



MAGIC WINDOWS: EXPLORING CULTURE THROUGH STORY AND ART

BOOK DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY GUIDE

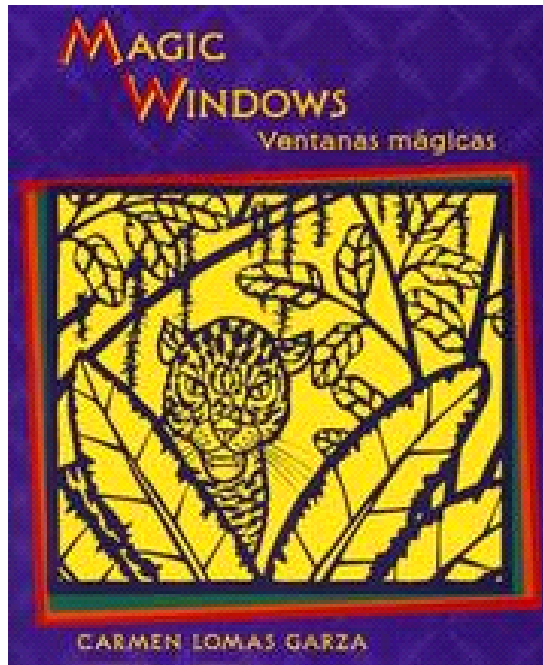
Project design: Lindsay Harris &
Haley Rugger

LS 590 Multicultural Literacy Programming for Children, Teens, & Families
University of Alabama, School of Library & Information Studies

May 2011

Program objectives:

The program will introduce youth to elements of Hispanic culture through stories, activities and crafts centered on the Pura Belpré Award winning book, *Magic Windows*.



Magic Windows / Ventanas mágicas
By Carmen Lomas Garza
Children's Book Press / Libros para niños:
San Francisco, CA, 1999.

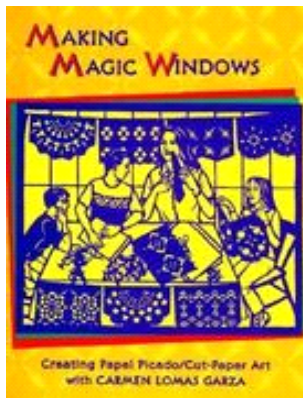
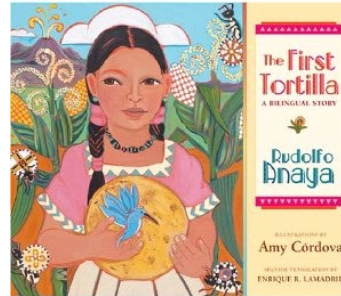
Summary:

This bilingual book introduces Mexican cut paper art, papel picado. Illustrations of papel picado show elements of the author's family and Mexican culture. Full page reproductions of papel picado are shown with short narratives explaining the picture in Spanish and English. Grades 1-5.

Supplementary Books:

The First Tortilla : a Bilingual Story
by Rudolfo Anaya; illustrated by Amy Córdova
2007
Grades 3 - Up

Guided by a blue hummingbird, Jade brings an offering to the Mountain Spirit who lives near her village in Mexico, and asks if he will send rain to end the drought that threatens the people. Includes information about the legend on which this story is based and facts about corn.

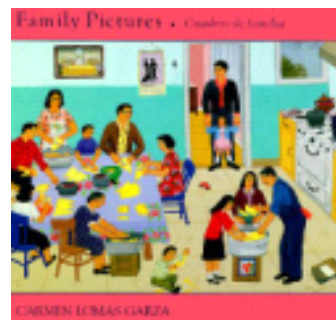


*Making Magic Windows : Creating Paper
Picado/Cut-paper Art with Carmen Lomas Garza*
by Carmen Lomas Garza
1999
Grades 3 - 8

Provides instructions for making paper banners and more intricate cut-outs. Includes diagrams for creating specific images.

Family Pictures/Cuadros de familia
by Carmen Lomas Garza
15th anniversary edition, 2005
Grades K-4

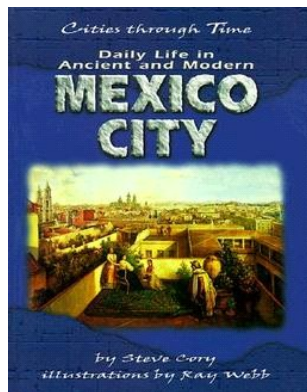
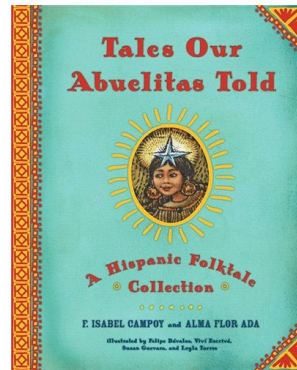
In this bilingual picture book, Carmen Lomas Garza depicts scenes from her childhood in Kingsville, Texas.



Supplementary Books:

*Tales Our Abuelitas Told :
a Hispanic Folktale Collection*
by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada ; illustrated by
Felipe Dávalos
2006
Grades 3 - Up

Ada and Campoy retell twelve folktales
from their childhoods.

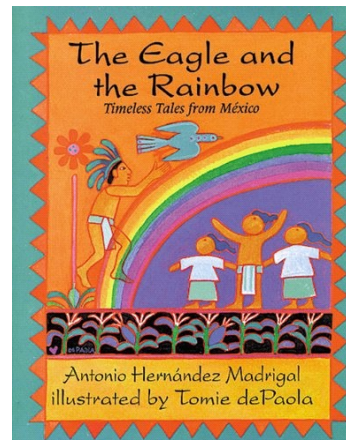


Daily Life in Ancient and Modern Mexico City
by Steve Corey; illustrated by Ray Webb
1999
Grades 3 - 6

A non-fiction look at life in Mexico City
throughout several different historical periods.

*The Eagle and the Rainbow : Timeless Tales
from Mexico*
by Antonio Hernandez Madrigal;
illustrated by Tomie dePaola
1997
Grades 4 - 7

Contains the tales: Eagle and the Rainbow
(Huichol legend); Tahui (Tarahumara legend);
Boy Who Cried Tears of Jade (Mayan legend);
Deer Tribe (Tarascan legend); and Legend of
the Feathered Serpent (Aztec legend).



Discussion Questions:

- ◆ Carmen Lomas Garza has “always loved to watch the work that people do with their hands” (p. 4). What examples of working with one’s hands are depicted in this book?
- ◆ What kinds of things do you like to do with your hands?
- ◆ How does Lomas Garza relate Mexican legends and traditional tales to her papel picado images?
- ◆ How are papel picado pieces like “magic windows”?
- ◆ How does Lomas Garza show the importance of her family?
- ◆ The author enjoyed spending time with her grandfather. Do you like spending time with your grandparents? What do you like to do with them?
- ◆ The people in this book make paper flowers to decorate for el Día de los Muertos / the Day of the Dead and papel picado for other special celebrations. What kinds of decorations do you make for celebrations in your life?
- ◆ There are many animals in the book (horned toads, hummingbirds, deer, turkey and eagle). What new things did you learn about the animals from the book?

Activities and crafts:

Introductory song:

“Hola Amigos—Hello Friends”

by Heidi Piña Madera

Hola, amigos
Ya salió el sol
Vamos a cantar
Y hablar en español

Hola, amigos
Ya salió el sol
Vamos a cantar
Y hablar en español

Chorus:
¿Como estás, como estás, como estás?
Muy bien gracias

¿Como estás, como estás, como estás?
Muy bien gracias

Hello, friends
Now the sun has come out
We're going to sing
And speak in Spanish

Hello, friends
Now the sun has come out
We're going to sing
And speak in Spanish

Chorus:
How are you, how are you? How are you?
Very well, thank you

How are you, how are you? How are you?
Very well, thank you

A sample recording of the music for the song can be found:
<http://www.songsforteaching.com/spanish/holaamigos-hellofriends.htm>

Activities and crafts:

Craft:

Creating Papel Picado

Source: <http://www.storyboardtoys.com/releases/Papel-Picado-Pattern-Simple.pdf>

Supplies:

Tissue paper, pre-cut to letter size (i.e. 8 1/2" by 11")

Scissors*

Small hobby knife* (recommended, but not mandatory. If you use a razor knife, you will need something to cut against, such as discarded magazines or catalogs.

*Hobby knives should only be used by children in grades 5 and up. Smaller children should make the craft using scissors.

Instructions:

1. Fold tissue paper in half or into quarters.
2. Use scissors (or hobby knife) to cut shapes on the edges of the paper. This is very similar to making "snowflakes" out of paper.
3. Make sure to leave space between shapes along the folded edges of the paper so that the paper stays in one piece.
4. If you are using a hobby knife, designs can be cut out of the center of the paper.
5. Unfold the cut paper to reveal the design.

More templates and design examples can be found in the book *Making Magic Windows: Creating Papel Picado/Cut-Paper Art*.



Activities and crafts:

Activity:

Jarabe Tapatío

Watch a video of dancers performing jarabe tapatío on YouTube. Discuss the origins and history of the folk dance. Share pictures of dancers in costume. Discuss how this form of dance is different from others (such as ballet or hip hop) and what it has in common with others (such as American folk dances from mountain cultures).

History of the dance:

<http://www.mexfoldanco.org/mexican/folkloric/dance/mexican-hat-dance.html>

Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C17IB5rP6xo>



Activities and crafts:

Activity:

Tissue Paper Flowers

Adapted from *Celebrating Cuentos*, p. 287

Supplies:

Tissue paper, rectangular in shape (not square)

Green wooden flower stems (or pipe cleaners)

Green masking tape/floral tape

Instructions:

1. Layer 4 to 5 sheets of tissue paper on top of each other.
2. Starting with the longest side, accordion-fold the layered tissue paper.
3. Attach the middle of the tissue paper to a green wooden floral stem with tape.
4. Slowly and gently separate each layer to form the flower petals.
5. More advanced participants can cut the tissue layers to create more detail, as pictured below.



Activities and crafts:

Activity:

Word Search

Generated from <http://www.puzzlemaker.com>

P W L A X C A M A L E O N E S
I N H E U S E T N G V A E H Z
C E I E P X S U T C A C O W W
A U H J I A Z D M K Z X H X E
D P O C E I P Q L Y Z T W M K
O W O N R R M T X Z X A Y D R
F X S E U O A H O R R X I U R
S R E V S P D H S R L K I I U
E D Y G B L Z T Z K T D M I A
K J W E L O X L F Z V I Q A R
R I L L W W T I F C N Y L X R
G T P G I F H W H I F Q N L F
W C H A V S U T B K W E S U A
V D S E L C Y P D I O C W Q M
F Y C C L K V E A O S O X B B

CACTUS
CAMALEONES
DEER
EAGLE
MEXICO
PAPEL
PICADO
TORTILLA



Rhymes and Songs:

Día de los muertos * Day of the Dead

From *Fiestas: A Year of Latin American Songs of Celebration**
Selected, arranged and translated by José-Luis Orozco

Primero y dos de noviembre
el día de los muertos celebramos
a nuestros seres queridos
a con cariño recordamos.

On November first and second,
we honor those who've departed.
With music and with prayer,
we celebrate Day of the Dead.

Cuando llegue el día de los muertos
haremos un altar bonito
con copal y muchas flores
para todos los muertitos.

On that special day,
we collect offerings for our altar
of incense and many flowers
for all our beloved departed.

Llevaremos pan de muerto
con tamales y atolito,
calabacitas con chile,
también mole con pollito.

We'll bring them pan de muertos,
some tamales and atolito,
green squash with chili pepper,
chicken mole and taquitos.

*Sheet music for the song is provided in the book or you can make up your own tune.



Rhymes and Songs:

Poem:

Share this traditional Calavera poem. Discuss the some traditions of Day of the Dead.

Source: <http://www.mamalisa.com/blog/skull-poem-for-the-mexican-day-of-the-dead/>

Calavera

(en español)

Ahi viene el agua
Por la ladera,
Y se me moja
Mi calavera.
La muerte calaca,
Ni gorda, ni flaca.
La muerte casera,
Pegada con cera.

Skull

(English translation)

Here comes the water
Down the slope,
And my skull
Is getting wet.
Death, a skeleton,
Neither fat, nor skinny.
A homemade skeleton,
Stuck together with wax.



Other Resources:

Websites:

Mexican Folkloric Dance Company of Chicago

<http://www.mexfoldanco.org/>

Carmen Lomas Garza

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

Making a Papel Picado banner

<http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/do/papelpicado.html>

Day of the Dead: Unique Memorials [a LIFE Photo Gallery]*

<http://www.life.com/gallery/35752#index/0>

*Images are suitable for Grades 9-Up.

Day of the Dead

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

Horned Toads - National Geographic

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/horned-toad/>

Films:

Food for the Ancestors: The Mexican Celebration of The Days of the Dead

Directed by Jan Thompson. Food for Thought Productions, Inc., 1999.

The Culture of Mexico (Mexico for Children Series)

Schlessinger Media, 2004.