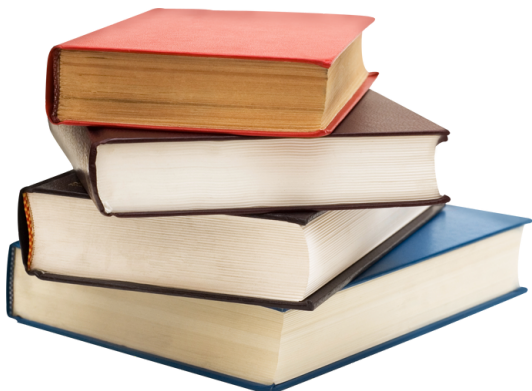




# TEJAS STAR ACTIVITY GUIDE 2024-2025



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Prepared by the Tejas Star Reading List committee, this activity guide was designed to support using the 2024-2025 Tejas Star Reading List titles with children ages 5-12 in classrooms and libraries.

## ABOUT THE TEJAS STAR READING LIST

The Tejas Star Reading List (TSRL) provides a recommended reading list to encourage children ages 5-12 to explore multicultural books and to discover the cognitive and economic benefits of bilingualism and multilingualism. The Tejas Star Reading List is intended for recreational reading, not to support a specific curriculum.

## ABOUT THE TEXAS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

TLA was established in 1902 to promote, support, and improve library services in Texas. Our 6,000+ members are from all library types: academic, public, school and special. TLA provides expertly curated reading lists and programs for ages 2 - 102 - from fiction, nonfiction, and graphic novels, to picture books, bilingual and multicultural lists.

## 2024-25 TEJAS STAR READING LIST COMMITTEE:

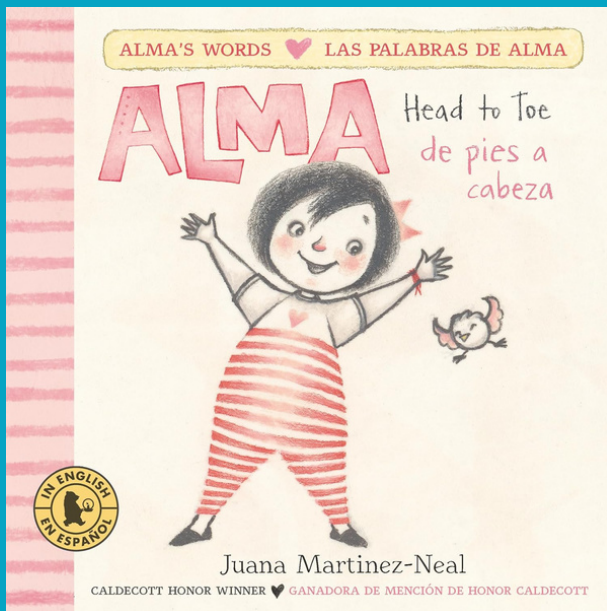
Miranda Quintero, Fort Worth ISD, Chair  
Alejandra Isais, Richardson ISD, Vice Chair  
Debbie Chavez, Libraries for the World  
Diana Miranda-Murillo, Austin Public Library  
Erica Salinas, McAllen Public Library  
Erin Motola, Austin ISD  
Kasey Fanucchi, Denton Public Library  
Jeffrey Merino, The Awty International School  
Myriam Hernandez, Fort Worth Public Library  
Rosenid Badia, Dallas ISD

# ACTIVITY 1

## LABEL THE BODY PARTS

Learn all about the body with this fun and colorful printable activity. By placing each body part in its proper spot, children will master basic anatomy one step at a time. For a bigger challenge, ask about tricky parts like knees, elbows, and chins: endless discovery awaits!

[My Body Parts](#)



Written and  
illustrated by Juana  
Martinez-Neal.  
(Candlewick, 2023)

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# ACTIVITY 2

## BODY BALANCING

Incorporate movement into your learning by making a masking tape "balance beam" on the floor. Direct your child to walk with a small beanbag in various positions: on the head, in the hands, in the crook of an elbow, under the chin, etc.

# BENITA Y LAS CRIATURAS NOCTURNAS (BENITA AND THE NIGHT CREATURES)



By Mariana Llanos.  
Illustrated by  
Cocoretto.  
(Barefoot Books,  
2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### KEEP THE MONSTERS AWAY!

Is your child scared of monsters at night? Here are a few ideas to scare the monsters away:

1. Use monster repellent spray - Keep a spray bottle filled with scented water by the bed so that you can spray the monster away
2. Let the family pet sleep in the room for security
3. Keep a stuffed animal with special powers in the room to keep monsters away
4. Abracadabra the monsters away with a magic wand
5. Use a worry doll or dreamcatcher to keep nightmares and monsters away"

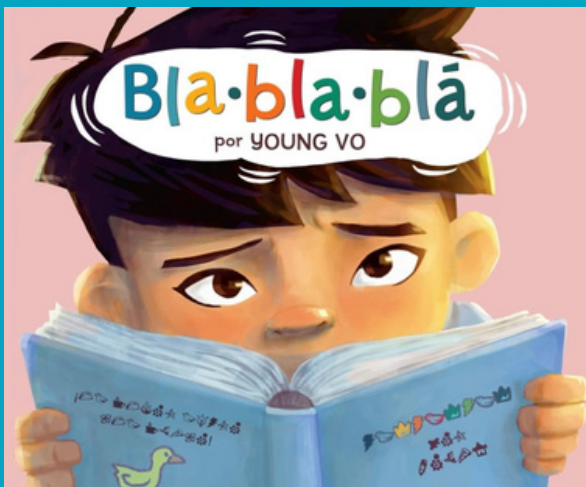
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## ACTIVITY 2

### UNUSUAL READING PLACES

Read in an unusual spot - under a pillow fort, in a tree, in the bathtub, under a table, etc.

# BLA. BLA. BLÁ (GIB. BER. ISH)



Written and illustrated by Young Vo. Translated by Gabriella Aldeman. (Levine Querido, 2022).

# ACTIVITY 1

## CODE BREAKERS

Can you break the gibberish code? In the book, each symbol corresponds to a letter of the alphabet. Can you figure out the words that are written as symbols? What language do you think is represented as gibberish in the book?

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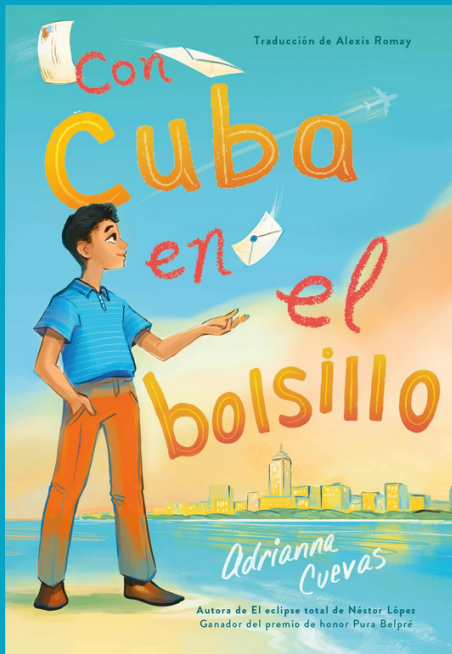
# ACTIVITY 2

## FIND A FRIEND LOTERÍA!

In the book, everything changes for Dat when he finds a friend. Now it's your turn to find a friend!

Use this link to the lotería card: [Lotería Card](#)  
See if you can find a friend that matches each of the descriptions on the squares of the card.

# CON CUBA EN EL BOLSILLO (WITH CUBA IN MY POCKET)



by Adriana Cuevas,  
translated by Alexis  
Romay (Square Fish,  
2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### LEARN MORE ABOUT CUBA

Use this website to learn about Cuba and some of the popular places to go on the island.

[https://www.elmundoentubolsillo.es/descubriend  
o-cuba/](https://www.elmundoentubolsillo.es/descubriendo-cuba/)

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## ACTIVITY 2

### PRINT AND PLAY CUBAN DOMINOES

Cumba keeps the caja de muerto with him in his pocket as he travels to the United States.

Print out these dominoes and use the instructions to play a game of dominoes.

[https://www.rosiesworld.co.nz/media/271524  
/Cuban\\_Dominoes.pdf](https://www.rosiesworld.co.nz/media/271524/Cuban_Dominoes.pdf)



# EL CAMPO FLOTANTE (THE FLOATING FIELD)



By Scott Riley,  
Illustrated by  
Nguyen Quang &  
Kim Lien. Translated  
by Zab Translation.  
(Lerner Books,  
2022).

# ACTIVITY 1

## WHERE IN THE WORLD IS KOH PAYNEE?

Visit Koh Paynee digitally using Google Earth: [Koh Paynee](https://www.google.com/maps/@5.5833333,101.3333333,15z). Next, watch this drone footage of the village: <https://youtu.be/oMpNLnpJ2pQ?si=fRSZhedVKAMkt84y>. Imagine that you lived in Koh Paynee, how would you go to school? What do you think would be different about living there than where you live?

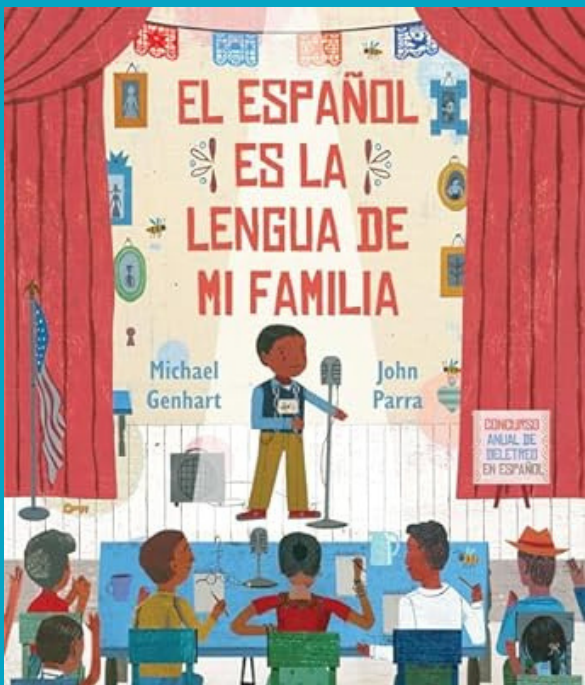
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# ACTIVITY 2

## FLOATING FIELD DESIGN CHALLENGE

Can you create a floating field? Use recycled materials to design your own floating field. Test your design to see if it floats!

# EL ESPAÑOL ES LA LENGUA DE MI FAMILIA (SPANISH IS THE LANGUAGE OF MY FAMILY)



by Michael Genhart,  
illustrated by John  
Parra, translated by  
Ana A. Izquierdo de  
Alba (Neal Porter  
Books, 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### LET'S HAVE A SPELLING BEE CONTEST IN SPANISH!

Use the words listed at the National Spanish Spelling bee website and organize a spelling bee contest at your school or with your family.  
<https://nationalspanishspellingbee.com/>

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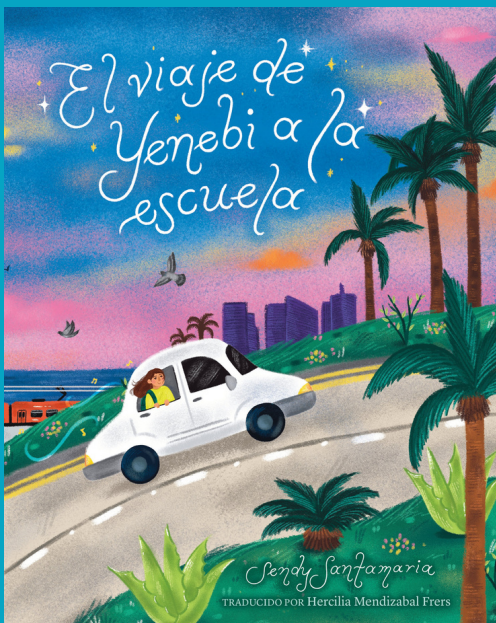
## ACTIVITY 2

### LET'S SPELL AND JUMP!

Print several Spanish Words in large print, laminate them and tape them to the floor. Have children stand in line, then read the word aloud and ask them to jump on the word they just heard and spell it. You can modify this game by dividing the group into teams. The team that advances the fastest will be the one that can spell more words correctly.



# EL VIAJE DE YENEBI A LA ESCUELA (YENEBI'S DRIVE TO SCHOOL)



by Sendy  
Santamaria,  
Translated by  
Hercilia Mendizabal  
Frers (Chronicle  
Books, 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### WHAT'S YOUR MORNING ROUTINE?

From [The TeachingBooks Blog](#). Yenebi and Melanie pack their backpacks, eat breakfast together in the car, and cross the border to get to school. This is their daily routine on a school day.

What does your morning routine look like? Describe or draw a moment from a typical school-day morning. This could be who is usually with you, what you have for breakfast, how you get there (bus, car, walk, etc.).

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## ACTIVITY 2

### ROAD GAMES

Keep children entertained while riding in the car. Here are a few games you can play on the road:

**Rainbow colors** - Find as many objects as you can of a certain color.

**Alphabet game** - think of words that begin with each letter of the alphabet. Narrow it down by choosing categories - food, animals, cities, etc.

**Word association** - One person thinks of a word. The next person thinks of a word that's associated with the first word. Example: Park - playground - slide - waterpark.

**License plate words** - Make a word with the letters on a license plate. Bonus point if you can make a word with the letters in the order that they appear on the license plate.

# ETNIAS DEL MUNDO (ETHNICITIES OF THE WORLD)



edited by Tres  
Patas y Pico,  
illustrated by Laia  
Berloso (Tres Patas  
y Pico, 2023)

## ACTIVITY 1

### A ROAD IN THE SKY

The story "Un Camino en el Cielo" talks about polar lights. Make your own at home! You need: a bowl, 1/2 a cup of milk, food coloring, and a q-tip. Instructions: Pour the milk in the bowl. Add some drops of food coloring on the bowl. With the q-tip, mix a little bit of the food coloring and the milk. Look at the magic of how the milk and the food coloring mix. You can add more colors if you want! If you want to watch a video about this activity, follow this link: <https://pin.it/2aBDDACFg>

## ACTIVITY 2

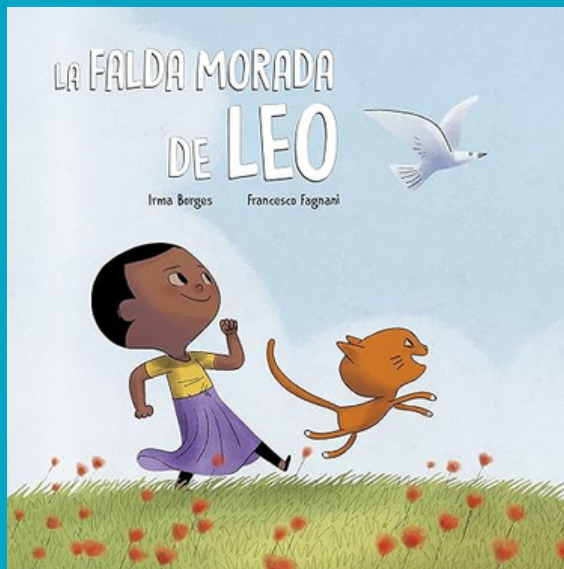
### EVERYONE HAS A POWERFUL STORY!

Write a story with your family! On a piece of paper, start writing a story about a family tradition. Write three sentences on your own. Pass the piece of paper to a grown-up and ask them to add to the story by writing three sentences. When that person completes his/her part, pass the piece of paper to another person in your family. Keep going until you have a complete story!

# ACTIVITY 1

## WHERE DO MEN STILL WEAR SKIRTS?

Investigate with children in which countries of the world men still wear skirts and when, for example, do they wear them daily or for special events? Mark on a map or globe the countries where men still wear skirts.



by Irma Borges,  
illustrated by  
Francesco Fagnani.  
(Nube Ocho, 2022).

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# ACTIVITY 2

## RESEARCH WOMEN WHO DEFIED FASHION STANDARDS

Some of the many women who wore pants when it was not allowed include: Amelia Bloomer, Marlene Dietrich, Katharine Hepburn, Susan B. Anthony, Coco Chanel, Frida Kahlo, Jovita Valdovinos, and Petra Herrera. Research who these women were and why they decided to wear pants instead of skirts.

# JOVITA LLEVABA PANTALONES (JOVITA WORE PANTS)



written and  
translated by Aida  
Salazar, illustrated by  
Molly Mendoza  
(Scholastic Inc., 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### BRAVE WOMEN

Think about a woman from your family that you admire. Interview family members who know her and ask them about what they admire about her and their best memory with her. Write down what you hear and gift your notes to that woman.

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## ACTIVITY 2

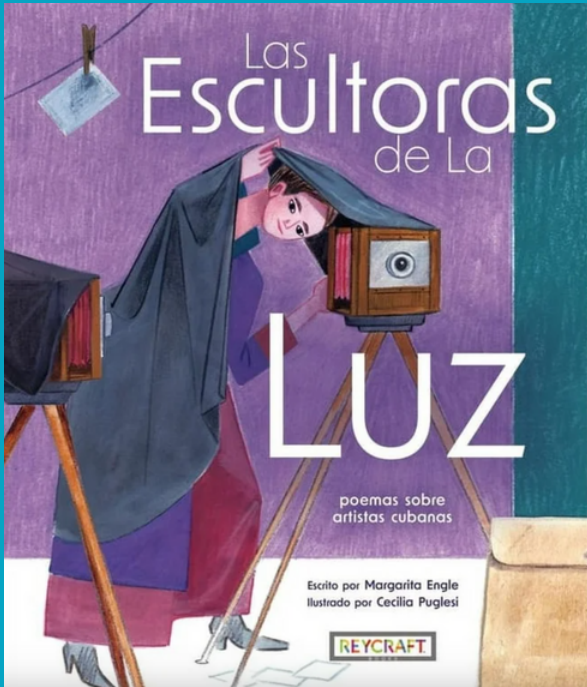
### SELF PORTRAIT OF BRAVERY

Think about 3 times when you were brave. On a piece of paper, draw or glue a photo of you. Next to your photo draw or write those 3 times when you were brave. For an example, visit this link:

<https://pin.it/207cFLzWr>



# LAS ESCULTORAS DE LA LUZ (THE SCULPTORS OF LIGHT)



written and translated by Aida Salazar, illustrated by Molly Mendoza (Scholastic Inc., 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### DISCOVERING CUBAN ARTISTS

Dive into the vibrant world of Cuban female artists. Parents and teachers can guide children in choosing an artist from the poetry collection. Together, explore the artist's unique contributions in various art forms. Using simple materials like paper and colors, kids can then create their own artwork, expressing their creativity inspired by these incredible women. Finally, create a mini art show in the classroom or at home, giving children the opportunity to proudly showcase their artistic talents and what they've learned about these often overlooked artists. Visit Pugliesi's website to print the artwork and use as inspiration or as a launching point to extend students' learning.

[t.ly/khmN7](https://t.ly/khmN7)

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## ACTIVITY 2

### POETRY SELF-PORTRAIT

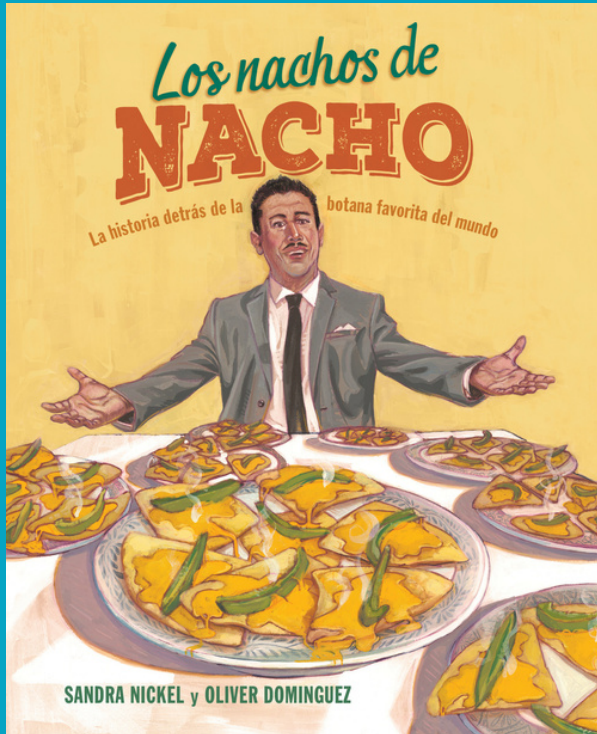
Parents and teachers can guide students in creating expressive portraits inspired by the poetry collection. After selecting a poem, encourage children to reflect on the emotions and themes within it. Provide materials like paper, markers, and paint for them to craft self-portraits or portraits of friends, expressing their individuality and emotions.

This hands-on activity not only reinforces the themes of the poetry but also allows children to explore self-expression through art. Students will not draw their own portrait, but instead fill in a canvas using words or phrases to describe their emotions. The classroom or home can then become a gallery showcasing these unique and personal artistic reflections.

# ACTIVITY 1

## NACHO MASTERPIECES

Unleash your inner artist by using nacho ingredients to create edible art on plates. Beans can be eyes, cheese can be rivers of molten lava, and olives can be tiny plants. Get creative and have fun!



by Sandra Nickel,  
illustrated by Oliver  
Dominguez  
(Lee & Low Books,  
2023).

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# ACTIVITY 2

## THE SCIENCE OF MELTING

Discuss how different ingredients change with heat, and guess which nacho topping will melt first. Put your nachos in the microwave for 30 seconds and watch to see if you were right!



# ¡LAS MASCOTAS MANDAN! (PETS RULE!)



by Susan Tan,  
illustrated by Wendy  
Tan & Shiau Wei,  
Translated by Abel  
Berriz  
(Scholastic, 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### LET'S MAKE A MAP!

Ember calls the Chin's home his "kingdom". Draw a map of the Chin's home and name each room like Ember's Kingdom. For example, what would you name the kitchen or Lucy's bedroom?

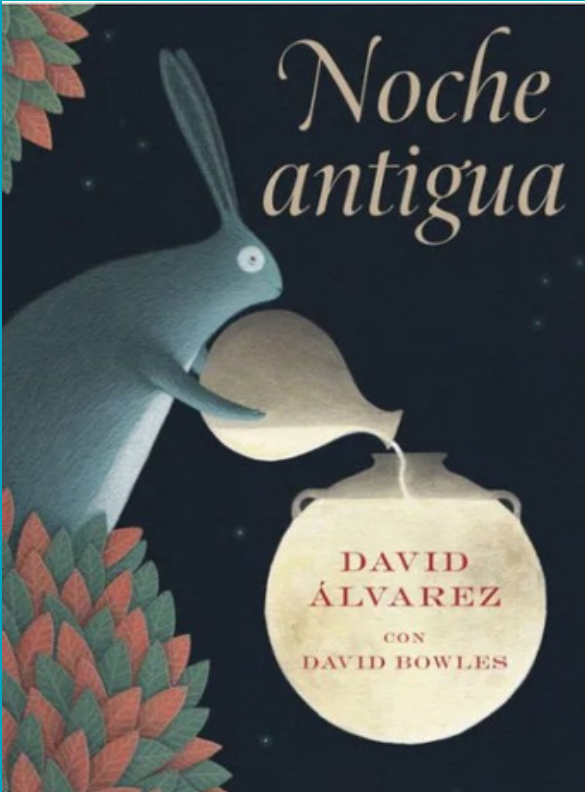
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## ACTIVITY 2

### THE BEST PET

The Chin family has different pets, a dog, a hamster, a bird, and even a beetle. Which animal do you think makes the best pet? A dog? A cat? A snake? Research about your favorite pet and write a letter to the Chin family letting them know which animal is the best pet and why.

## NOCHE ANTIGUA (ANCIENT NIGHT)



Written and illustrated  
by David Álvarez,  
adapted by David  
Bowles.  
(Levine Querido, 2023).

# ACTIVITY 1

## ANCIENT MESOAMERICAN BALL GAME

This can be a fun summer reading event for Teens/ Tween or even a fun field day activity for Teens/ Tweens. Get a big hacky sack (not hard) and create hoops that the hacky sack has to go through. Have teams of 3-4 players and they will play against each other. The rules can be modified; ex. Using body (torso) only, soccer rules, using hacky sack rules. Keep it fun and safe. Also, can have a time limit ex. 2minute intervals. Whichever team has the highest score after 2 out of 3 intervals, wins.

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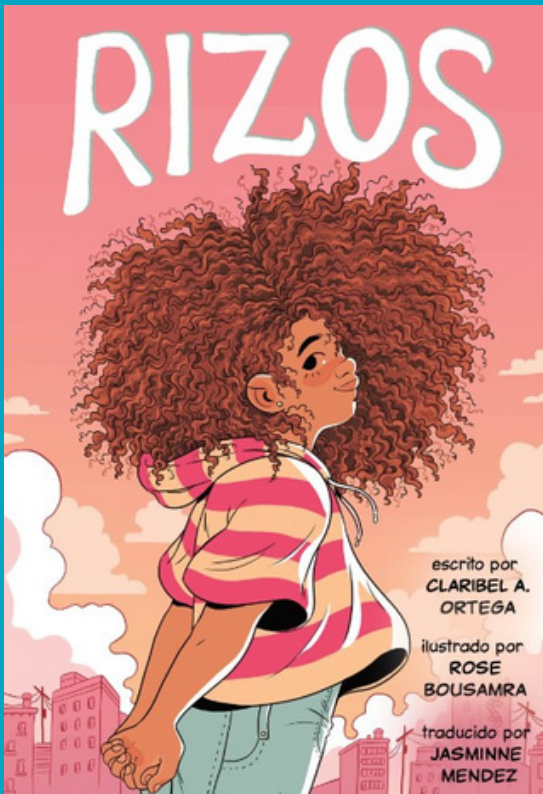
# ACTIVITY 2

## PATOLLI

This game can be played with two to four players. You'll need a board; you can print the one below or make your own! Six counters per player. These can be anything: pieces of paper, coins or counters from another game, but the two sets must be different, so you can tell which belong to each player.

<https://otagomuseum.nz/athome/how-to-play-patolli>

# RIZOS (FRIZZY)



by Claribel A. Ortega,  
illustrated by Rose  
Bousamra, Translated  
by Jasminne Mendez  
(First Second, 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### COMPLIMENT JAR

In a classroom setting, have a small jar for each student. Each week the librarian/ teacher can secretly write 1 compliment that they noticed about the student. At the end of each week or end of the month, the students read their compliments. They can then create their own collage with the compliments that they have gotten.

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## ACTIVITY 2

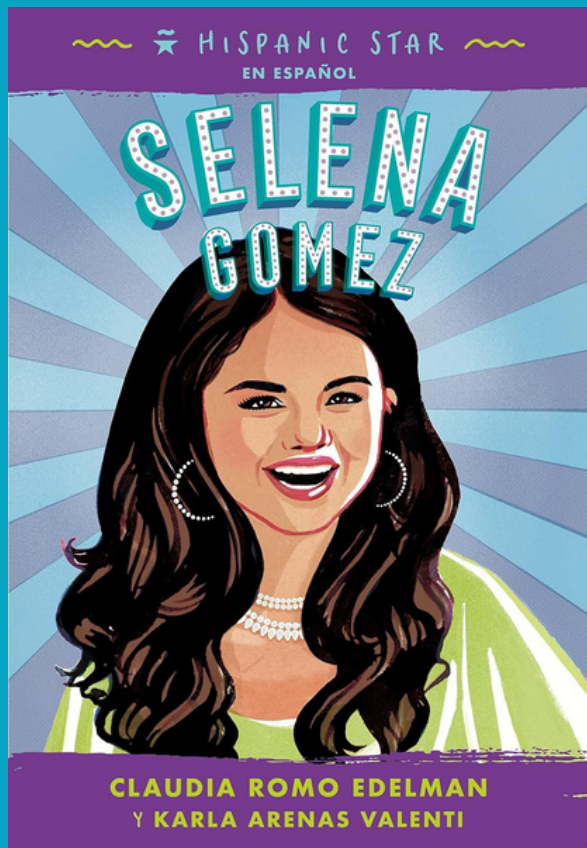
### ART AFFIRMATION

This can be a library program. They can either have the template of a tree or something similar (concept is to have roots and things that bloom).

They paint their canvas and then begin adding words / sentences of affirmation for themselves.

They take their art work home or it can be displayed in the library for Art Appreciation month in August or for Mental Health Awareness Month in May.

# SELENA GOMEZ



by Claudia Romo Edelman & Karla Arenas Valenti, illustrated by Alexandra Beguez, Translated by Terry Catasús Jennings (Roaring Brook Press, 2023).

# ACTIVITY 1

## PRAIRIE LIGHTS

Selena was born in Grand Prairie, Texas where each year Lynn Creek Park shines with colorful displays to celebrate the holidays. Watch this [video](#) and imagine that the event organizers have asked you to design a new lighted display that represents Selena Gomez. Use this [page](#) to draw it and write how it represents Selena Gomez.

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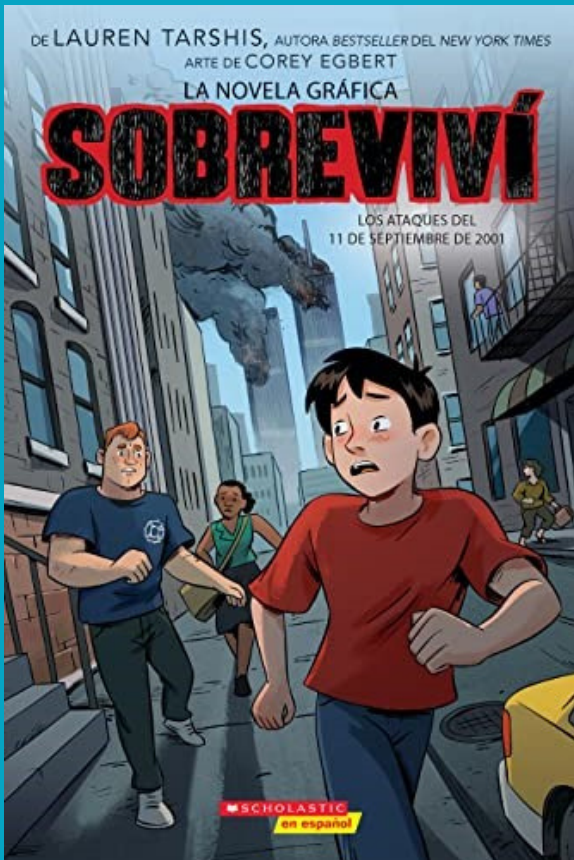
# ACTIVITY 2

## WHEN I GROW UP...

Selena knew she wanted to be an actress and singer since she was little, think about what your dream job would be and do some research about it. Fill out this [graphic organizer](#) and write a short composition about your dream job. Share it with your family!



# SOBREVIVÍ: LOS ATAQUES DE 2001 (I SURVIVED THE ATTACKS OF 2001)



by Lauren Tarshis,  
illustrated by Scott  
Dawson, translated by  
Scholastic Inc  
(Scholastic Inc, 2021).

## ACTIVITY 1

### LEARN MORE WITH TEACHING BOOKS

Discover [Teachingbooks.net](https://www.teachingbooks.net) to dig into other books by Lauren Tarshis, engage in activities, and explore the publisher's website.

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## ACTIVITY 2

### POSTER MAKER

Students will create a poster about diverse viewpoints (differences and similarities) about how different people reflect about the attack of September 11, 2001.

# SUPERHEROÍNAS Y SUPERHÉROES: MANUAL DE INSTRUCCIONES (HOW TO BECOME A SUPERHERO)



by Davide Cali,  
illustrated by Gómez  
(Nube Ocho, 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### DESIGN YOUR SUPERHERO OUTFIT

Just like in the book, you can design your own super suit! Don't forget to include if you will have a cape, the best colors, and what your mask might look like.

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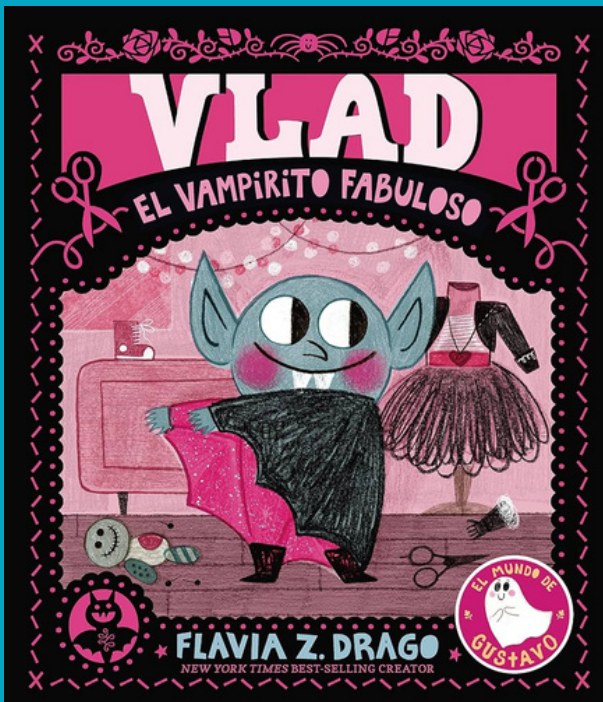
## ACTIVITY 2

### WRITE YOUR OWN GRAPHIC NOVEL USING YOUR SUPERHERO

Gómez illustrates this fun and colorful graphic novel. Draw a one page graphic novel using your superhero. Superheroes usually have a problem to solve, so start with that!



# VLAD EL VAMPIRITO FABULOSO (VLAD THE FABULOUS VAMPIRE)



Written and illustrated by  
Flavia Z. Drago  
(Candlewick Press, 2023).

## ACTIVITY 1

### MASKING EMOTIONS

Families and teachers can engage children in a hands-on activity inspired by the themes of self-expression and acceptance in the story. Begin by discussing how characters like Vlad express themselves and share their true selves with others. Provide plain masks, markers, and various craft materials. Encourage the children to decorate their masks, using colors and designs that reflect their own personalities and emotions. As they work on their creations, prompt discussions about acceptance and embracing differences. Once the masks are complete, have a mini-mask parade where each child can proudly showcase their unique creations, reinforcing the story's message of celebrating individuality.

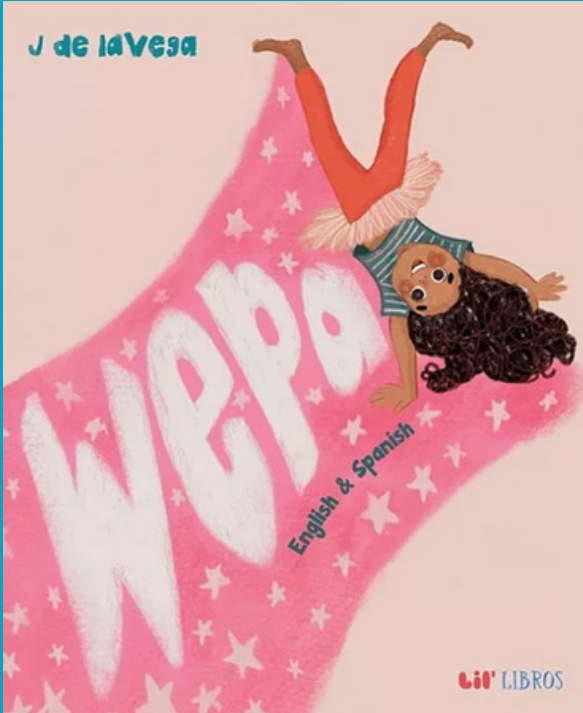
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## ACTIVITY 2

### CELEBRATING FRIENDSHIP

Extend this wonderful story by organizing a "Celebrating Friendship" event. Invite children to bring a small item or artwork that represents them, similar to how Vlad and Shelley share their physical traits in the story. Provide a space for the kids to display their items, creating a mini-exhibition of diversity. Encourage the children to discuss their chosen items, fostering conversations about acceptance and friendship. Additionally, facilitate a collaborative art project where the kids work together to create a mural or collage that represents the vibrant and diverse community in the story. This activity not only reinforces the themes of the book but also emphasizes the importance of acceptance and unity in building strong friendships.

# WEPA



Written and illustrated  
by J. de la Vega,  
(Lil' Libros, 2023).

# ACTIVITY 1

## DIARY ENTRY

Students are assigned to create a diary entry. Each student selects a character from the book. In their entry, they need to incorporate how the character feels emotionally and intellectually. Students can incorporate details from the book, dialogue and interactions to make the diary entry more interesting. Very important, all entries need to cultivate empathy, diversity, and respect to each other.

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# ACTIVITY 2

## MAKE A PLAY

The students will perform a theatrical adaptation of the book, each student will be a different character of the book. Participants will dress in appropriate costumes, follow the stage rules. After practicing a few times, the students will perform the play in front of the group, their parents and/or other classes.