



The Booklist Project



Focus: Marissa Montes
PreK-8

Developed by: Michelle Faford
SU I 2012

Marisa Montes Grades PreK-8



“I feel that Hispanics who live in the United States must be fluent in speaking, as well as reading and writing, English. ...I also believe that holding onto one's culture is vital to a person's self esteem, I think it is important to retain the ability to speak the language of one's origin, either by speaking it at home or by studying it in addition to English.”

Marisa Montes was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Her father was in the army therefore they moved often while she was young. At the age of four, she moved with her parents to Missouri where she lived until the age of seven. When she moved to Missouri, Marisa did not speak any English. She learned English from her friends. By the time she entered school, she could speak English. From Missouri, she moved to France and lived there for three years. While in France, she came to love books even more than she already had. Since the American television did not work, she spent her time reading. Marisa learned to speak French fluently by conversing with the neighbors. At this point, Marisa could speak three languages. At home she had to speak Spanish so her native language would not be lost, at school she spoke English, and in the neighborhood, Marisa spoke French. At the age of ten, she and her family moved to California. When Marisa was sixteen, she was stricken with rheumatoid arthritis.

After Marisa graduated from Seaside High School in California, her family moved back to Puerto Rico. She stayed in Puerto Rico to attend her freshman year at the University of Puerto Rico. However, due to her health issues, she moved back to California where she attended the University of California at Santa Cruz. While at UC at Santa Cruz, Marisa met her husband, David Plotkin. Ms. Montes decided to go to law school at University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

After graduation, she spent three years practicing family and immigration law in a low-income, Hispanic district of San Francisco. At the end of those three years, Marisa began writing and editing law books. During that time period, she started writing at home. After ten years in legal publishing, she retired from law so that she could write children's books full time.

Marisa was a dreamer as a child. Her Gabí character appears to mirror herself as a child. She was feisty and imagined herself as a superhero. That is why she chose to go into law so that she could help those who needed help. Marisa Montes went on to write the *Get Ready for Gabi* series (a total of five books), several novels, and several picture books. Marisa Montes was an animal lover who enjoyed having unusual pets. Tragically, she died unexpectedly on August 18, 2011 at the age of 59.

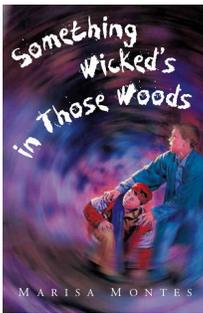
About Marisa Montes:

<http://www.marisamontes.com/>

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/contributor/marisa-montes>

Booklist

Many of Marisa Montes' books focus on children from Puerto Rico. She emphasizes the importance of being true to one's identity. One of the themes in her books is to never lose your native language. By doing so would be to lose one's identity.



1.

Montes, M. (2000). *Something Wicked's in Those Woods*. New York: Harcourt.

- ISBN-13: 978-0152023911

Something Wicked's in Those Woods is about a boy and his brother who move from Puerto Rico to California. The move follows the death of their parents. The boys move in with their aunt. The older boy, Javi, has a difficult time adjusting to his new life. He is no longer allowed to speak Spanish and his aunt wants him to assimilate into the new culture. However, strange happenings are occurring at his aunt's house and he has to trust his instincts to protect his younger brother and to solve the mystery of these strange happenings. Ultimately, Javi learns to maintain his heritage but to welcome his new future. This novel was Marisa Montes first novel. It has a strong focus on family ties and one's own heritage.

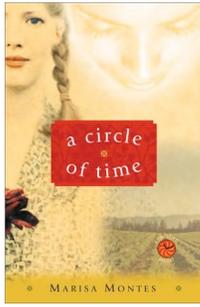
Formats Available: Hardcover

Accelerated Reader Booklist

Levels:

Age: 8 -12
Grade: 3 and up
Interest: Grades 4-8
WIDA: Reaching

Awards: First place for the California Writer's Club in their annual CWC Conference Contest.



2.

Montes, Marisa. (2002). *A Circle of Time*. New York: Harcourt.

- ISBN-13: 978-0152026264

A Circle of Time is a novel about time travel. A young teenager, Allison, is a victim of a hit and run accident. While in a coma, she is transported back to the early 1900s by a young girl who died at that time. Allison must change the course of history or she may never return to her own time period. While in the earlier period, Allison learns about what life was really like for those living in California at that time period. This story focuses on the bonds among people and how events can change a person.

Formats Available: Hardcover, Soft-cover

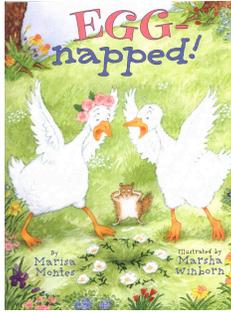
Levels:

Age: 10 and up
Grade: 4 and up
Fountas and Pinnell: T
Lexile: 650L
WIDA: Reaching

Awards: WILLA Literary Award 2003

Video Trailer:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=aSPQHsbSEpE - !



3.

Montes, M. (2002). *Egg-napped!* Singapore: Harper Collins Publishers.

- ISBN-13: 978-0060289508

Egg-napped! was Marisa Montes first rhyming book. This story discusses the importance of family, friendship, and working together. It is a story about a mother and father goose, Gabbler and Mrs. Gabbler, who are in search of their egg. Throughout the story, the egg is found and captured by other animals. However, a small flying squirrel, Kit, saves the egg and returns it to the parents. At the end, the egg hatches into a baby goose.

Formats: Hardcover and Soft-cover

First rhyming picture book

Levels:

Age: 4 and up

Grade: PreK-2

Lexile: AD630L (AD represents adult directed)

WIDA: Developing/Expanding



4.

Montes, M. (2006). *Los Gatos Black on Halloween*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

- ISBN-13: 978-0805074291

Los Gatos Black on Halloween is a bilingual, rhyming book. Native English speakers will not have difficulty reading it due to the context and picture clues. This picture book is a Halloween story where the reader meets all the typical Halloween characters and settings. Although this book won numerous awards, it was rejected by many publishing houses before it was finally published.

Formats Available: Hardcover, Soft-cover, eBook, Audio, DVD

Levels:

Age: 4 and up

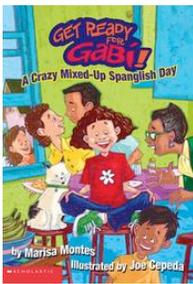
Grade: PreK-2

WIDA: Developing

Awards: 2007 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year,
Winner of the 2008 Pura Belpre Medal for Illustration
Pura Belpre Honor Book for Narrative.

Lesson Plans:

<http://www.teachingbooks.net/authoridsearch.cgi?id=5908>



5.

Montes, M. (2003). *Get Ready for Gabi! A Crazy Mixed-Up Spanglish Day*. New York: Scholastic Press.

- ISBN-13: 978-0439475198

This is the first of the *Get Ready for Gabi!* series. It is about a girl named Maritza Gabriela Morales Mercado. She is in the third grade. She is a feisty young lady who has magic feet (or so she thinks) when she wears her red cowboy boots. In this book, Gabi's grandmother comes to stay with the family for an extended vacation. Gabi becomes confused between her Spanish language and her English language. She is forced to endure working with others whom she does not like and to find a way to use her head and not her feet to solve her problems.

Formats Available: Spanish, Hardcover, Soft-cover

Levels:

Age: 7 and up

Grade: 2 and up

Fountas and Pinnell: Q

Lexile: 420L

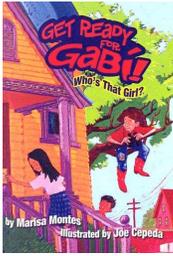
WIDA: Expanding

Video Trailer:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=C3OX6rvoJTw -

Lesson Plans:

http://www.edhelper.com/books/author_unit_Marisa_Montes.htm



6.

Montes, M. (2003). *Get Ready for Gabi! Who's That Girl?* New York: Scholastic.

- ISBN-13: 978-0439475211

In the second installment of the *Get Ready for Gabi!* series, Gabí meets a new neighbor, Lizzie. Gabí realizes that Lizzie has some secrets of her own. As their friendship grows, they share their own secrets. Lizzie and Gabí become close friends but family loyalty threatens that friendship. It is only accidental that the girls overcome their differences and remain friends.

Formats Available: Hardcover, Soft-cover

Levels:

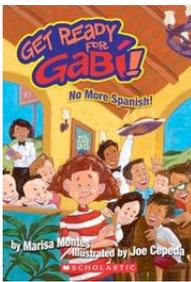
Age: 7 and up

Grade: 2 and up

Fountas and Pinnell: Q

Lexile: 400L

WIDA: Expanding



7.

Montes, M. (2004). *Get Ready for Gabi! No More Spanish!* New York: Scholastic.

- ISBN-13: 978-0613845717

In the third book of the *Get Ready for Gabi!* series, Gabí is forced to decide between her Spanish language and her English language when she is the focus of some teasing when her parents come to school. Gabí rejects her heritage to fit in with the other students in her class. Ultimately, her friends and family show her the importance of maintaining her culture.

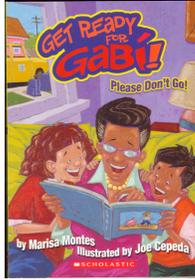
Formats Available: Soft-cover

Levels:

Age: 7 and up

Grade: 2 and up

WIDA: Developing/Expanding



8.

Montes, M. (2004). *Get Ready for Gabi! Please Don't Go!* New York: Scholastic.

- ISBN-13: 978-0439475235

In the fourth *Get Ready for Gabi!* book, Gabi has a hard time saying goodbye to her grandmother, Abuelita. Abuelita is ready to return to Puerto Rico after an extended stay. Gabi tries many tactics to show Abuelita how much she needs her to stay. Unfortunately, this includes Gabi getting in trouble (as usual). In this book, Gabi struggles with having family living in different parts of the world.

Formats Available: Soft-cover

Levels:

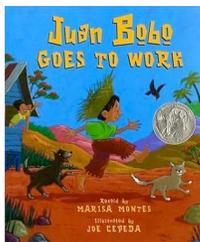
Age: 7 and up

Grade: 2 and up

Fountas and Pinnell: Q

Lexile: 530L

WIDA: Expanding



9.

Montes, M. (2000). *Juan Bobo Goes to Work.* Hong Kong: Harper Collins Publishing.

- ISBN-13: 978-0688162337

Juan Bobo Goes to Work is a Puerto Rican folktale. Juan Bobo is a character very

similar to the American character Amelia Bedelia. Juan Bobo is a simple boy who takes every word that others speak literally. Therefore there are many comedic aspects of this book. In the end, Juan's ability to be silly rewards he and his mother.

Formats Available: Spanish, Hardcover, Soft-cover

Levels:

Age: 4 and up

Grade: PreK and up

Fountas and Pinnell: M

Lexile: 390L

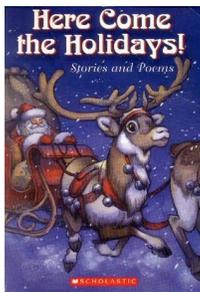
WIDA: Developing

Awards: ALA's 2002 Pura Belpré Honor Book Award for Illustration

Lesson Plans:

http://teachers.yale.edu/curriculum/search/viewer.php?id=initiative_07.04.07_u-j

<http://www.wheelcouncil.org/featuredstories/juanbobo.html>



10.

Montes, M. (2005). The Christmas Camel. In Scholastic (Eds.), *Here Come the Holidays! Stories and Poems* (pp. 26-40). New York: Scholastic.

- ISBN-13: 978-0439800051

“The Christmas Camel” by Marisa Montes is one story in a book of short stories. It is based on the religious story of Jesus. However, the focus is on a camel instead of Jesus. In this short story, Gobi-Kazaam (the camel) is forced to leave his mother and go to Arabia. Since Gobi is a two hump camel, the Arabian camels tease him relentlessly and taunt him that he is not worthy. Throughout the course of the story, Gobi offers kindness to strangers and in the end, that kindness is rewarded.

Formats Available: Soft-cover

Levels:

Age: 7 and up

Grade: 2 and up

WIDA: Developing

REACH. INSPIRE. CONNECT.



The Booklist Project

A Project of the
M.Ed. In TESL Program,



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