



The Booklist Project



Focus: Culture-Specific Booklist

Dominican

Developed by: Ashly Paris

Fall, 2011

Culture Specific Book list for Dominican ELLs
Grades K-5



Ashly Paris

Rhode Island College

TESL 507- Teaching Reading and Writing to ESL

Dr. Nancy Cloud



Gordon, G.(1993). *My Two Worlds*. New York: Clarion Books.

[ISBN 0 –395-58704-2]

My Two Worlds is a true story of seven year old Kristy Rodriguez, a Dominican American from New York. She and her sister Wendy are going to Puerto Plata for Christmas to stay with their grandparents. The rest of the family cannot go because of work and school obligations.

Puerto Plata is very different from New York City. While there Kristy celebrates her eighth birthday. Kristy determines she loves both her homes and is happy she feels part of both of them.

Some students frequently travel back and forth from their family's native land to their new home. This story puts into perspective how there are good aspects to both lifestyles and both can be appreciated.

Interest Level: K-2

Grade Level Equivalent: 2.8

WIDA Level: Developing



Appelbaum, D. (1997). *Cocoa Ice*. New York: Orchard Books.
[ISBN 0-531-33040-0]

A young girl in Santo Domingo shares her story about cocoa beans, a crop native to Santo Domingo, and all the natural riches the island has to share.

While a young girl in Maine shares her story about her family's role in the ice trade business.

The girls' stories are linked by Uncle Jacob and his travels on an ice schooner to Santa Domingo to trade ice for chocolate. Although the two girls never meet they each appreciate a gift from each other's homeland and are curious about how different life would be there.

This story is based on actual trading done in the 1870s between the Northeastern States and Santo Domingo.

So often we teach American history to our ELLs. This would be a great story to introduce some of American's history with the Dominican Republic and how the two are intertwined.

Interest Level: Grades 3-5

Grade Level Equivalent: 5.9

Lexile: 1030 L

WIDA Level: Bridging I agree!

Websites for teaching ideas:

<http://www.homeschoolshare.com/cocoaice.php>



Balaguer, E. (2007). *Mi Carnaval; My Carnival*. Cristo Rey: Editoria Manati. [ISBN 978-9945-405-90-3]

Mi Carnaval; My Carnival is a bilingual book. The story is told from the perspective a young girl writing a letter to her cousin who lives in New York. This story takes you to the Carnival parade and gives you a child's perspective of the celebration. Ludi's aunt explains each of the characters significance to the parade and answers Ludi's questions.

There are quite a few Spanish words in the English translation; there is a glossary for clarification. At the end of the book there is a brief history of the Dominican carnival and also instructions on how to make a mask, similar to those worn in the book.

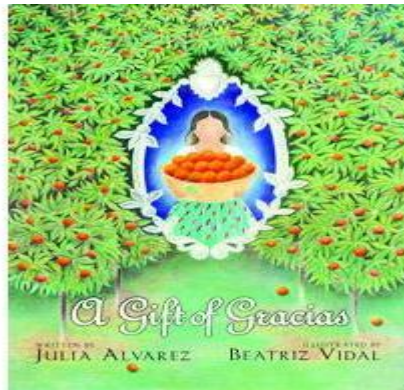
Often as ELL educators we are asked to look beyond holidays when teaching ELLs. However, since we do introduce our ELLs to many American holidays this book is a way to show students that we respect their culture as well in recognition of traditions in their country.

WIDA Level: Expanding to Bridging—I agree!

Background information on Carnaval:

<http://www.colonialzone-dr.com/traditions-carnival.html>

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



Alvarez, J. (2005). *A Gift of Gracias*. New York: Random House Children's Books. [ISBN 0-375-92425-6]

A Gift of Gracias is a story based on legends of Our Lady of Altagracia. This saint is so beloved in the Dominican Republic that, January 21, her saint's day is a national holiday.

Maria worries about her Papa and Quisqueya's travels into the city, due to the current economy of the island it is a dangerous travel. When the men return they tell Maria they may have to move to the city because they can't afford to keep the farm, which isn't producing successful harvests.

That night Maria has a dream. In her dream Nuestra Senora de la Altagracia appears under a harvest of orange trees. The next morning Maria tells her family that they will grow orange trees. The trees produce a bountiful harvest and Maria asks for a present of a portrait of the patron saint. There are none to be found in the city. However on the way home Quisqueya catches the falling stars which produce a portrait of the saint to bring home for Maria.

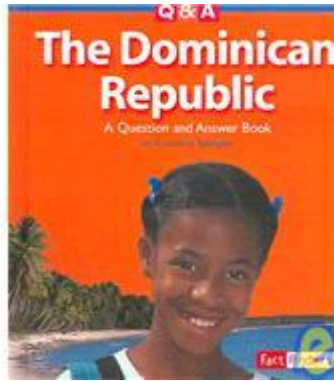
This story is also published in Spanish *Un regalo de gracias: la leyenda de la Altagracia*.

Interest Level: K-2

Grade Level Equivalent: 3.5

WIDA Level: (high Developing) Expanding

Preview the book: www.google.com/books



Spengler, K. (2006). *The Dominican Republic A Question and Answer Book*. Mankato: Capstone Press. [ISBN-13: 978-0-7368-4353-9]

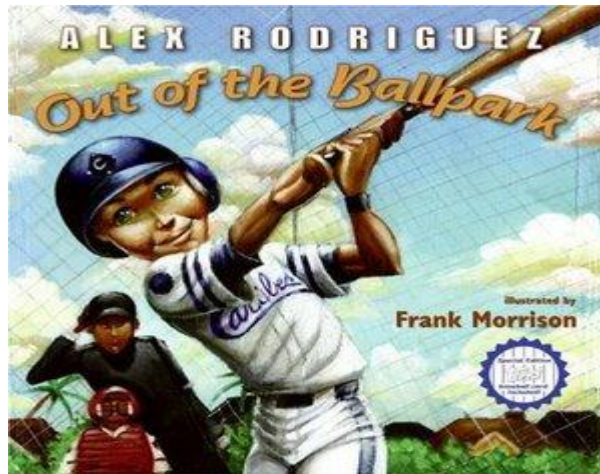
This non-fiction book provides information about the geography, history, people and culture of the Dominican Republic. Each page has photographs with captions, maps, charts or graphs relating to the Dominican Republic.

WIDA Level: Expanding

Preview the book: www.google.com/books

Lesson Plans:

<http://www.discoveryeducation.com/teachers/free-lesson-plans/geography-of-the-caribbean.cfm>



Rodriguez, A. *Out of the Ballpark*. (2007). New York: HarperCollins Children's Books. [ISBN-13: 978-0-06-115194-1]

Baseball is an extremely popular sport in the Dominican Republic. Alex Rodriguez is the author of the story and third baseman for the New York Yankees. Alex was born in New York City, and moved to his family's native Dominican Republic when he was four. He lived there until he was eight years old.

The story is about a boy, Alex who plays on a baseball team, The Caribes. It is a story about how hard work and determination pays off.

At the end of the story there is a timeline (with pictures) of the author's life. There are pictures included from the period he spent living in the Dominican Republic.

Since baseball is an extremely popular sport in the Dominican Republic and United States of America children are likely to be interested in this story. Alex Rodriguez, the author, is a famous baseball player who many students may already know, if they are New York Yankees fans, or baseball enthusiasts. It also has a positive message about accomplishing your dreams which anyone can relate to.

Interest level: Age 4-8

WIDA Level: Developing to Expanding

Preview the book: www.amazon.com



Alvarez, J. *How Tia Lola Came to Stay*. (2001). New York: Random House. [ISBN 0-375-80215-0]

Miguel, his mother and sister move to Vermont due to his parents' divorce. His mother has invited his Tia Lola to come stay with them to help out. Miguel is having trouble fitting in at his new school and is embarrassed of his tia. Over the course of the story Miguel's attitude changes from being embarrassed of his Dominican tia, to being proud of his heritage.

This story relates not only to Dominican culture, but a child's perspective to issues such as divorce, moving, switching schools and making new friends.

Interest Level: 3-5

Grade Level Equivalent: 4.8

Lexile: 740 L

DRA: 40

WIDA: Bridging

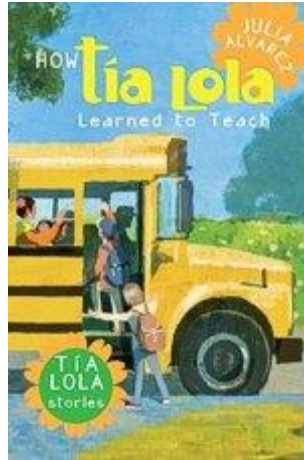
Lesson Plans:

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/foreducators_lesson_plan_01.html

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/foreducators_lesson_plan_05.html

Author's Website: <http://www.juliaalvarez.com/>

Preview the book: www.google.com/books



Alvarez, J. (2010). *How tia Lola Learned to Teach*. New York: Random House Children's Books. [ISBN 978-0-375-964460-2]

This is a sequel to *How Tia Lola Came to Stay*. In this story Tia Lola is asked to be the Spanish teacher at Miguel and Juanita's school. Each chapter begins with one of Tia Lola's favorite saying in Spanish and the English translation. Some idioms are universal; others your students may need to research to understand the root.

This story addresses issues such as deportation, immigration, divorce and remarriage from a child's perspective.

Interest Level: Grades 3-6

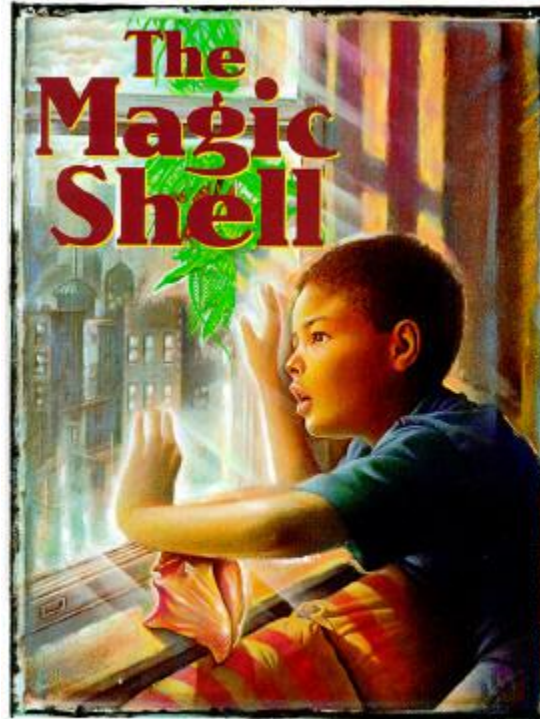
Lexile Level: 810L

WIDA Level: Bridging

Author's Website: <http://www.juliaalvarez.com/>

Teacher Resources: http://thelittleread.net/?page_id=743

Preview the book: www.google.com/books



BY NICHOLASA MOHR
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUDY GUTIERREZ

Mohr, N. (1995). *The Magic Shell*. New York: Scholastic.

Jaime is moving to New York City from the Dominican Republic. He is not happy to leave his home, friends and extended family behind. Jaime struggles with the differences in culture, climate, language barrier and loneliness.

His conch shell, a gift from his great-uncle, helps him through the tough time by providing memories of the Dominican village he left behind.

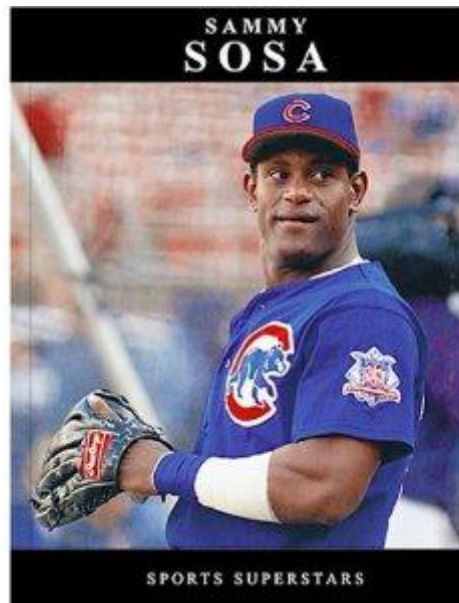
This story is was also published in Spanish, *Regalo Magico*, however it is out of print.

Interest Level: 2-5

Grade Level Equivalent: 4.5

Lexile measure: 740L

WIDA Level: Bridging –possibly expanding with support; but I agree with your rating



Flynn, G. *Sammy Sosa*. (2000). United States of America: The Child's World, Inc. [ISBN: 1-56766-663-9]

Sammy Sosa is a non-fiction story about the most famous Dominican baseball player Sammy Sosa. Sammy is from San Pedro de Macoris, a poor fishing town. He dreamed of playing professional baseball in America. Despite growing up in poverty Sammy worked hard to accomplish his dream. He is proud of his Dominican heritage and has given back to his community by donating money and computers to schools.

WIDA Level: Bridging—I agree; but sentence structures are simple and for kids with background knowledge about baseball, they might be able to access sooner (expanding)

More about Sammy Sosa:

http://www.edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_35_811.html

Learn more about the Dominican Republic:

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/dominican-republic-country-profile.html>

Facts and statistics as well as etiquette and customs can be found on this website.

<http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Dominican-Republic.html>

History and cultural information

REACH. INSPIRE. CONNECT.



The Booklist Project

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Feinstein School of Education and Human Development
Rhode Island College

For Further Information, Contact:

Nancy Cloud, Ed.D., Director

ncloud@ric.edu

Rhode Island College

600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue

Providence, RI 02908