



## Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel (Max's Lucha Libre Adventures #4) / Maximilian & la maldición del Ángel Caído

written and illustrated by Xavier Garza

### About the Book

**Genre:** Fiction

**Format:** Paperback, 224 pages

**ISBN:** 9781947627314

**Reading Level:** Grades 6 - 7

**Interest Level:** Grades 3 - 7

**Guided Reading Level:** Y

**Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:**  
N/A

**Lexile™ Measure:** N/A

\*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

**Themes:** Bilingual, Childhood Experiences and Memories, Conflict resolution, Courage, Cultural Diversity, Diversity, Dreams & Aspirations, Families, Fiction, Identity/Self Esteem/Confidence, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest, Mentors, Middle Grade, Optimism/Enthusiasm, Overcoming Obstacles, Persistence/Grit, Spanish, Sports

**Resources on the web:**

[leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caidolucha-libre](http://leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caidolucha-libre)

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

### SYNOPSIS

It's the end of an era! Max's uncle --legendary luchador, the Guardian Angel-- is getting married and walking away from wrestling! Max was set on taking over the wrestling role, but not so soon. He's just fourteen! To make matters worse, his uncle chose a wild new wrestler for his last match, the Fallen Angel. If the villain wins, will the legend of the Guardian Angel die before Max is ready to put on the mask?

¡Es el fin de una era! El tío de Max --el legendario luchador, el Ángel de la Guarda-- se va a casar, ¡y retirarse de la lucha libre! Max quería ser la siguiente persona a asumir el papel del héroe enmascarado, pero no tan pronto. ¡Solo tiene catorce años! Y para colmo, su tío escogió un nuevo luchador temerario para su última pelea, el Ángel Caído. ¿Si gana el villano morirá la leyenda del Ángel de la Guarda antes de que Max esté listo para ponerse la máscara?

Catch up on the Max's Lucha Libre Adventures adventures series:

- 1--*Maximilian and the Mystery of the Guardian Angel / Maximilian y el misterio del Ángel de la Guarda*
- 2--*Maximilian and the Bingo Rematch / Maximilian y la revancha de bingo*
- 3--*Maximilian and the Lucha Libre Club / Maximilian y el club de Lucha Libre*

## BACKGROUND

### From Author's Note in *Maximilian & the Mystery of the Guardian Angel*

"The inspiration for *Maximilian & the Mystery of the Guardian Angel* sprang from a short story I wrote about a kid who goes to see lucha libre matches with his uncle and ends up getting into a tug of war with a girl over his favorite wrestler's mask. Little did I know that the story I had titled back then as "Adventures in Mexican Wrestling" would lead to a series of books about the escapades of Maximilian and his world that is filled with masked heroes and villains. I am beyond thrilled to share the news that the adventures of Maximilian will continue to be published under the Cinco Puntos Press imprint at its new home, Lee & Low Books. I dedicate this relaunch of the Maximilian series to Lee Byrd and everybody else who was ever a part of *Cinco Puntos Press*. I wouldn't have been able to introduce *Maximilian & the Mystery of the Guardian Angel*, and the three books that followed, to the world without you all. I also dedicate the relaunch of the series to my readers for supporting my stories over the years. Maximilian and the Guardian Angel have returned. The best is yet to come!"

### The History of Lucha Libre

Lucha libre is an important and iconic part Mexican culture. In the Maximilian series, family time for Max means attending lucha libre matches together. In lucha libre there are masks, technical maneuvers, rules, and plenty of dramatic entertainment.

Lucha libre dates back to the mid-1800s. Lucha libre wrestlers are called luchadores. The luchador masks are a "sacred part of a wrestler's identity," according to Texas Highways. Lucha libre is an important activity and pastime for families and fans not only in Mexico and the United States, but around the world today. To learn more about the history of lucha libre, visit some of the following resources:

<https://www.si.com/wrestling/2019/09/17/lucha-libre-mexico-united-states>

<https://abc7.com/lucha-libre-wrestling-mexico-sports/1412999/>

<https://texashighways.com/culture/how-lucha-libre-mexican-style-wrestling-unites-two-countries/>

## BEFORE READING

### Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- Ask students what they know about lucha libre or other types of wrestling.
- Have you ever been a part of a team or project that required you to work alongside others? How was that experience? What was it like to work with others?
- What does it mean to forgive? What does forgiveness mean to you?

## Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel

Teacher's Guide [leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caido](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caido)

- Have you ever been in a difficult situation where you didn't know what to do? Who did you go to for help? What plan did you come up with to tackle the situation? How did this situation make you feel?
- Ask students to think about their family and what family means to them. How is family important to you? How do you interact with your family members? How do you help them?
- What does it mean to be a friend? What are the qualities of friendship?
- Why is bilingualism important? If you are bilingual (or speak more than two languages), what does it mean to you? If you are not bilingual, why do you think those languages are significant to that person?

You may want to have students journal their responses to these questions or pose the final question as a KWL discussion and chart so that you can refer back to it throughout and after the reading of the book to further their thinking on the topic(s).

### Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)  
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book, *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*. Ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- **Book Walk:** Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, half title page, title page, message to readers, author's short bio (at the end of the book), and listing of the author's other titles. Display the book and analyze the cover. What do students notice in the illustration?
- **Read the Author's Biography:** Read about Xavier Garza (<https://www.kens5.com/article/news/community/south-texas-culture-stories-storyteller-xavier-garza/273-7e27e609-2db1-4c81-a2bc-d32a0a7892ed>). What do you think the process is like to write and illustrate a book for young readers? Why do you think Xavier Garza created this book for young readers?

Encourage students to stop and jot down notes in their reading notebooks during the reading when they: learn new information, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or see new words.

### Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- how hard work and dedication are crucial to achieving a goal
- why it is important to reflect and accept one's mistakes
- the difficulties and pressures of being the middle sibling

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- what it means to be a good friend
- how Max, his family, and friends change over the course of the book, and what events cause those changes
- how young people show resilience through difficult times
- how Max's family supports and looks after one another throughout the book
- why it's important to stand up for your beliefs, identity, culture, and traditions

Encourage students to consider why the author/illustrator Xavier Garza would want to share this story with young people.

## VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

### Content Specific

beastial/bestiales, fiend, sacrificial/sacrificios, barrage/ganchos, obsidian/obsidiana, cauldron/caldero, rouges/enemigos, Legion/Legión, catapult/lanzo, pivots/gira, hammerlock/canado inverso, protagonists/protagonistas, abomination/abominación, braggart/presumido, scoundrel/sinvergüenza, alimony/pension alimenticia, annals/anales, prowess/proezas, tyrant/dictadora, alebit, bonafide, disciples/discípulos, devotional/dedicaron, mortal/mortal

### Academic

defiance, engulfed, momentum, blatantly, blasphemy/blasfemia, demise/destruir, enormity/enorme, revelation, dictated/dictado, malfunctioning/descomponerse, generosity/generosidad, affliction/aflicción, embodiment/encarnación, malvolent/malévola, luminescent/iluminación, pummeled/golpeen, onslaught/embestida, triumphant/triunfante, vanquished/derrotado, forbade/prohibí, hypocrite/hipócrita

## AFTER READING

### Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.

## Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

### Chapters 1 –10

1. Who is the Guardian Angel fighting in his new movie? Who else is featured in this new movie?
2. Who is the Silver Star? What is her relation to the Guardian Angel?
3. What news does Tío Rodolfo deliver to Max and his family?
4. Who is teaching Gus and Max wrestling? Who else joins the boys in practice?
5. What does the Vampire Velasquez bring up during their practice session?
6. How is the Fallen Angel similar to the Guardian Angel? How are they different? What is the Fallen Angel doing to imitate the Guardian Angel?
7. What does Paloma suggest to Max about his uncle retiring? What advice does Paloma give Max?
8. What connection will the Guardian Angel have to La Dama Enmascarada after his marriage to Silver Star?
9. Who are the Fallen Angel's followers?
10. Why is Max having a hard time understanding his Tío Rodolfo's retirement? Who helps Max understand why?
11. What happens during Max's sparring session with his uncle? Who interrupts Max's sparring session with his Tío Rodolfo? What does Max learn during this session?
12. Who does Max befriend backstage? What does he discover? Who is the Fallen Angel?

### Chapters 11-19

13. Who are Tía Soccoro and Tía Dolores acting at the wedding? Who are they fighting over?
14. Who does Vampire Velasquez introduce Max to at the wedding? What do they talk about?
15. Who is Tío Rodolfo's best man? What does he say about this?
16. Why is the wedding of Tío Rodolfo a big deal to Max's mom?
17. Who crashes the wedding? How is the Vampire Velasquez responding?
18. What does Tío Lalo tell his family about the production of Lucha Azteca?
19. What special announcement is made on Lucha Azteca? What happens during this announcement?
20. How does Max and his family respond to the Lucha Azteca showing?
21. What updates does Paloma provide during the Lucha Libre Club? Who wants to join the club?
22. Why is Max surprised during "The Test"? How does he feel about Little Roberto? What does Max find out about Little Roberto?

## Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel

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23. How does Mom feel about flying? What happens while they are flying to the match?
24. What updates does Spooky give Max? What is he left wondering?
25. What role is the Lucha Libre Club going to be playing in the big brawl between the Guardian Angel and the Fallen Angel?
26. What luchadores are fighting in The Opening Bout? What are the results of each of their matches?
27. How does the Fallen Angel enter the arena?
28. How is the Fallen Angel described? How is the Guardian Angel described in the chapter, The Main Event? How are they being compared? What are the differences between them?

### Chapters 20-22

29. How is the Fallen Angel fighting? Is he being fair during his match with the Guardian Angel? How is the Guardian Angel doing?
30. Just as all hope is lost, who steps into the ring to help the Guardian Angel?
31. How do the Lucha Libre Club help during the fight between the Guardian Angel and the Fallen Angel?
32. How does the Guardian Angel pin down the Fallen Angel? Who does he get help from? How is the Fallen Angel defeated?
33. What does the Guardian Angel say when he addresses the crowd at the end of the match?
34. Who does the Guardian Angel dedicate his life to outside of being a luchador?
35. What happens as the Guardian Angel is going to reveal his identity?
36. What trace is left of the Guardian Angel?
37. Where does the Guardian Angel "live"?
38. What does Rigo's message to Max say?
39. What happens at the airport? Who does Max have a conversation with?
40. What does Little Roberto tell Max at the airport? Who do you think will become the next Guardian Angel?

### Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What does the title *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel* mean to you after reading? Why do you think the author chose this particular title? What would be another fitting title? Why?
1. How do Max's relationships change with his family throughout the story? What do Max's relationships look like in the beginning of the book versus the end of the book?
1. How does Max's character change and evolve from the beginning of the book versus the end of the book?

2. What makes lucha libre a good family activity? What activities do you enjoy doing with your family? Why?
3. Why does lucha libre play an integral role in Max's life? Why is it important to pursue hobbies and passions that are important to one's beliefs, cultures, and identity?
4. What is special about junior high? What are the challenges? What advice do you have for Max as he gets ready for a new school year?
5. Why is it important to understand community and purpose in lucha libre?
6. What important lesson does Max learn from his family? Why is it important to learn from your mistakes?
7. Despite disagreements between Rodolfo and Braulia, they still love and care for one another. Why is it important to have clear communication with family and friends? How do you handle relationship with people that you may not always see eye to eye with?
8. Forgiveness, reconciliation, and reflection play a big role in Max's life. How does that make you think differently about forgiveness? When is it important to forgive? Why do you think that?
9. What lessons does Max learn about hard work? Who or what are some examples of hard work that Max sees among his family or friends?
10. How does Max use his passion for lucha libre to work towards a goal? Who keeps him accountable?
11. Max has conflicted emotions in regards to the Guardian Angel retiring. How do you deal with difficult situations? What advice would you give to Max on how to deal with conflict? Why?
12. Little Roberto looks up to his older brother Max. Do you have an older sibling, friend or person in your life you look up to? Why?
13. Why do you think author Xavier Garza presents this story with English and Spanish together?
14. How does the author Xavier Garza use humor to explore difficult subjects, such as growing up, family relationships, and identity?
15. What does family mean to you after reading this story? Have any of your perceptions or feelings toward family members changed after reading this book? How does Max's relationships with his family members inspire you to act toward your own family and friends?

### Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion. You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. **What do you think is the author's message to the reader?** Think about Xavier Garza's message in the book. What do you think he wanted to tell young readers?
2. **Have students make a text-to-self connection.** What kind of connections did you make

between this story and your own life? What is your role in your own family?

- 3. Have students make a text-to-text connection.** Did you think of any other books while you read *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*? Why did you make those connections?
- 4. Have students make a text-to-world connection.** What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world or on the news? Why did *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel* make you think of that?
- 5. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book?** Think about different character changes, the setting, and the relationships. What did you learn from reading *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*?
- 6. What different types of conflicts are presented in *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*?** Discuss Max's conflicts within himself, with his family, with his friends, and in the world. Compare and contrast the different conflicts within the text.

### Multilingual Learners Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)  
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are multilingual learners (ML). It is also important to stress that the Spanish used in this book is considered Mexican American Spanish and that may or may not resonate with all students. Some words may have different meanings in the Spanish used in other areas around the world.

1. Assign ML students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Review each chapter and chapter title. Have students summarize what is happening in the chapter, first orally, then in writing. Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about one of the characters in the book. Have them discuss the characteristics they admire about the person they chose.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose ML students to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up the word and record definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.
6. The book is bilingual, with English text on the left and Spanish text on the right of each spread



(except for the first page of each chapter, which has the English text above the Spanish text). Have students read both texts and compare them. Have students highlight any unknown words or phrases and then record them separately. Have students look up the definitions of the words or phrases and share their knowledge with others in the class, if applicable.

7. Have students identify true cognates throughout the book. Students can begin with one to two pages and gradually increase to a chapter(s) where students highlight true cognates and determine the meaning to the word if they do not already know it. This is also a great opportunity to discuss false cognates with students. If time allows, have students reflect on the cognates that they found. Did they know the word in English? Did they know the word in Spanish? If it was an unknown word in English, did the identification of the Spanish cognate help them define the word? Consult ¡Colorin Colorado! (<https://www.colorincolorado.org/using-cognates-ells>) for more ideas on how to use cognates in the classroom with ML students.

### ACTIVIDADES EN ESPAÑOL PARA APOYO EN PROGRAMAS BILINGÜES Y DE INMERSION DUAL

*(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4-6)  
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4-6)*

For the CCSS in Spanish, please check out <https://commoncore-espanol.sdcoc.net/CCSS-en-Espanol/SLA-Literacy>

1. Asigne el libro *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel* a sus estudiantes. Coloque dos estudiantes juntos para leer el libro en voz alta. Compare las palabras en inglés y en español. ¿Cómo se comparan las palabras? Los estudiantes pueden practicar las palabras que tengan dificultad en pronunciar. Estudiantes pueden tener un cuaderno con las palabras difíciles para hacer referencia en el futuro.
2. Durante el tiempo de tiempo de lectura, haga preguntas de comprensión a los estudiantes en inglés y en español para medir el nivel de comprensión en los dos idiomas. Preguntas pueden incluir: ¿de qué se trata el cuento? ¿Conectaste con uno de los personajes en el cuento? ¿Por qué sí o no? ¿Qué parte te gusta más en el cuento?
3. Elija palabras de vocabulario. Los libros ilustrados bilingües son una excelente manera para que sus estudiantes aprendan nuevas palabras de vocabulario porque el idioma se presenta en contexto. Si es posible, haga fotocopias de las páginas. Estudiantes pueden usar subrayadores en un color para inglés y un color para español para las palabras nuevas. También, puede anotar las palabras en un póster para referencia. Reflexione con sus estudiantes sobre cuales palabras ya sabían y cuales palabras aprendieron.
4. En casa los estudiantes pueden pre-leer el libro con sus familias y puede sugerir que lean el libro juntos. Esto ayuda a practicar la lectura y a aprender de los dos idiomas, inglés y español.
5. El uso de cognados puede ser útil en libros bilingües, en español y en inglés. En esta actividad estudiantes pueden buscar cognados en el libro. Los estudiantes pueden trabajar en parejas para identificar y formar una lista si las palabras son cognados verdaderos o falsos. Al final de la actividad es importante distinguir como clase la lista de los cognados verdaderos o falsos.
6. Estas actividades solo son sugerencias. Puede encontrar más recursos para apoyar las clases

de inmersión dual y bilingües. Puede leer más en (<https://blog.leeandlow.com/2013/11/04/using-dual-language-and-bilingual-books-in-third-and-fourth-grade/>).

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### Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Throughout the story, Max feels the pressure of being a good friend. Have you ever felt pressure from friends? What does this pressure feel like and what strategies do you use to overcome those feelings?
2. What SEL skills does Max exhibit over the course of the book? Some examples of SEL skills include problem-solving, grit and perseverance, and perspective taking. How does Max demonstrate these skills? Why was it important for him to demonstrate these skills?
3. How has a family member impacted your life? How do you think Max's family have inspired him? Provide evidence from the story to support your thoughts.
4. Max learns what it means to be honest to reach his goals, but it was a lesson he had to learn the hard way. Why is it important to tell the truth? Why is it important to communicate in an honest way? Provide some examples of when you've had to honestly communicate in your life
5. Have students go on SEL scavenger hunt in the text, looking for evidence in the details from the book. Assign students to relevant SEL themes, such as: empathy, problem-solving, perspective taking, perseverance, and recognizing and managing emotions.
6. Encourage students to identify passages where characters manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways. In a chart with four columns, write: What was the cause of the conflict? What was the consequence of the conflict? How does the character(s) resolve the problem? What are additional ways the character(s) could have solved the problem? What advice would you give?
7. Choose an emotion that interests you: happiness, sadness, fear, anxiety, frustration, hope, perseverance and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

### English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Prepare a persuasive essay that explains your views on which character changed the most throughout the course of the novel.** Defend your views by citing specific examples. Track their change through evidence from the book over the course of the story. What did you notice about how they changed? Readwritethink.org's "Inferring How and Why Characters Change" lesson plan provides additional details and ideas on how to teach about character change (<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/inferring-characters-change>).
- **Have students identify a place where Max's character changes in the book.** Why do students think that was a point where Max's character changed? How does Max feel before the change, what causes the change, and then how does he feel after? Create a graphic organizer with a column on the left that says "Before," a column in the middle that says "Event—what happened that caused the change," and then a column that says "After." Afterwards, students can write an essay detailing their findings from the graphic organizer, and what they learned from analyzing Max's character change.
- **Have students examine the character of Max and write several journal entries from the perspective of Max.** Have students select a section of the story that features interactions with different characters. Have students write journal entries from the point of view of Max and have them examine these questions: How is Max feeling during this interaction? How does he respond to each interaction? Does he change during this interaction?
- **Select a scene in which you disagreed how a character handled a situation, person, or event.** In the voice of that character, rewrite the scene as you think it should have happened. Here are a few resources on how to teach voice in writing (<https://www.teachwriting.org/612th/2020/1/29/teaching-voice-in-writing-a-guide-for-creative-teachers>) and (<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/teaching-voice-anthony>)
- **Assign students different characters from the book and have them brainstorm about a guiding question: what and how can this character teach us?** Students can think about different characters to examine as a whole class and then break into smaller, specific character groups. Encourage students to think about how characters have made

## Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel

Teacher's Guide [leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caido](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caido)

mistakes and also have done good things in the book, and ultimately what they learned from that character. Have students share out their findings: How is this character important to the book, and what lessons did they teach us over the course of the story? How did their actions develop the narrative, and why are they crucial to understanding the meaning of the book?

- **Encourage students to imagine they can interview the author.** Students can design interview questions to ask the author, Xavier Garza, of *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel* if they were on a talk show, news show, or radio show. What do students want to learn more about in terms of the writing process? Consider reaching out to Xavier Garza for a virtual author visit.
- **Conduct an Author Study on Xavier Garza with his any of his other titles, including *Charro Claus and the Tejas Kid* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/charro-claus-and-the-tejas-kid>) and *Lucha Libre: The Man in the Silver Mask* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/lucha-libre>).** How are the main characters similar? How are they different? What themes do both books have in common? How are the topics similar? How are they different? Provide students with a graphic organizer to differentiate the two titles, and then have students write an essay answering the previous questions.
- **Create a family tree that will help students follow the different characters that are presented in *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel* their reading of the book.** You can do this together as a class on chart paper or you can provide students with individual copies of a blank family tree organizer. You can find and read more about using family tree graphic organizers here (<https://awriterofhistory.com/2022/11/25/growing-a-fictional-family-tree/>).
- **Create a story map that will help students follow the different elements in *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel* during their reading of the book.** Discuss the main components of the story (characters, setting, problem/ solution, theme). You can do this together as a class on chart paper or you can provide students with individual copies of a blank story map organizer. You can find and read more about using story maps graphic organizers here ([https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/story\\_maps](https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/story_maps)).
- **Have students read the Message to Readers from Xavier Garza.** What did they learn from the Message to Readers after reading the story? How did it make them think differently about *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*? What is Xavier's perspective and why did he decide to write this story? Have students write a reaction essay to the Message to Readers, and present three follow-up questions for Xavier Garza.
- **Have students analyze the descriptive language used in Chapter 20.** What do students notice about how the author describes the fight? What figurative language does the author use? What details does the author use? You can find and learn strategies for descriptive writing ([https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/descriptive\\_writing](https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/descriptive_writing)). If time allows, encourage students to rewrite final fight of the Guardian Angel using descriptive language. Students can share their brawl in partners or to the whole class.

## Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Ask students to research the history of lucha libre at the school or public library.** Where did lucha libre originate? How did lucha libre make its way to the United States? What are the rules of lucha libre? Why are masks important in lucha libre? Discuss how this information helps students understand *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*.
- **Have students read a book about lucha libre. *Lucha Libre: The Man in the Silver Mask* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/lucha-libre>) is a Lee and Low title and a bilingual story about lucha libre.** Encourage students to take note of what they learn about lucha libre. What did they learn from reading this title? What did students think about the book? How does this title relate to *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*? Students can write an essay about the questions and reflect on what they learned about lucha libre from both books.
- **Conduct a reader's theater using two or three of the luchadores that are introduced in *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*.** In groups of 3 or 4 students can prepare a skit or scene using the characters from the book. Before allowing group work time, remind students that their skits should be school appropriate and safe. Groups can then present their act to the class. If time allows, students can create their own luchador/luchadora using inspiration from the book. For more information on how to use reader's theater as a strategy in your classroom, go to ([https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/readers\\_theater](https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/readers_theater)).

## Art/Media

(K-ESS3-3 Earth and Human Activity: Communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment; MS-LS2-5: Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, Dynamics: Evaluate competing design solutions for maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services;

(MS-PS3-4: Energy: Plan an investigation to determine the relationships among the energy transferred, the type of matter, the mass, and the change in the average kinetic energy of the particles as measured by the temperature of the sample)

- **Have students reimagine the cover to *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*.** What would they change? What would they keep? If time allows, have students illustrate the new book cover.
- **Citing textual evidence, select a theme portrayed in the novel, *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*.** Create a visual presentation with illustrations, drawings, and any other creative materials to reflect how this theme is developed over the course of the text.
- **Have students illustrate a feeling one of the characters experienced in the story.** What do they want to convey? What kinds of materials do they want to use? Have students share their pieces with a partner, small group, or whole class.
- **Encourage students to use inspiration from *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel* to create their own luchador/luchadora.** What type of luchador/luchadora would they be? A rudo or a tecnico? What would their mask be like? Have students write a biography

of their luchador/luchadora and if time allows, have students illustrate their character. If possible, present in a gallery walk format.

- **Consider having students come up with questions to interview the author and illustrator Xavier Garza.** What is his process behind creating the illustration for each chapter? What medium did he use to create the illustrations? Why? What was it like to work on *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*?

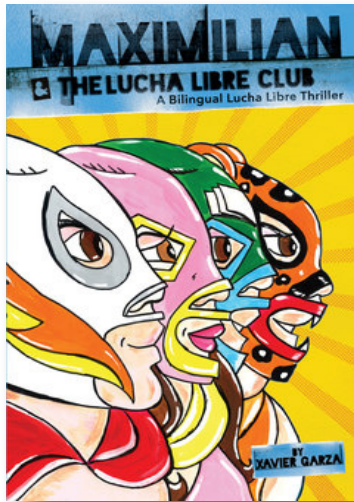
### School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Interview a family member about the history of their family.** Have students talk about their country of origin. Why is it important to understand your family history? Why is it important to know the different parts of the world where your family is from? If students do not know their family history, have them interview someone about the history of your town or city.
- **Have students interview a parent, guardian, or adult mentor about their experiences with fighting for something they believe in or going through a hardship.** How did this person react to and handle the situation when they were faced with obstacles? What advice do they have for someone going through something similar?
- **Have students research their family history.** Where were you born? Where were your parents and grandparents born? For additional activity and lesson ideas, check out the "Family Ties and Fabric Tales" lesson plan from Learning for Justice (<http://www.tolerance.org/supplement/family-ties-and-fabric-tales/elementary-grades>). To use digital storytelling to capture immigration stories, explore Crossing Border with Digital Storytelling from the American Immigration Council ([http://www.communityeducationcenter.org/sites/default/files/crossing\\_borders\\_with\\_digital\\_storytelling\\_teacher\\_unit\\_plan\\_0.pdf](http://www.communityeducationcenter.org/sites/default/files/crossing_borders_with_digital_storytelling_teacher_unit_plan_0.pdf)).
- **Ask students to create portraits of people who are their personal role models using drawing, collage, photographs, or any other media with which they enjoy working.** In writing, students should describe the actions and qualities they admire about these people. They can also give their role models special abilities and powers. Students can write in prose or submit a poem or song.
- **Have students take home a copy of *Maximilian & the Curse of the Fallen Angel*.** Ask students to read with adults at home. Encourage conversation and discussion after reading. What did they like about reading a bilingual book? What did they learn from the story?
- **Ask students to describe an activity or pastime they enjoy doing with their families.** It can be anything from an annual family tradition to a weekly hike. Encourage students to write about, sketch, or take photographs to show what meaningful time with their families is to them and how it has evolved since they were younger children



## Ordering Information

### General Order Information:

[leeandlow.com/contact/ordering](https://www.leeandlow.com/contact/ordering)

### Secure Online Ordering:

[.leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caido](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/maximilian-the-curse-of-the-fallen-angel-max-s-lucha-libre-adventures-4-maximilian-la-maldicion-del-angel-caido)

**By Phone:** 212-779-4400 ext. 25

**By Fax:** 212-683-1894

### By Mail:

Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue,  
New York, NY 10016

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

### Xavier Garza

Xavier Garza was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley, author and lucha libre aficionado Xavier Garza is a prolific and enthusiastic author, artist, and storyteller whose work focuses primarily on his experiences growing up in the small border town of Rio Grande City and is a lively documentation of the dreams, superstitions, and heroes in the bigger-than-life world of South Texas. Garza has exhibited his art and performed his stories in venues throughout Texas, Arizona and the state of Washington. He has authored and illustrated fourteen books, and has received such prestigious awards as the *Americas Honor Book Award* in 2005, the *Tejas Star Book Award* three times from 2007-2010 and the *Pura Belpré Honor Book award* in 2012. In 2014 he was awarded both the *NAACS Tejas Young Adult Book Award* and the *Texas Institute of Letters Children's Book Award*. In 2019 Xavier Garza will be inducted into the prestigious *Texas Institute of Letters*. Garza lives in San Antonio, Texas with his wife Irma and their teen son Vincent.

## REVIEWS

"Through Max's struggle to handle his hero's news, Garza reflects on the often-outsize expectations we heap onto our heroes and the personal sacrifices they make to become athletes and entertainers. The steadily paced narrative, accented by offbeat characters and moments of sincerity and growth, resembles a tender family sitcom." – *Booklist*

"Garza shows a new mastery of his characters—all Mexican—and fictional world in this latest installment. Apart from Max's continued growth, each character shines, no matter how small an appearance they may make. In the end, what readers get is an assured, joyous story full of lucha libre antics and poignant familial bonding. Max's finest adventure thus far." – *Kirkus Reviews*

## ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

**LEE & LOW BOOKS** is the largest children's book publisher specializing in diversity and multiculturalism. Our motto, "about everyone, for everyone," is as urgent today as it was when we started in 1991. It is the company's goal to meet the need for stories that children of color can identify with and that all children can enjoy. The right book can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, prompt discussion about race and ethnicity, and inspire children to imagine not only a world that includes them, but also a world where they are the heroes of their own stories. Discover more at [leeandlow.com](https://www.leeandlow.com).