



Quinito's Neighborhood / El Vecindario de Quinito

written by Ina Cumpiano

illustrated by José Ramirez

About the Book

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Format: Paperback, \$10.95
24 pages, 9-3/4" W | 8-1/2" H

ISBN: 9781600602481

Reading Level: Grade 2

Interest Level: Grades PreK-2

Guided Reading Level: L

Spanish Guided Reading Level: K

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
1.5/0.5

Lexile™ Measure: 500L

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Community Life, Neighborhood, Home, Families, Day in the Life, Community Helpers, Jobs and Occupations, Beginning Concepts, Childhood Experiences, Realistic Fiction, Identity, Pride, Latino Interest

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/quinito-s-neighborhood-el-vecindario-de-quinito

SYNOPSIS

Quinito knows that his neighborhood is made up of much more than just buildings, streets, and shops—it is made up of all the people he knows and loves. People like his grown-up cousin Tita, who learns how to make people laugh in clown school, and his aunt, who paints murals to brighten up the streets. Everyone in the neighborhood has an important job, and each friend and neighbor knows and values everyone else.

José Ramírez's jewel-like paintings vibrate with life and energy, and bring Quinito's charming neighborhood journey to life. *Quinito's Neighborhood* will inspire readers to explore and appreciate their own neighborhoods, and show them the boundless array of different jobs in their communities.

Awards

- **Skipping Stones Honor Award**, Bilingual Book, Skipping Stones magazine
- **Texas 2x2 Reading List**, Texas Library Association
- **"Choices,"** Cooperative Children's Book Center
- **Finalist**, Best Read Aloud Book Award, ReadBoston

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

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood and Community

As Quinito looks around him, he observes all the ways his family works in the community and helps each other. He points out different places in his neighborhood and the work his family members do there. Review or teach students what makes a community. What makes a neighborhood? Look at a map of the neighborhood around the school and different points of interest.

Families

Review family structures and the many ways people form families. It may be helpful to create a list of family members and remind students that some families include pets.

Community Helpers and Jobs

Brainstorm together a list of jobs people can do in a community. Talk about how jobs in a community can look at a lot of different ways. Some may be formal – such as go to a place of business and get paid to work, such as a florist at a flower shop. Many other jobs that are helpful in our community and neighborhoods may be informal – volunteer, temporary, seasonal or unpaid. Remind students that jobs can be done in the home or outside, not just in specific buildings. Encourage students to think about how they help their community and what jobs they do to help their families and neighborhood.

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:

- Take a look at the front and back covers. Take a picture walk. Ask students to make a prediction. Do you think this book will be fiction or nonfiction? What makes you think so?
- This story is going to show different jobs in *Quinito's Neighborhood* and family. What are some examples of jobs and work in a community? What might you like to be or try when you grow up?
- Who is in your family?
- What is the difference between a neighborhood (physical place) and community (people)?
- What kind of ways kind young people help in their neighborhood and community?

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, *Quinito's Neighborhood*. Then 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?
- Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, dedications, page numbers, author and illustrator biographies, illustrations, and bilingual glossary.
- Encourage students to stop and jot/sketch in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.
- Have students quickly write a feeling in their notebooks during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote that feeling down and have them to write a journal entry about it.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- who Quinito includes in his family
- what places he visits and observes in his neighborhood
- the types of jobs and talents people do or have in his community
- how everyone in the book works together to help one another
- how Quinito helps in his neighborhood

Encourage students to consider why the author, Ina Cumpiano, would want to share this story with young people. Have students consider why she wrote the story in both Spanish and English.

VOCABULARY

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

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.

Note: Glossary is included at end of the book. The story uses Spanish words for family relations, kinds of stores, and other terms.

Content Specific

carpenter, nurse, muralist, bodega, school guard

Academic

bank, delivers, neighbor, neighborhood

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)

1. Who is the speaker of the story? How do you know?
2. Who is in Quinito's family?
3. What places does Quinito see in his neighborhood? Where do his family members work?
4. What jobs or talents do each of his family members do or have?
5. Identify the different colors used in the pages. Examples: What colors do you see the most of? What is blue? Have you ever seen purple sidewalks?
6. How does Quinito's abuelo and abuela work together?
7. How is Quinito busy?

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. Discuss the importance of being observant and appreciating the family in our lives. Talk about how Quinito does this in the book.
2. What patterns do you see in the book?
3. What other jobs do you see in the story Quinito missed in his life?
4. How would you describe Quinito's relationship with his family? With his neighborhood?
5. What is the difference between a neighborhood and community? Why do you think the author chose the title, *Quinito's Neighborhood*, rather than *Quinito's Community*?
6. How does each family member in the book show they care for another?
7. What does the word "family" mean to Quinito?
8. Compare Quinito's family to your own family. How are the two families similar and different?
9. Compare *Quinito's Neighborhood* to your own neighborhood (or the neighborhood around your school).
10. What job might you want to try or explore when you grow up? Why?
11. How does this story celebrate neighborhoods?
12. Identify the different professions in the book and find similarities between them. For example: How are a carpenter and construction worker alike? (Both help to construct buildings) How are a nurse and dentist alike? (Both help people feel better) How are a truck driver and a mailman alike? (Both deliver things) How are a dance teacher and musician alike? (Both use music)

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 is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about *Quinito's Neighborhood* and what he sees during his journey. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think author Ina Cumpiano's message is to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Ina Cumpiano's intentions to write the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do Quinito's experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you?

4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Quinito's Neighborhood*? Why did you make those connections?
5. 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, such as on television or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?

ELL 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 English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL 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. Alternatively, ELL students could read the larger text and strong English readers/speakers, the smaller text.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, 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 community, community helpers, or their neighborhood and what it means to help each other.
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 English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, 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, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.
6. Display a picture of Quinito's entire family and point to the relevant members when you ask students to share about their own families, emphasizing family vocabulary. Include any other family members students have beyond Quinito's family.
7. Provide a sentence frame for sharing about our neighborhoods, such as "When I walk around my community, I see _____."
8. *Quinito's Neighborhood / El vecindario de Quinito* is a bilingual book with the text of the story presented in both Spanish and English. If possible, reflect this by including bilingual labels for the things in your classroom, including table/mesa, desk/escriptorio, chair/silla, clock/reloj, globe/globo, door/ puerta, window/ventana, pencil sharpener/ sacapuntas, and so on.

9. Find different pictures of people doing different jobs. Use these images to create a bulletin board display entitled "People At Work." Be sure to include images of men and women doing non-traditional jobs. For example, you can show a female construction worker, a male nurse, or a female firefighter.
10. Write the colors students identify in the book on the board and read them aloud. Ask students to help you think of objects that are the colors they have identified. Create a chart with one column for the color and one column for things that are that color. For example, blue – sky, red – apple, purple – grapes.

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. Quinito demonstrates pride in his neighborhood, his family members, and the work he sees everyone doing. Discuss, draw, or write about what or whom you are proud of in your life.
2. Have students write or draw which parts of Quinito's life they connected with the most? Why? What can you learn about family diversity and family structures from this book? What can you learn about what makes up a neighborhood?
3. This story celebrates everyone taking care of each other and valuing the work they do for their community. Discuss, draw, or write about how people in your life take care of each other.
4. Every character in the book helps people in their own way. Have students share how they can or do help people in their neighborhood. How does it make them feel to help someone?

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)

- Read the second adventure of Quinito with *Quinito, Day and Night / Quinito, día y noche* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/quinito-day-and-night-quinito-dia-y-noche>). As students reflect on these stories, ask them to compare how each story encourages readers to explore and appreciate the world around them.
- Read additional stories about communities and neighborhoods, including:
 - *Kiyoshi's Walk* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/kiyoshi-s-walk>
 - *Grandma and Me at the Flea/Los meros meros remateros* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/grandma-and-me-at-the-flea-los-meros-meros-remateros>
 - *Finding the Music/En pos de la música* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/finding-the-music-en-pos-de-la-musica>
 - *Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/lakas-and-the-makibaka-hotel>
 - *Lend a Hand: Poems About Giving* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/lend-a-hand>
 - *Mama and Papa Have a Store (also available in Spanish, La tienda de Mamá y Papá)* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/mama-and-papa-have-a-store>
 - *Xochitl and the Flowers/Xóchitl, la Niña de las Flores* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/xochitl-and-the-flowers-xochitl-la-nina-de-las-flores>
 - *Young Cornrows Callin Out the Moon* <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/young-cornrows-callin-out-the-moon>

What do these stories have in common? How are the communities similar? How are they different? How were the main characters involved with their communities? What did their communities mean to them?

- Ask students: Imagine this weekend, you are spending the day in *Quinito's Neighborhood*. Which job would you want to try? What do you want to learn more about or how to do?

- Encourage students to write a letter to their own family member asking if they could spend time with him or her and suggesting some activities they might share.
- Help students describe or draw their family in as much detail as possible. To be inclusive, draw parents, siblings, or someone else who doesn't live with them. Reassure students that they can include anyone they consider family in their pictures. What do you like to do together?
- What makes your family unique? What activities do you do or interests do you share with one member in your family? Describe a time you spent with a family member in your life and why that memory is special to you.
- Have students create a Venn diagram of Quinito's and their own family. Then in two paragraphs (or in discussion), ask students to compare how Quinito is similar to and different from their own family.

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)

- Make a class book called "Our Neighborhood" based on the neighborhood around the school. Each student will contribute a page by drawing a picture of his or her favorite part of the neighborhood or school campus. Reassure students that they can include any place they consider special in their pictures.
- Using the jobs featured in the book or adding others, invite students to act out the job in pairs or for the class and have students guess what the job is.
- Take students on a tour of the school and the neighboring streets (if school and family approved) to identify people doing different jobs. Point out and introduce students to as many people they see along the way, such as teachers, other school staff, crossing guard, corner store clerk, mailperson, street vendor, construction worker, etc. Upon returning to the class, recall with students the places and the people from the tour. Record this information on the board. Discuss the different jobs that people were doing. Have students draw pictures of the people and places they saw.
- Read additional stories about jobs and careers, including: *My Teacher Can Teach...Anyone!* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/my-teacher-can-teach-anyone>). What did students learn about the different jobs? What were the roles that each person had? How is that job important in the community?
- Ask for family volunteers to come to class and share the type of jobs or work they do. Invite them to bring in along any objects from their job that they may have. Brainstorm a list of questions with students beforehand, such as what do you do, what do you like about your job, what do you dislike about your job. Encourage students to write a class thank you letter.
- Invite students as a whole class or at home with an adult to write a letter (and include a drawing) welcoming someone to their school or neighborhood. What will this person see? Who might they meet? What is special about their community?

Arts/Media

(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, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- Create a map of the neighboring community around the school. Have students refer to different maps to inform the creation of their map. Start with the school, and then students can add landmarks and places of interest around the school with appropriate icons and a legend. Refer to Reading Rockets for additional information on teaching about how to create maps for students (<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/map-making>).
- Encourage students to pick an illustration that they identified with the most from *Quinito's Neighborhood*. Which illustration did connects with their life the most? Why? Then, have students create a drawing inspired by *Quinito's Neighborhood* about how it relates to their own life.

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)

- Encourage students to draw a family portrait of their own families. Ask for volunteers to share their pictures with the group and name the people shown. Alternatively, have your students bring in a copy of a family photograph to share with the class. Students can write about these photographs and post them in the classroom.
- Have students brainstorm a list with their families of what is in their neighborhood. It can include buildings, streets, shops, as well as all the people they know and love. What array of jobs and work do they see in their neighborhood?
- Encourage students to interview a family member about what they appreciate the most about their own neighborhood and why.
- Write or draw a thank you to someone in their neighborhood.



Ordering Information

General Order Information:

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

Secure Online Ordering:

[leeandlow.com/books/quinito-s-neighborhood-el-vecindario-de-quinito](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/quinito-s-neighborhood-el-vecindario-de-quinito)

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

Ina Cumpiano is a Puerto Rican poet and writer, the author of many little books for big kids and a few big books for little kids, among them *Quinito's Neighborhood / El vecindario de Quinito* and *Quinito, Day and Night / Quinito, día y noche*. Morning and night, she edits books for teachers, plays with her eleven grandkids (big and small), writes poems (good and bad), and travels (near and far). She lives in San Francisco, California.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

José Ramírez is an artist, children's book author, teacher in the Los Angeles School District, and the father of three girls. His work has been exhibited widely, and his commissions can be seen in nonprofits, hospitals, cities, film and tv companies, and cultural centers across the country. He lives in Los Angeles, California.

REVIEWS

"Its child appeal, lovely message, and potential inspiration to young authors and artists make *Quinito's Neighborhood* a place that youngsters will enjoy visiting."
—*School Library Journal*

"The colors and textures, the absence of white space, and the folk-art representation of the neighbors make every page seem like a mural—this is a vibrant depiction of a variety of individuals and the talents that energize the community in which they live." —*Booklist*

"Presents a healthy view—without gender stereotypes—of a neighborhood." —*ForeWord Magazine*

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).