

READING COMMUNITIES: CBP TEACHER'S GUIDES

*Lakas and the  
Manilatown Fish / Si  
Lakas at ang Isdang  
Manilatown*



Written by **Anthony D. Robles**

Illustrated by **Carl Angel**

Designed by **Lucille Tenazas**

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

*Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown* (SEE La-KAHS aht ahng ees-DAHNG Mah-NIH-lah-town) is a humorous fantasy about a boy who explores his neighborhood as he meets and then chases a magical fish from a fish store to the bay. Set in San Francisco's historic Filipino community, the story introduces readers to a lively assortment of Filipino elders, known as *manongs* (MAH-nohng), as it races to an unexpected and imaginative conclusion. This first-ever bilingual English-Filipino (Tagalog [Ta-GAH-log]) story set in the United States is a fanciful romp through a dreamscape of the imagination of a young boy, Lakas (La-KAHS). (Note: U.S. residents of Philippine descent speak many different languages, with Tagalog being the most widespread. Since 1987, Filipino, based on Tagalog has been the official language of the Philippines.)

The San Francisco Filipino community traces its roots back to the early 1900s when thousands of single Filipino men arrived, primarily as merchant seamen, cannery workers, and farmworkers. By the 1920s, nearly 40,000 Filipinos lived in San Francisco. This population was largely confined to an area known as Manilatown (named after Manila, the Philippine capital), the setting of *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown*. In their early history in San Francisco, Filipinos weren't allowed to own property or live anywhere else in the city. As a result, they stayed in boardinghouses or hotels, such as the International Hotel, which became the heart of the San Francisco Filipino community. In 1977 the International Hotel was the site of a major civil rights demonstration to try to prevent elderly tenants from being evicted. Ultimately, the hotel was demolished, but in its place remains the hope that an even

stronger community will arise and preserve the proud heritage of the *manongs* who lived there. (For more information about the history of Filipinos in San Francisco see the **Resources** page of this document.)

COMMUNITY: Filipino American

#### THEMATIC UNITS

**Neighborhoods:** immigrant communities; community members and their roles; neighborhood institutions (places for people to gather)

**Family:** single-parent families; extended-family networks; relationships

**Fantasy/Reality:** dreams; imagination; distinguishing fantasy from reality / fiction from fact

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Anthony D. Robles was born and raised in San Francisco, California. He has also lived in Orlando, Florida, and Waipahu, Hawaii, but says that wherever he traveled, he always “had Chinatown in [his] belly and hot sauce in [his] veins.” Robles describes himself as “just a poet a job can’t hold down.” His poetry has appeared in numerous journals and magazines, including *DisOrient Journalzine*, *Pinoy Poetics*, *The Asian Pacific American Journal*, and the anthology of Filipino American writing *Seven-Card Stud and Seven Manangs Wild* (2002).

*Lakas and the Manilatown Fish* is Robles’s first book for children. The book was inspired by Robles’s own son, Lakas, to whom he first told the tale as a bedtime story, and his uncle, poet Al Robles, one of the original Manilatown *manongs*. Anthony Robles writes that “sometimes we get lost in life looking for things, chasing things that give us nothing—that drive us further from our community. I think that the fish in the story takes us on a journey back into the past, a journey into our community . . . back to who we are.” Robles hopes that children who read the book will learn that imagination is one of the important things in their lives.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Carl Angel is a painter and illustrator whose work is exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. He was born in Bainbridge, Maryland, in 1968, and was raised in Hawaii. He attended the California College of Arts and Crafts and the Academy of Art College in San Francisco, California, and now lives in Oakland, California.

As an artist, Carl Angel's focus is on storytelling and on symbolism and its relationship to the human condition, both social and spiritual. He says his first objective as an illustrator "is to serve the writer's vision and capture the spirit of the narrative." For *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish*, "the story allowed for a more lyrical painting style, a more outrageous color palette, and for the compositions to have more movement." He wants the book to be a starting point for children to learn that there once was a bustling, vibrant Manilatown, and also about the humor in Filipino culture. He hopes that after reading the book, children will want to explore their cities, and learn that stories are created through appreciation of heritage and history.

Carl Angel has done numerous painting exhibitions, usually based on a theme, such as Filipino mythology, racism in America, religion and spirituality in Oakland, and the Philippine-American War. In addition to *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish*, Carl Angel has also illustrated and designed many other books for children and adults.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER



Lucille Tenazas, head of San Francisco-based Tenazas Design, was born and raised in Manila. She was educated in graphic design and practiced as a graphic designer in the Philippines before coming to the United States in 1979 to further her education at the California College of Arts and Crafts. She received her MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan and worked for several years in New York for Harmon Kemp, Inc. before returning to the West Coast. The recipient of the National Design Award in

Communication Design, she was recently the first woman and West Coast-based president of the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) and is currently the chair of the MFA program at California College of Arts and Crafts.

## GETTING THE CLASSROOM READY

### Where in the World Is Manilatown?



- globe or world map
- maps of the United States, California, and San Francisco; map of your state; map of your city or area (see **Resources** for online maps)
- old magazines with images of neighborhood scenes (shops, schools, parks, and so on)
- collection of local artifacts (menus from local restaurants, local newspapers, advertisements from local shops, photographs of the neighborhood)

1. Create a “Where in the World . . . ?” display in one part of your classroom, which includes a globe and the maps listed in the materials box.
2. Save an area on the display for “artifacts” that contain information about your local community in the form of local newspapers, restaurant menus, visitor brochures, business advertisements, and so on.

#### ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR GETTING THE CLASSROOM READY

3. **Fish Stories:** Make fish shapes that can be taped to the floor to lead to a reading area with a collection of fish storybooks. See **Resources** for possible titles at the end of this document.
4. **Immigrant Communities Photo Gallery:** Set up a gallery of photos of immigrants to the U.S., including photos of the old International Hotel and its residents. (See **Resources** for some website sources of photos at the end of this document.)

## GETTING READY FOR READING

### Our Neighborhood / Our Community

Students prepare to read *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish* / *Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown* by locating the story setting and their own neighborhood on a map and then discussing what they know about neighborhoods.



30 minutes



whole class; partners

**CA Social Studies Standard\* 2.2:** Students demonstrate map skills by describing the absolute and relative locations of people, places, and environments.

\*Note: Grade 2 standards have been used throughout this lesson plan.



Maps listed in **Getting the Classroom Ready**; flipchart and markers or blackboard and chalk

1. Tell students that they will be reading a book about a neighborhood in San Francisco that is both similar to and different from their own. Help students share their prior knowledge by engaging them in a discussion of their own neighborhood(s).
2. If possible, begin this activity by having volunteers help you locate your state on a U.S. map, your city on a state map, and your neighborhood on a city or area map. Then ask students to share what they know about their neighborhood. Have them consider these questions as part of the discussion:
  - What types of places do people go to in your neighborhood? (For example, shops, parks, offices, schools, or churches and other places of worship.) Encourage students to look at neighborhood artifacts in the “Where in the World...?” display (see “Getting the Classroom Ready”) to help them come up with ideas.
  - What do you know about the history of your neighborhood?
  - Who lives in your neighborhood? (For this question, encourage students to name specific people. Record the names on the board. Then work with students to

- categorize these people into groups such as Family Members, Friends, Community Workers (police, firefighters, bus drivers), Other Workers.)
- What do you like about your neighborhood? What are your favorite places?
3. Set the scene for the story by locating the regions that play an important role in its telling. To begin, show students the location of the Philippines and the United States on a globe or world map. Then focus in on the story setting by first having students find California in the United States and then showing the location of San Francisco in California. After that, point out the Manilatown area (where Kearny and Jackson Streets cross) on the San Francisco map.
  4. Explain that Manilatown, named after the Philippine capital Manila, is an important place in the history of the San Francisco Filipino community. During their early history in San Francisco, Filipinos weren't allowed to own property or live anywhere else in the city; as a result, they stayed in boarding houses or hotels, such as the International Hotel, which became the heart of the community. Tell students that the story you are about to read takes place in this neighborhood.

#### ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR GETTING READY FOR READING

- **Fantastic Stories:** Have students share their experiences with stories that include fantastic characters and events. Then discuss with them how to distinguish fantasy from reality in the stories they read.
- **Students as Resources:** If students in your classroom are of Filipino descent, provide them with an opportunity to share their knowledge of the culture and history of the Philippines and Filipinos in the United States.

## EXPLORING THE BOOK

### Diving In



30 minutes



whole class

**CA Language Arts Standard 2.0:** Students read and understand grade-level appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed (e.g., generating and responding to essential questions, making predictions, comparing information from several sources).

Introduce the book to students in a large or small group. The focus of this first reading should be reading for pleasure—encouraging students to enjoy the beauty of the book and the story it tells. In order to foster this enjoyment, try some of the following activities:

- (A) Point out to students the bilingual format of the book, with the Filipino (Tagalog) text on the left-hand page and the English text on the right-hand page. In certain instances students will be able to compare the Filipino (Tagalog) and English text and identify equivalent words. Examples include:

**Filipino (Tagalog)**

*batang* (BAH-tahng) *Pinoy* (Pee-NOY) (p. 4)

*oo* (OH) or *opo* (OH-poh) (p. 6)

*Tatay* (TAH-tai) (p. 10)

**English**

Pilipino boy (p. 5)

(Tagalog for “Filipino”)

yes (p. 7)

Daddy (p. 11)

- (B) Point out also how some of the text appears in bold type that sets it off from the rest of the text. Ask students why they think these words are larger and darker than the others. What does that tell them about the words?
- (C) Encourage students to explore the book further by taking a “picture walk” through the book. Have students pair up and discuss what they see in the illustrations as you turn the pages of the book in front of them. At the end of the picture walk, ask the students to share one thing they liked that they observed in the illustrations.



- (D) Once they've shared their observations about the book, ask students what questions they have about the story, as well as what story they think the book tells. List your students' questions and predictions on the board.
  
- (E) Read sections aloud to the large group, or have students read the book on their own, in pairs, or in small groups. As students are reading, stop them occasionally to see if they have answered their questions, or to check their predictions and have them make new ones. Once the reading is complete, return to the lists of questions and predictions and review them as a class.

FIRST TIME AROUND: VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

**Talk of the Town**

*Students preview key story vocabulary to develop meanings in context; students practice using additional strategies to understand unfamiliar words.*



20 minutes



whole class

**CA Language Arts Standard 1.1:** Recognize and use knowledge of spelling patterns when reading; **1.8:** Use knowledge of individual words in unknown compound words to predict their meaning.



Flipchart and markers

1. Introduce students to important story words by reading the words in context. Guide students to use structural cues (for example, compound words, prefixes, and suffixes) and surrounding words to figure out new vocabulary:
  - amazed (p. 9)
  - international, café, drugstore, pool hall (p. 23)
  - dream, barbershop (p. 11)
  - shoulders, piggyback ride (p. 25)
  - shears, shivered (p. 13)
  - bay (p. 27)
  - market, tanks (p. 15)
  - stew (p. 31)
2. Point out the Tagalog words that appear in the English text. Help students figure out possible meanings of these words, based on context.
  - *Hoy* (HOY): used to get someone’s attention (p. 5)
  - *manong/manang* (MAH-nohng/MAH-nahng): Filipino man/woman (p. 5)
  - *Pilipino* (Pee-lee-PEE-noh): Filipino, person from the Philippines (p. 5)
  - *sinigang* (SEE-nee-gahng): a stew with rice, tomatoes, and chili pepper (p. 17)

- *adobo* (ah-DOH-boh): pork or chicken stew, considered the national dish of the Philippines (p. 3, in introduction for adults)
3. Work with students to compile a Filipino (Tagalog) / English glossary. Use the words above as a starting place. List them on your flipchart, and then add other words students can figure out by comparing the English and Filipino text on facing pages. For this activity, draw on the knowledge of your Filipino students. You may also want to consult a Filipino (Tagalog) / English dictionary to confirm meaning. (See **Resources** at the end of this document for online Tagalog / English dictionaries.)

ADDITIONAL VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

• **Onomatopoeia:** Work with students to examine the author's use of onomatopoeia (language and words that mimic sounds). For each story word listed below, guide students in using the surrounding text to help them identify to what each sound refers. Write their responses on the board. After you have worked with the story words, you may want to ask students to add other sound words they know to the list.

- snip, snip (p. 13)
- smack (p. 19)
- toot (p. 21)
- skreech (p. 23)
- splash (p. 27)
- gurgle-gurgle (p. 29)

SECOND TIME AROUND: READING COMPREHENSION

**The Chase Is On**

*Students use a story map to follow the sequence of events, paying special attention to the multiple changes in setting.*



30 minutes



small groups or pairs

**CA Language Arts Standard (Reading) 3.0:** Students read and respond to a wide variety of significant children’s literature. They distinguish between the structural features of the text and the literary terms or elements (e.g., theme, plot, setting, characters).



Story Map Worksheet (see end of this document—one copy for each group of students) index cards

1. Have students work together in pairs. For each pair, duplicate a copy of the **Story Map Worksheet** at the end of this document.
2. Ask students to read the story together. Have them use the story map to record the main characters, the story problem, and the main events. When pairs have finished, ask them to share their results.
3. Next, ask the pairs to summarize each set of events from the story map on a separate index card (omitting the page numbers). Then, ask them to shuffle the cards thoroughly. Have pairs exchange their sets of cards and try to put their neighbors’ cards in order, retelling the story as they go.

ADDITIONAL READING COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY

• **Reality/Fantasy:** Have students work in small groups to review the story, spread by spread. As they do so, ask them to create a list of events that could happen in real life and

a list of the events that are make-believe. Then have students discuss the mix of reality and fantasy in the story.

AFTERWORDS: LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS

**Manilatown on Stage**

*Students create and follow a script for a dramatic performance of the story.*



30 minutes each  
day for 4–5 days



whole class

**CA Language Arts Standard (Listening and Speaking) 2.1:** Recount experiences or present stories: move through a logical sequence of events, describe story elements (e.g., characters, plot, setting).



paper, pencils, completed story map worksheet from Reading Comprehension activity; materials to make stick puppets (craft sticks, glue, construction paper, markers, and so on); heavy paper; tape

1. Divide the class into eight groups. Assign each group one of the settings / sets of events from the story map worksheet they completed previously. (If they have not yet completed the map, work together with the class to recreate and complete the story map on the board.)
2. Guide each group to create a simple script for their part of the story. To do so, have them reread the story, identify the characters’ actions and words, and then translate those into script form. Use this example for pages 10–11 of the story as a model for them to follow. Explain the conventions for writing dialogue and stage directions.

*Lakas enters the kitchen. He yawns. His father is putting plates of hot dogs and rice on the table. Lakas sits down and begins to eat. He is thinking about his dream.*

Lakas:           Daddy, can fish talk?  
Daddy:           No, fish can only swim. *(smiling)*

*Lakas thinks for a minute, then speaks.*

Lakas:           Daddy, can you buy me a fish?

Daddy:           Yes, Lakas, we'll get a fish. But first you need a haircut.

3. When groups have finished their scripts, compile them into a single script.
4. Alternatively, print out the Reader's Theater script provided (**PDF at the end of this document**) and duplicate for students.
5. Have students take on the roles of the various characters and perform the script for another class or with cross-grade Reading Buddies. You may want students to act the performance themselves, or you may want to create stick puppets by making copies of the book's characters, gluing them to stiff paper, and cutting them out. Students can then color in the drawings and paste them to craft sticks.

#### ADDITIONAL LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS ACTIVITIES

• **Accordion Book:** Have small groups of students create accordion book versions of the story by illustrating each scene (from the story map worksheet) on a separate sheet of heavy paper. Ask them to add a sentence or two summarizing the events in this scene. They can then attach all the pages together with transparent tape to make an accordion book.

• **Author's Purpose:** Engage students in a discussion about why they think the author wrote this story. To prepare for this activity, you may want to read for yourself the author's note to grownups on page 3 of the book and read to students the notes about Manilatown on page 32. Ask students how knowing a little about the history of Manilatown and the International Hotel affects their ideas about the author's purpose or purposes.

LANGUAGE ARTS

**Let the Chase Begin**

*Students write their own narrative using a story structure similar to **Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown.***



20–30 minutes  
each day for 4–5  
days



whole class; partner; independent

**CA Language Arts Standard (Writing) 2.1:** Write brief narratives based on their experiences: move through a logical sequence of events; describe the setting, characters, objects, and events in detail.

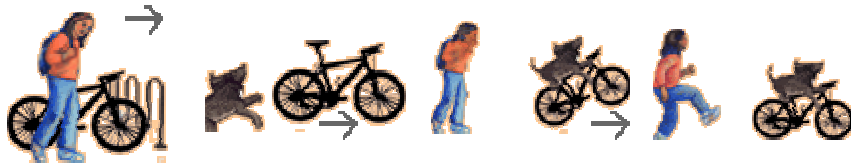


paper, pencils

**Plan**

1. Tell students that they are going to write stories similar to the story of *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish* about a chase through their own neighborhood.
2. To begin, work with students to create a word bank of words related to neighborhoods. To activate their prior knowledge, recall with students the background-building discussions you had about the businesses, institutions, and people in your neighborhood. Create a separate word bank for action words related to a chase. You might tell students to look back at the story for words or phrases to add to this list, including *jumped out, ran out, chased after, was heading toward* (page 19); *jumped in, drove off, ran after, was zooming down* (page 21); *drove through, drove past, jumped off* (page 23); *ran down, jumped into, ran right into* (page 27); and *did a flip, fell into* (page 29).
3. Ask students to make a list of the characters in their stories. Then, have them create a “storyboard”: a series of quick drawings that plot their stories’ events. Remind them to draw the story’s beginning, middle, and end.





### Draft

- Have students use their storyboards to write a first draft of the story. Remind them that when writing a draft they should try to get all their ideas down on paper, without worrying about spelling and punctuation. Remind them also to include details about their neighborhood to clearly establish the setting of the story.

### Revise

- Have students read their stories aloud to a partner, who should listen carefully and ask questions about any parts of the story that are unclear. Students should then write a second draft.

### Edit

- Upon completing their second drafts, ask students to review their stories carefully, correcting any errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, and making any last-minute changes to improve the flow of the story.

### Publish

- Have students produce a clean copy of their story and complete with any illustrations they may want to add.
- Have students share their stories by reading them aloud to the class.

### ADDITIONAL WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **Dream Story:** Remind the students that at the beginning of the book, Lakas has a dream that tells him something. Ask them to write a story based on one of their own dreams.
- **Talking Fish Story:** Have students write a story about the adventures of a talking fish. In preparation for this activity, you may want to read with them other “fish” stories you have collected. (See **Resources** at the end of this document for book ideas.)
- **Neighborhood Elder:** Ask students who are the *manongs* and *manangs* in their neighborhood. Encourage them to think globally about these terms, applying them to people of other ethnicities or national backgrounds. Work as a group to write a story with an elderly person from your community as the main character.
- **New Ending:** Have students work in small groups to write a new ending for *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown*.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

### **Our Block, Our Neighborhood, Our City**

*Students explore their own neighborhood and community to find out its key components and how it has changed over time.*



30–40 minutes  
each day for 2–3  
days



whole class

**CA Social Studies Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate map skills by describing the absolute and relative location of people, places, and environments.



map of San Francisco; maps of your city or neighborhood; poster paper; colored pencils or markers

1. Have students use the map of San Francisco to locate the Manilatown area (where Kearny and Jackson Streets cross). Trace the path of the chase down Kearny to Columbus Avenue, down Columbus to the area near the bay, and then into the bay. Point out that the beginning of the chase took Lakas through the heart of the Manilatown neighborhood.
2. Explain to students that in this activity they will explore their own neighborhood. Display a map of the neighborhood and have students locate your school. Then work with them to plan a brief walking tour of the area. If possible, include a shopping district as part of the tour.
3. Take the tour with your students. Help them to identify important local landmarks, including parks, the library, businesses, places of worship, and buildings of historical importance.
4. After the tour (or instead of the tour, if it is not possible to go on one), engage students in a discussion about your neighborhood. Ask them to name important

places in your community and tell why each is important. Record their responses on the board. Then have students identify and locate these places on the map. Ask them to think in particular about places where people meet or get together with one another.

5. Guide students to name some of the people who work in your community, including police officers, firefighters, bus drivers, and shopkeepers. Add this list to the board.
6. If possible, arrange to have a long-time resident of your community visit the class to tell students what the community was like in the past and how it has changed.
7. Ask students to work together to create a class poster about your community, placing the information they have gathered into categories such as important places, people, and dates. Suggest that they include a simple map that outlines the area they are describing.

ART

**Neighborhood Collage**

*Students examine the artwork in **Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown** and then create their own mixed-media collages of their neighborhood.*



40 minutes



whole class, independent

**CA Visual Arts Standard 2.0:** Students apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art; **2.1:** Demonstrate beginning skill in the use of basic tools and art-making processes, such as printing, crayon rubbing, collages, and stencils.



photocopies of family photos brought in by students; colored pencils, oil pastels, or crayons; construction paper; scissors; glue sticks

1. A week prior to starting this activity, ask students to bring in family photos, including photos of their ancestors. Make photocopies of the photographs and return the originals to students. If the photographs are too precious for students to bring to school, suggest that they ask their parents to reproduce them and send the photocopies in. If students fail to bring in photos, take pictures of the students themselves using a disposable or digital camera.
2. Review with students Carl Angel’s artwork in *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown*. Point out the use of real photographs of Filipino immigrants in the artwork on pages 2–3, 8–9, 14, 21, 22–23, and 24–25. (Note: A photo of the author’s mother (with sunglasses) appears on page 2, and a photo of the author and his son Lakas appears on pages 22 and 23.) Point out also the use of words in shop signs (pages 14, 15, 21) and street signs (page 19).

3. Tell the students to cut out shapes to make a city skyline (or an individual house) from construction paper or brown paper bags. Have them glue these shapes onto a larger piece of construction paper.
4. Provide students with the photocopies of their family photos or the photos you took of them, along with paper and other art supplies. Ask students to cut around the people in the photos and place them onto their silhouetted buildings.
5. Now, have students use oil pastels, crayons, or colored pencils to color over their collage. Remind them to look at the book to see how the artist worked the photographs into the buildings to create one coherent image.

#### ADDITIONAL ART ACTIVITIES

**Lakas and the Fish:** Use the story's final illustration on page 31 as the starting point for a discussion about similarities in the artist's rendering of Lakas and the fish. Ask students to share their ideas on why the artist may have done this. If necessary, refer them to Lakas's dream on page 7, when a *manong* compares him to the talking fish.

**Motion Captured:** Examine with students the artist's use of several frames on pages 26–27 to capture the movements of the characters described in the text. Then have students create their own four-panel cartoons to show characters in motion.

MATH

**Measure for Measure**

*Students use standard and nonstandard measures to examine distances and lengths from **Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown.***



30 minutes



whole group

**CA Mathematics Standard (Measurement and Geometry) 1.1:** Measure the length of objects by iterating (repeating) a nonstandard or standard unit.



ruler; yardstick; pencils; paper clips; blocks; shoe boxes; other common found classroom objects; paper

1. Recall with students the scene in the Happy Fish Market with fish everywhere (see pages 14–15 of the story). Ask students how Lakas was able to identify the Manilatown fish in among all the other fish. (It was the only fish that wasn’t sad. It spoke to him.) Point out that another way to compare the various fish would be by their size, and that in order to do that, students would need to measure the fish.
2. Discuss with students the use of standard units (inches, feet, yards, miles) and nonstandard units (paper clips, pencils, blocks, and so on) to measure the length of an object or a distance. Have volunteers demonstrate by measuring the cover of the book with a ruler and paper clips.
3. Ask students which nonstandard unit of measure would be more appropriate to measure the length of a fish—a pencil or a chair? Then have students identify other objects or distances in *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown* that they might measure. Make a list of these distances.

4. Ask students questions regarding which of two nonstandard units of measurement would be more appropriate for measuring each one. For example, you might ask which of the following would be better to measure the length of
  - Lakas's trip to the bay—a shoebox or blocks?
  - the length of a bus—a hand or a whole body?
  - a hot dog for breakfast—paper clips or a book?
5. After students have responded, ask them to explain their answers.
6. Have students make a new list of distances or objects in their classroom, school, and community. Ask them to identify appropriate units of measurements for this new list.

#### ADDITIONAL MATH ACTIVITIES

**Distance and Time:** Provide students with a map of San Francisco or a map of your city. If you use a map of San Francisco, work with them to use the map's scale to figure out the distance from the corner of Kearny and Jackson Streets to the bay along Columbus Avenue. If you use your city's map, describe a trip to students and help them use the map scale to figure out the distance. Then help students calculate the time it would take to make such a trip if they were walking 2 miles per hour or driving 25 mph.

**Tank Dimensions and Volume:** Draw a diagram of a fish tank on the board. Label the height, width, and depth. Then guide students to figure out the volume of water the tank will hold.

## SCIENCE

### The Real Fish Story

*Students learn about fish and their life cycle.*



30 minutes



pairs or small groups

**CA Science Standard 2:** Plants and animals have predictable life cycles.



encyclopedia, science books and websites about fish

1. Ask students to tell how the Manilatown fish was like a real fish and how it was not like a real fish. Record their responses on the board. Then have students work in pairs or small groups to learn about real fish and their life cycle.
2. After students have gathered information from reference materials (see **Resources** section of this document for suggestions), work as a group to create a flow chart that shows the life cycle of a fish from egg to adulthood.
3. You may also want to ask students to prepare brief reports about different types of fish, including carp (the fish upon which the magical fish in the story is based).

### ADDITIONAL SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

**Class Fish Tank:** Set up an aquarium for goldfish and have students take turns feeding the fish and keeping the tank clean. Use this activity as an opportunity to build students' understanding of the elements of a thriving ecosystem.



**Animal Communication:** Use the talking fish as the starting point for a whole class research project on some of the different ways that animals communicate. You might want to focus your efforts on whales, dolphins, wolves, and some types of birds.

**What's for Breakfast?** Remind students that Lakas's father made hot dogs and rice for breakfast. Ask students to share what they know about the different breakfast foods that people from various cultures eat. Together, examine the nutritional value of different breakfast foods. Use this information as the starting point for a discussion about the elements of a healthful breakfast as well as the reasons why breakfast is an important meal.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

- Ask students who are “experts”—whose families have immigrated to the United States—if they would like to share their own experiences with people and traditions tied to their family’s country of origin. Discuss the connections between your students’ experiences and those of the characters in the book. Children’s families’ experiences in coming to the United States may vary; be sensitive to the fact that some students may not wish to share.
- If your students, or your students’ families, are from the Philippines, draw on their knowledge of the country’s society and culture as much as possible. Even though this knowledge may not be formal, students may bring a familiarity that can deeply enrich activities.
- Partner heritage speakers of Filipino (Tagalog) and English whenever possible, and encourage them to explore differences in reading and writing the two languages.

## RESOURCES

### **Related Titles from Children's Book Press**

*Honoring Our Ancestors: Stories and Pictures by Fourteen Artists*. Edited by Harriet Rohmer. (Includes art and writing by Carl Angel, the illustrator of *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown*.)

*Grandma and Me at the Flea / Los meros meros remateros*. Story by Juan Felipe Herrera. Illustrations by Anita DeLucio-Brock.

### **Books About the Filipino Community from Other Publishers**

Aruego, Jose, and Ariane Dewey. *Rockabye Crocodile: A Folktale from the Philippines*. Scott Foresman, 1993.

Gilles, Almira Astudillo. *Willie Wins*. Lee & Low, 2001.

Lucas, Alice (Editor). *Mga Kuwentong Bayan: Folk Stories from the Philippines*. Many Cultures Publ., 1995.

Romulo, Llana Elena, and Joanne de Leon. *Filipino Children's Favorite Stories*. Charles E. Tuttle Co., 2000.

### **Fish Stories**

Lionni, Leo. *Swimmy*. Knopf, 1992.

Palmer, Helen. *A Fish Out of Water*. Random House, 1961.

Pfister, Marcus. *The Rainbow Fish*. North South Books, 1992.

Troll, Ray. *Sharkabet: A Sea of Sharks from A to Z*. WestWinds Press, 2002.

Dr. Seuss (Theodor Geisel). *McElligot's Pool*. Random House, 1947.

Dr. Seuss (Theodor Geisel). *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*. Random House, 1960.

### **NonFiction Books About Fish**

Braithwaite, Althea and Carolyn Rubin. *Fish (Life Cycle Books)*. Longman Trade/Caroline House, 1989.

Royston, Angela. *Life Cycle of a Salmon*. Heinemann Library, 2000.

Spilsbury, Louise, Richard Spilsbury, and Mike Unwin. *The Life Cycle of Fish (From Egg to Adult)*. Heinemann, 2003.

### **Websites:**

- Information/Photographs about the History of Filipinos in San Francisco: [http://www.manilatown.org/Our\\_past.htm](http://www.manilatown.org/Our_past.htm)
- Tagalog/English Dictionaries: <http://www.manilatown.org/TagEng.htm> and <http://www.foreignword.com/dictionary/Tagalog/default.htm>

- American Family Immigration History Center: <http://www.ellisland.org>
- The Alvarado Project—an exhibit of photos about the Filipino American community by Filipino American photographer Ricardo O. Alvarado (1914–1976):  
<http://www.thealvaradoproject.com>
- The University of Texas website has a large collection of maps of the United States, including California and San Francisco maps and links to other map websites:  
[http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/united\\_states.html](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/united_states.html)
- Information about Fish:  
[http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/fishing/regional/enveducation/kidscorn\\_fish.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/fishing/regional/enveducation/kidscorn_fish.html)

## CONTRIBUTORS

Gloria Maciejewski participates in a Children's Book Press program at John Swett Alternative School in San Francisco, CA. Gloria teaches second and third grade at John Swett, a school dedicated to serving its diverse student population by integrating the arts into its academic curriculum.

## TIPS FROM THE PROS

Please share your own ideas for how to use *Lakas and the Manilatown Fish / Si Lakas at ang Isdang Manilatown* in the classroom. We'll be pleased to post your work on the website for other teachers to use. Email us your lesson plans at [communityprograms@cbookpress.org](mailto:communityprograms@cbookpress.org). Children's Book Press is particularly interested in posting activities used successfully in bilingual or primarily Filipino classrooms.

## Story Map Worksheet

<b>Main Characters:</b> <b>Story Problem:</b>
--

<b>Setting:</b> Playground (pp. 6–9) <b>Events:</b> Lakas has a dream about meeting a manong who tells him to go to Manilatown to find a talking fish.
---



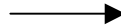
<b>Setting:</b> (pp. 10–11) <b>Events:</b>
---



<b>Setting:</b> (pp. 12–13) <b>Events:</b>
---



<b>Setting:</b> (pp. 14–19) <b>Events:</b>
---



<b>Setting:</b> (pp. 30–31) <b>Events:</b>
---



<b>Setting:</b> (pp. 26–29) <b>Events:</b>
---



<b>Setting:</b> (pp. 23–25) <b>Events:</b>
---



<b>Setting:</b> (pp. 19–23) <b>Events:</b>
---

## A Reader's Theater

### Characters:

Lakas (a playful boy—his name means "strength" in Tagalog)

Manong #1 (elder)

Daddy

Barber

Manong #2 (wears a bright red wig)

Happy Fish man

Manilatown Fish

Bus driver

Manong #3 (wears big false teeth)

Extra Manongs (no speaking)

Extra Fish (no speaking)

### Scene 1–Dreamland Park

*Lakas is dreaming he is in a park swinging on a swing. Suddenly he hears a voice.*

Manong #1: Hoy, hoy, Pilipino boy!

*Lakas looks around.*

Manong #1: Hoy, hoy, Pilipino boy!

Lakas: Did you call me?

Manong #1: Yes. You are a Pilipino boy, aren't you?

Lakas: How did you know I'm a Pilipino boy?

Manong #1: Because you jump around just like a fish. Do you like fish?

Lakas: Yeeeeees. . .

Manong #1: Did you ever meet a fish that can talk?

Lakas: Noooo. . .

Manong #1: I know a fish that can speak Tagalog and English. And he jumps and plays just like you! (*laughing*)

Lakas: I want to see this fish. Can I?

Manong#1: The fish lives in Manilatown. If you want to find him, you have to look very carefully.

Lakas: Where is Manilatown?

*Manong disappears and Lakas wakes up from dream.*

### Scene 2–The Kitchen

*Lakas enters the kitchen. He yawns. His father is putting plates of hot dogs and rice on the table.*

*Lakas sits down and begins to eat. He is thinking about his dream.*

Lakas:           Daddy, can fish talk?  
Daddy:           No, fish can only swim. (*smiling*)

*Lakas thinks for a minute, then speaks.*

Lakas:           Daddy, can you buy me a fish?  
Daddy:           Yes, Lakas, we'll get a fish. But first you need a haircut.

### Scene 3–The Barbershop

*Four manongs sit in the barbershop reading newspapers. Lakas is getting a haircut.*

Barber:           Hoy, hoy Pilipino boy!  
Lakas:           My daddy is going to get me a fish.  
Barber:           I like fish! With rice and tomatoes and chili peppers!

*Lakas shivers.*

Lakas:           Can a fish talk and walk and play?  
Barber:           Yes! There is one fish who can do it. (*snip! snip!*) Go to Manilatown and you'll find that crazy fish.  
Manong #2:      No, do not listen to him! You don't want to find a fish like that! (*He sneezes and his wig flies off.*)  
Barber:           Be quiet your mouth. Lakas, if you just keep looking you'll find the fish.

### Scene 3–Happy Fish Market

*Lakas and Daddy leave the barbershop and go to the fish market.*

Lakas:           Could this be Manilatown? (*wondering to himself*)

*Fish are everywhere and Lakas is amazed. All the fish look sad but the Manilatown Fish.*

Fish:            Hoy, hoy Pilipino boy!

*Lakas looks at this fish.*

Fish:            Hoy, hoy Pilipino boy!  
Lakas:           Hmmmmmm, the manong in my dream said I was just like a fish. I'll ask my daddy to buy you and take you home so we can play!

*Off to the side, Daddy is talking to the Happy Fish man.*

Daddy:           Give me that fish in the tank. (*Points to the Manilatown Fish*) I will take him home and cook *sinigang*.



*Lakas shivers and shudders. The Happy Fish man dips his net into the tank to retrieve the fish. The fish jumps out and KISSES the Fish man. He falls "dizzy in love." The fish runs out, with everyone chasing after one by one.*

Fish man: Come back, dear fish!  
Lakas: Come back, fish!  
Daddy: Come back, dinner!

#### Scene 4–The Big Chase

*The fish is running after a bus with a sign that says Manilatown. It jumps on the bus and KISSES the driver. She falls out of her seat "dizzy in love" and surprise. The fish drives away with the bus.*

Daddy: Follow that bus!  
Lakas: Follow my fish!

*Daddy, Lakas, and the Happy Fish man run after the bus going down Kearny Street. BRMMMMMI TOOT! The fish drives the bus through the heart of Manilatown. We see many landmarks: the International Hotel, the Lucky \*M\* Pool Hall, the Silverwing Cafe, and the Bataan Drugstore.*

*The fish jumps out of the bus and runs up to Manong #3, who is standing on the corner. It KISSES the manong and he falls "dizzy in love." The fish steals his hat, shirt, pants, and teeth. The manong is left wearing fish-print underwear!*

*Daddy, Lakas, and the Happy Fish man run up huffing and puffing. Lakas takes the manong's hand.*

Lakas: Don't worry, Manong, we'll get your clothes back . . . and your teeth.

*They all chase after the fish. The fish runs down Kearny Street, down to Columbus Avenue, and all the way to the bay.*

Fish man: Give me another kiss!  
Manong #3: Give me my clothes! Give me back my teeth!

*The fish jumps into the water, and everybody falls in after it by accident.*

Everyone: SPLASH!  
Lakas: Help! Help!  
Daddy: The water is so coooooold.  
Fish man: Gurgle!  
Manong #3: Gurgle!

*The fish hears them and pulls them all out one by one. The fish gives the manong back his teeth, pants, and hat. He wraps the shirt around Lakas. The sun shines on them and they are happy to be saved. When everyone is nice and warm . . .*

Daddy: Who's hungry?

Fish man: I am.

Manong #3: I am.

Fish: Hoy, hoy, me too, Pilipino boy!

Daddy: I guess that means no fish stew for dinner.

*Lakas and the fish both nod their heads together yes. They spend the rest of the afternoon eating plain rice and tomatoes and chili peppers . . .and playing in the bathtub!*