*, we’ve compiled the following selective multimedia resources that are available at no cost online.

INTERVIEWS WITH KARINA N. GONZÁLEZ

- Read [“Review and Author Q&A: Churro Stand by Karina N. González and Illustrated by Krystal Quiles”](#)

During this interview, González discusses topics such as the inspiration for *Churro Stand*, the research involved in preparing to write the book, and the positive working relationship with her illustrator, Krystal Quiles. The author goes into detail regarding a tense political climate in New York City several years before writing the book and the ways in which a particular mayoral candidate had chosen to single out street vendors as a target of their campaign, even mentioning women selling churros in particular. She describes the ways these vendors have been unfairly harassed and the advocacy of organizations that aim to address this issue. In a poignant note, González mentions the awe that children have of their parents and the way in which Lucía gazes at her mom like a magical hero; the author notes that her mother *is* a hero, as she is able to make great sacrifices to support her family.

- Read [“Canvas Rebel: Meet Karina González”](#)

Although this interview was published before González wrote *Churro Stand*, this interview is still valuable for classrooms reading the book because the author shares personal information related to her creative process, including what inspired her to be a writer and the most rewarding parts about being creative. The author also explains that although it was difficult for her to break into the field and get published, the drive instilled in her from her parents is what pushed her to persevere.



COMPLEMENTARY LITERATURE

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Titles marked with * are Americas Award recognized titles.

Alma and How She Got Her Name by Juana Martinez-Neal. Candlewick, 2018.

If you ask her, Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela has way too many names: six! How did such a small person wind up with such a large name? Alma turns to Daddy for an answer and learns of Sofia, the grandmother who loved books and flowers; Esperanza, the great-grandmother who longed to travel; José, the grandfather who was an artist; and other namesakes, too. As she hears the story of her name, Alma starts to think it might be a perfect fit after all—and realizes that she will one day have her own story to tell. In her 2019 Caldecott Honor Book, Juana Martinez-Neal opens a treasure box of discovery for children who may be curious about their own origin stories or names.

**Barrio Rising: The Protest that Built Chicano Park* by María Dolores Águila and illustrated by Magdalena Mora. Dial Books, 2024.

Barrio Logan, one of San Diego's oldest Chicane neighborhoods, once brimmed with families and stretched all the way to the glorious San Diego Bay. But in the decades after WWII, the community lost their beach and bayfront to factories, junkyards, and an interstate that divided the neighborhood and forced around 5,000 people out of their homes. Then on April 22, 1970, residents discovered that the construction crew they believed was building a park—one the city had promised them years ago—was actually breaking ground for a police station. That's when they knew it was time to make their voices heard. *Barrio Rising* invites readers to join a courageous young activist and her neighbors in their successful twelve-day land occupation and beyond, when Barrio Logan banded together and built the colorful park that would become the corazón of San Diego's Chicane community. Also available in Spanish/también disponible en español: *El barrio se levanta*

**Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales. Neal Porter Books, 2018.

Dreamers is a celebration of making your home with the things you always carry: your resilience, your dreams, your hopes and history. It's the story of finding your way in a new place, of navigating an unfamiliar world and finding the best parts of it. In dark times, it's a promise that you can make better tomorrows. This lovingly-illustrated picture book memoir looks at the myriad gifts migrantes bring with them when they leave their homes. It's a story about family. And it's a story to remind us that we are all dreamers, bringing our own strengths wherever we roam. Beautiful and powerful at any time but given particular urgency as the status of our own Dreamers becomes uncertain, this is a story that is



both topical and timeless. The lyrical text is complemented by sumptuously detailed illustrations, rich in symbolism. Also included are a brief autobiographical essay about Yuyi's own experience, a list of books that inspired her (and still do), and a description of the beautiful images, textures, and mementos she used to create this book. A parallel Spanish-language edition, *Soñadores*, is also available.

Fridays Are for Churros by Jenny Alvarado. Holiday House, 2025.

Every Friday, Emi and her Papi made churros for the entire familia. Now in their new apartment in the big city, Papi is always working, and there are no churros, and no familia, on Fridays. Until, Emi smells something sweet and delicious coming from her neighbor Señora Luisa's apartment. Emi has an idea! Maybe she can make churros after all, with a little help. From Señora Luisa, she can borrow flour. Tomas in 312 has sugar. Marisol in 512 has a piping tip. Soon Emi's apartment is filled with the scent of fresh churros, new foods, and new friends! A story of food and community, *Fridays Are for Churros* celebrates old traditions becoming new, and strangers becoming friends.

**Growing an Artist* by John Parra. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2024.

Today is a big day—the first time Juanito gets to help his papi on the job as a landscape architect! Throughout the day, Juanito sketches anything that catches his eye: a nest full of baby birds, a nursery with row upon row of plants and flowers, and more. Father and son travel from house to house, pruning, weeding, mowing, and turning overgrown and chaotic yards into beautiful spaces. A few of the clients don't appreciate Papi's hard work, like Juanito's classmate who pretends not to see him. But Papi always feels pride in owning his own business and in a job well done. And at the end of the day, Juanito may get the chance to turn his artistic eye toward landscape design—just like his papi.

**Hopeful Heroes: More Poems About Amazing Latinos* by Margarita Engle and illustrated by Juliet Menéndez. Godwin Books, 2025.

Prepare to be inspired by this empowering collection of poetry that tells a larger story about fortitude and community across Hispanic history. From environmental activists such as Christina Figueres to record breaking athletes like Pelé, each role model featured is a legend in their own right. There's no better time to champion the accomplishments of this remarkable group of unsung heroes from all across Latin America! Those profiled in this collection include Anacaona, Martín de la Cruz and Juan Badiano, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Micaela Bastidas Puyucahua, Simón Bolívar, Mariana Grajales Cuello, Ana Roqué de Duprey, Julio Garavito Armero, Ramón Fonst Segundo, Christiana Figueres, Juano Hernández, Gabriela Mistral, Martín Chambi de Coaza, Marina Núñez del Prado, Noé Canjura, Nicolás García Urriburu, Pelé, and Rigoberta Menchú Tum.

Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell, illustrated by Rafael López. Clarion Books, 2016.



What good can a splash of color do in a community of gray? As Mira and her neighbors discover, more than you might ever imagine! Based on the true story of the Urban Art Trail in San Diego, California, *Maybe Something Beautiful* reveals how art can inspire transformation—and how even the smallest artists can accomplish something big. Pick up a paintbrush and join the celebration!

**Menudo Sunday* by María Dolores Águila and illustrated by Erika Meza. Dial Books, 2025.

Sundays are the best: that's when a little girl and her mamá, abuelitos, tías and primos all gather together to eat yummy menudo, a traditional Mexican soup. But when playtime with the cousins and family dogs gets out of hand and Abuelito Esteban's special bowl of menudo breaks, everyone has to pitch in to make a new batch! Through all the menudo mishaps and sneaky snacks for perritos with wagging tails, young readers will giggle as they learn to count from 1-15 in Spanish and English. Bonus materials at the back of the book include a glossary of Spanish words, a note from the author, and tips for hosting your very own Menudo Sunday!

**Mistaco: A Tale of Tragedy y Tortillas* by Eliza Kinkz. Kokila, 2025.

After an awful day at school (including a tragic but plausibly deniable mishap with a pudding cup), Izzy wants to be left alone. But it's Friday, and that means making tortillas with Lito. As the mistakes pile up, they come tumbling out of Izzy—and Lito surprises her by saying everyone makes mistakes, and if she makes a tortilla out of her mistakes, he will EAT it. "Mmmm. . .spicy! And boogery! With a hint of courage. My favorite taco EVER!" Suddenly, the whole family is confessing and getting mistakes off their chests with a feast of mistacos! A delightfully silly picture book for fans of *Dragons Love Tacos* and *The Book of Mistakes*. Includes instructions on how to make and enjoy your own mistacos!

**My Papi Has a Motorcycle* by Isabel Quintero and illustrated by Zeke Peña. Kokila, 2019.

When Daisy Ramona zooms around her neighborhood with her papi on his motorcycle, she sees the people and places she's always known. She also sees a community that is rapidly changing around her. But as the sun sets purple-blue-gold behind Daisy Ramona and her papi, she knows that the love she feels will always be there.

**Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale* written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2013.

Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote opens with festive scenes of the Rabbit family preparing for Papá Rabbit's homecoming. Musicians, family and friends gather to welcome home Papá who had traveled north to work in the carrot and lettuce fields, years before. Plates of mole, rice and beans are prepared in anticipation of his arrival and the house is strung with papel picado. When Papá Rabbit doesn't arrive, his son Pancho decides to sneak away in the dark of the night to find him. The reader follows the young rabbit as he travels north with the aid of a sneaky coyote by train, by river, by tunnel, and by desert.



Tonatiuh bravely presents the controversial issue of illegal immigration through the lens of a children's fable. Inspired by 14th century Mixtec codices and traditional folklore, the author / illustrator presents the sometimes startling realities of many modern day immigrants in a form which can be appreciated by both young and old alike. (Grades Kindergarten and up)

Classroom Resources: [Educator's Guide for Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale](#) written by Katrina Dillon on behalf of CLASP.

**The Circuit* (graphic novel) by Francisco Jiménez and illustrated by Celia Jacobs. Clarion Books, 2024.

An honest and evocative account of a family's journey from Mexico to the fields of California—and to a life of backbreaking work and constant household moves—as seen through the eyes of a boy who longs for education and the right to call one place home. A popular choice for community reads, as well as school curricula and curriculum adoptions, Francisco Jiménez's award-winning memoir, now brought to life in Celia Jacob's beautiful and resonant artwork, is a powerful story of survival, faith, and hope.

**The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child* by Francisco Jiménez. University of New Mexico Press, 1997.

After dark in a Mexican border town, a father holds open a hole in a wire fence as his wife and two small boys crawl through. So begins life in the United States for many people every day. And so begins this collection of twelve autobiographical stories by Santa Clara University professor Francisco Jiménez, who at the age of four illegally crossed the border with his family in 1947. "The Circuit," the story of young Panchito and his trumpet, is one of the most widely anthologized stories in Chicano literature. At long last, Jiménez offers more about the wise, sensitive little boy who has grown into a role model for subsequent generations of immigrants. These independent but intertwined stories follow the family through their circuit, from picking cotton and strawberries to topping carrots--and back again--over a number of years. As it moves from one labor camp to the next, the little family of four grows into ten. Impermanence and poverty define their lives. But with faith, hope, and back-breaking work, the family endures.

**The Interpreter* by Olivia Abtahi and illustrated by Monica Arnaldo. Kokila, 2025.

Some kids have one job: to be a kid! Cecilia has two. When she isn't on the soccer field scoring goals, she's accompanying her parents to all kinds of grown-up places, like the DMV, the accountant's office, and the auto shop. She helps them translate from Spanish to English and from English to Spanish. It's an important job, and it can even be fun. It's also hard work. Sometimes Cecilia's second job is so much responsibility, it feels like she'll split in two! Is it time for Cecilia to blow her whistle and call for a time-out? Olivia Abtahi's clever text and Monica Arnaldo's charming illustrations capture a common aspect of life for immigrant and bilingual families while offering a model for teamwork that helps everyone feel understood.



The Youngest Sister by Suniyay Moreno and illustrated by Mariana Chiesa. Greystone Kids, 2022.

In the Andean foothills, a five-year-old Quechua girl is entrusted with a big job: to collect a marrow bone from the neighbor for the family soup. A stunning debut from Indigenous author Suniyay Moreno. Picu's family is very poor. In the dry Andean foothills, her mother must feed fourteen people—her kids, her relatives' kids, and the hired hand's kids—every day. One morning, Picu, the youngest sister, is sent to get a marrow bone from a neighbor. The bone will add flavor and nutrition to the lunchtime soup. Her mother warns her not to dawdle on the two-hour walk, each way, through the wild landscape. But Picu can't help it! She marvels at the butterflies, samples the cactus fruit, and daydreams about using the marrow bone as a football. Will the neighbor let her family keep the bone after the soup is made? Will her mother let her play with it? And will she be punished for being so late?

* *Tía Sofía and the Giant Tortilla* by Felicia Cocotzin Ruiz and illustrated by Carlos Vélez Aguilera.

After their aunt Sofía accidentally makes a giant tortilla, Sol and Luna discover that it has a special magic with the power to be a cape, a placemat, a scarf, a blanket, and even more importantly—a way to bring back the memory of someone special. Meet Tía Sofía — the “cool aunt” who creates wild art and loves dancing in her cozy California bungalow. One day, while babysitting her niece and nephew, things get out of control while preparing fresh tortillas in her colorful kitchen. Distracted by dancing with her niece and nephew in the kitchen, Tía Sofía makes a giant tortilla so big that Luna sees an opportunity for an adventure. Exhausted by a day of laughing, coloring, ghosts, and broomsticks, Luna and Sol finally enjoy lunch with their favorite aunt and her little dog, Tamayo. This sweet semi-bilingual story includes a seek-and-find of animals commonly found in traditional Mexican folk art and includes a recipe for Tía Sofía's flour tortillas!

* *Xochitl and the Flowers / Xóchitl, la Niña de las Flores* by Jorge Argueta and illustrated by Carl Angel. Children's Book Press, 2008.

Miles away from their home in El Salvador, Xochitl (SOH-cheel) and her family make a new home in the United States, but nothing is the same. Xochitl mourns a lovely garden and her family's small flower business, all left behind. Selling flowers on the street soon provides more than income for the Flores family: they begin to make friends with local storeowners and neighbors. But it is not until the family decides to start a nursery in its backyard that Xochitl begins to learn the true value of community in their adopted country. Basing his narrative on real-life events, prize-winning poet Jorge Argueta has crafted a tender, poetic, and moving story about a family's determination to set down roots and about their child's blooming among friends and neighbors. Artist Carl Angel's authentic and brilliant artwork splendidly documents this quintessentially American immigration story. (Grades Kindergarten and up) Classroom Resources: [Teacher's Guide to Xochitl and the Flowers](#) produced by Children's Book Press and Lee & Low Books.



Young Adult Literature

**A Second Chance on Earth* by Juan Vidal. Holiday House, 2024.

Have you ever encountered a book that KO'd you, Iron Mike Tyson style? One that hit you square in the face and heart like some abracadabra casting a hex from an unknown planet? For sixteen-year-old poet and b-baller Marcos Cadena, that book is the beat-up copy of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* he finds among his late father's possessions after Papi is killed in an accident. Marcos' papi has always loomed large in his eyes. So, when Marcos travels to his parents' childhood home of Cartagena, Colombia to spread Papi's ashes, he brings his father's book with him, convinced that Gabriel García Márquez's masterpiece holds the key to understanding Papi's life and accepting his death. In Cartagena, Marcos befriends eighteen-year-old Camilo, a taxi driver and fellow García Márquez fan who appoints himself Marcos' unofficial tour guide. Together, the two boys explore the landscape of Cartagena, from the picturesque streets of Old Town to the poor neighborhood where Camilo grew up. But when Camilo reveals a troubling secret from his past, Marcos must ask himself whether everyone deserves a second chance. Woven through with themes of friendship, family, and forgiveness, this poignant novel in verse is also a love letter to Colombia and to the books of Gabriel García Márquez.

**Brownstone* by Samuel Teer and illustrated by Mar Julia. Versify, 2024.

Almudena has always wondered about the dad she never met. Now, with her white mother headed on a once-in-a-lifetime trip without her, she's left alone with her Guatemalan father for an entire summer. Xavier seems happy to see her, but he expects her to live in (and help fix up) his old, broken-down brownstone. And all along, she must navigate the language barrier of his rapid-fire Spanish—which she doesn't speak. As Almudena tries to adjust to this new reality, she gets to know the residents of Xavier's Latin American neighborhood. Each member of the community has their own joys and heartbreaks as well as their own strong opinions on how this young Latina should talk, dress, and behave. Some can't understand why she doesn't know where she comes from. Others think she's "not brown enough" to fit in. But time is running out for Almudena and Xavier to get to know each other, and the key to their connection may ultimately lie in bringing all these different elements together. Fixing a broken building is one thing, but turning these stubborn individuals into a found family might take more than this one summer.

**Call Me Iggy* by Jorge Aguirre and illustrated by Rafael Rosado. First Second, 2024.

Ignacio "Iggy" Garcia is an Ohio-born Colombian American teen living his best life. After bumping into Marisol (and her coffee) at school, Iggy's world is spun around. But Marisol has too much going on to be bothered with the likes of Iggy. She has school, work, family, and the uphill battle of getting her legal papers. As Iggy stresses over how to get Marisol to like him, his grandfather comes to the rescue.



The thing is, not only is his abuelito dead, but he also gives terrible love advice. The worst. And so, with his ghost abuelito's meddling, Iggy's life begins to unravel as he sets off on a journey of self-discovery. Call me Iggy tells the story of Iggy searching for his place in his family, his school, his community, and ultimately—as the political climate in America changes during the 2016 election—his country. Focusing on familial ties and budding love, *Call me Iggy* challenges our assumptions about Latino-American identity while reaffirming our belief in the hope that all young people represent. Perfect for lovers of multigenerational stories like *Displacement* and *The Magic Fish*.

Clap When You Land by Elizabeth Acevedo. Quill Tree Books, 2022.

Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people....In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash. Separated by distance—and Papi's secrets—the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered. And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other.

I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erika L. Sánchez. Ember, 2019.

Perfect Mexican daughters do not go away to college. And they do not move out of their parents' house after high school graduation. Perfect Mexican daughters never abandon their family. But Julia is not your perfect Mexican daughter. That was Olga's role. Then a tragic accident on the busiest street in Chicago leaves Olga dead and Julia left behind to reassemble the shattered pieces of her family. And no one seems to acknowledge that Julia is broken, too. Instead, her mother seems to channel her grief into pointing out every possible way Julia has failed. But it's not long before Julia discovers that Olga might not have been as perfect as everyone thought. With the help of her best friend Lorena, and her first love, first everything boyfriend Connor, Julia is determined to find out. Was Olga really what she seemed? Or was there more to her sister's story? And either way, how can Julia even attempt to live up to a seemingly impossible ideal?

**The Hero's Guide to Summer Vacation* by Pablo Cartaya. Kokila, 2026.

Gonzalo Alberto Sánchez García has never considered himself the hero of his own story. He's an observer, quietly snapshotting landscapes and drawing the creatures he imagines emerging from them. Forced to spend the summer with his estranged grandfather, Alberto William García—the very famous reclusive author—Gonzalo doesn't expect to learn that heroes and monsters are not only the stuff of fantasy. But that's precisely what happens when Gonzalo's CEO mother, Veronica, sends Alberto on tour to promote the final book in his fantasy series for children and Gonzalo must tag along, even though he feels no connection to his grandfather or the books. Together, they embark on a



An Educator's Guide to *Churro Stand* by Karina Nicole González

cross-country road trip from Mendocino to Miami in a classic 1968 Oldsmobile Cutlass S convertible named Mathilde. Over the course of ten epic days on the highway, they will slay demons, real and imagined; confront old stories to write new ones; and learn what it truly means to show up for your family.