

ALSC Book Awards and Selected Booklists

List: Pura Belpré Children's Author Award

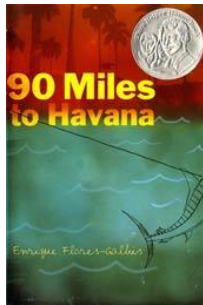


¡Olé! Flamenco

By George Ancona

Nonfiction, Arts, Performing Arts ISBN 9781600603617

¡Olé! Flamenco offers a well-written, non-fiction introductory book on the Spanish art of flamenco, including its history as an expressive art form. Ancona describes flamenco in easy and understandable language for those not familiar with the art form.

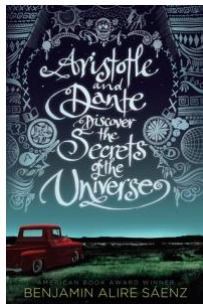


90 Miles to Havana

By Enrique Flores-Galbis

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9781596431683

"90 Miles to Havana" is based on the author's experience as one of 14,000 children in Operation Pedro Pan. Moving from Cuba to the refugee camp in Miami, Flores-Galbis' writing is engaging, fast paced, and colorful with well-developed characters drawn from his personal experiences.

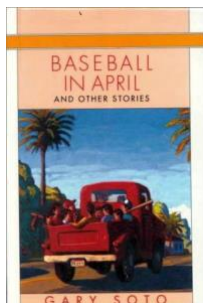


Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe

By Benjamin Alire Sáenz

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781442408920

"Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe" brings readers the tale of 15-year-old loner Aristotle Mendoza and his friendship with Dante Quintana. Sáenz exquisitely captures the story of two boys on the edge of manhood. By addressing issues of identity, friendship, family and love, Sáenz pushes beyond geography, sexuality and cultural identity to create a truly universal novel.

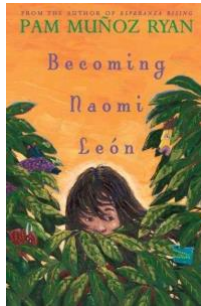


Baseball in April, and Other Stories

By Gary Soto

Fiction, Short Stories ISBN 9780833574008

A collection of eleven short stories focusing on the everyday adventures of Hispanic young people growing up in Fresno, California. (Library of Congress summary)



Becoming Naomi León

By Pam Muñoz Ryan

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780439269698

In "Becoming Naomi León," Muñoz Ryan writes convincingly about the love that binds an extended family together. Characters are well-drawn and balanced, relationships are honest, and Naomi's growing awareness of her cultural heritage and sense of self will keep readers engrossed.



Before We Were Free

By Julia Alvarez

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9780375815447

Exquisitely written testimonial, sometimes in diary form, immerses readers in the details of life under dictator General Trujillo in the Dominican Republic during the political upheavals of the early 1960s. It is an engaging story of one girl's coming of age set against a backdrop of fear and secrets. Powerful and at times intense, this book will take readers on a frightening journey of fear and anguish that will cause them to pray for the rescue of Anita and her family.

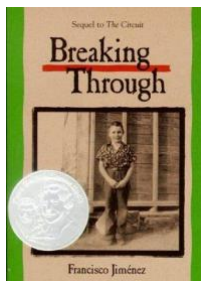


The Bossy Gallito / El Gallo de Bodas: A Traditional Cuban Folktale

By Lucía González, Lulu Delacre (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Folklore Fairy Tales ISBN 9780590468435

In this cumulative Cuban folktale, a bossy rooster dirties his beak when he eats a kernel of corn and must find a way to clean it before his parrot uncle's wedding. Includes a glossary of Spanish words and information about the different birds in the story. (Library of Congress summary)



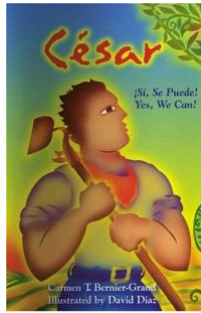
Breaking Through

By Francisco Jiménez

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9780618011735

Jiménez's compelling autobiographical stories in "Breaking Through," sequel to "The Circuit," combine dramatic social issues of poverty and prejudice in the 1950s with timeless adolescent experiences of family tension, school, and romance. Powerful images of a teenager overcoming crushing poverty and personal challenges while maintaining hope encourage readers to "break through" their own barriers with tenacity and courage.

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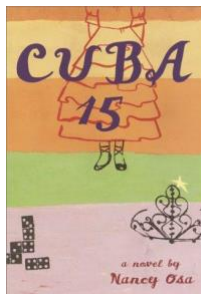


César: ¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can!

By Carmen T. Bernier-Grand, David Diaz (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780761451723

Bernier-Grand's poems on César Chávez flawlessly intertwine Spanish words into the English text, which includes prayers, folk sayings, and César's own words.

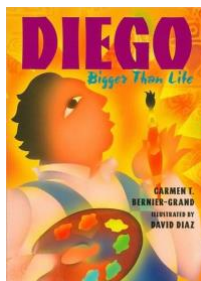


Cuba 15

By Nancy Osa

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780385730211

"Cuba 15" humorously and poignantly tells the story of Violet Paz as she prepares unwillingly for her quinceañera, the traditional Latina 15th birthday celebration. Her journey into self-discovery leads her to truly value and understand her Cuban heritage for the first time.



Diego: Bigger Than Life

By Carmen T. Bernier-Grand, David Diaz (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780761453833

A series of chronological poems delve into the life of artist Diego Rivera, enlivened by bold, bigger than life images.

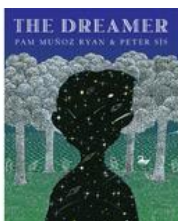


Doña Flor: A Tall Tale About a Giant Woman with a Great Big Heart

By Pat Mora, Raúl Colón (Illustrator)

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780375861444

This captivating tall tale brings life to an engaging, original character, whose love and concern for her neighbors fills the story with joy.



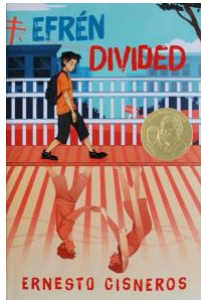
The Dreamer

By Pam Muñoz Ryan, Peter Sís (Illustrator)

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9780439269704

"The Dreamer" by Pam Muñoz Ryan, author medal winner, masterfully imagines the magic-filled youth of Chilean Nobel Prize-winning poet Pablo Neruda. Through her skillful use of language inspired by Neruda's work, Muñoz Ryan weaves this stunning tale of a young boy's discovery of self and the development of his ideologies and artistic voice.

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Efrén Divided

By Ernesto Cisneros

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780062881687

When his mother is deported to Mexico, seventh grader Efrén is the only one who can cross the border to bring his mother home.



Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings: A Memoir

By Margarita Engle

Nonfiction, Poetry, Autobiography ISBN 9781481435222

The daughter of an American father and Cuban mother, poet and novelist Engle describes her childhood living between two countries during a time of political tension for Cuba and the U.S.

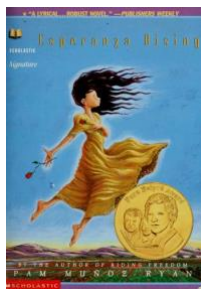


The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora

By Pablo Cartaya

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781101997239

Arturo struggles to keep the family business, a Cuban restaurant, alive in the face of the gentrification of his Florida neighborhood in a fresh, often very funny novel.

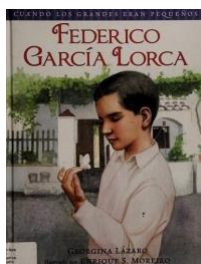


Esperanza Rising

By Pam Muñoz Ryan

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780439120418

Pampered thirteen-year-old Esperanza and her mother are forced to flee Mexico following her father's sudden death and his brothers' takeover of their land. In a California migrant-worker camp, they encounter poverty and racism that are mitigated by the support of family and friends. Esperanza's response to the fall from a privileged life into a 1930s, immigrant experience transforms her from a spoiled child into a strong adolescent.

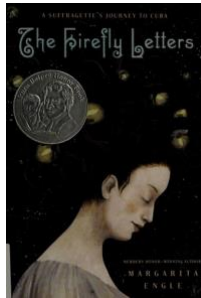


Federico García Lorca

By Georgina Lázaro, Enrique S. Moreiro (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9781933032399

Lázaro's lyrical poetry, written in Spanish, evokes the spirit and style of 20th-century poet and playwright, Federico García Lorca



The Firefly Letters: A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba

By Margarita Engle

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780805090826

“The Firefly Letters: A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba” introduces Fredrika Bremer. This audacious Swedish woman visited Cuba in 1851 and met Cecilia, an African-born slave. Engle blends fact and fiction, creating Elena, a plantation owner's daughter, who conspires with Bremer to secure Cecilia's freedom.

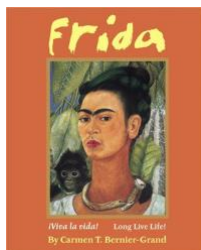


The First Rule of Punk

By Celia C. Pérez

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780425290408

Malu and her “SuperMexican” mother move across the country, leaving behind the father who gets her punk identity. Through new friends and zines, she connects to her roots in an authentic way.

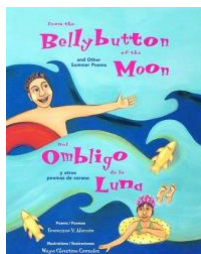


Frida: ¡Viva la vida! Long Live Life!

By Carmen T. Bernier-Grand

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780761453369

“Frida: ¡Viva la vida! Long Live Life!” uses lyrical free-verse poems which comprise the heart of a well rounded biographical work for older children. The poems, written in impassioned first-person voice, follow the arc of Frida Kahlo's life from birth to death. The opening birth poem and the closing death poem set a tone of self-determination firmly placing her in history, in her family and in her country.



From the Bellybutton of the Moon and Other Summer Poems/ Del Ombliigo de la Luna y Otro Poemas de Verano

By Francisco X. Alarcón, Maya Christina Gonzalez (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780892391530

Brimming with sights, sounds and memories, this bilingual collection of summertime poetry celebrates the author's vacations with relatives in Mexico.



Gracias Thanks

By Pat Mora, John Parra (Illustrator)

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781600602580

Small pleasures of Latino family life and experiences are captured in nostalgic folk art illustrations.



Hurricane Dancers: The First Caribbean Pirate Shipwreck

By Margarita Engle

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9780805092400

Engle's beautifully written poetic narrative cuts to the heart of an untold story in Latin American history and describes the enslavement of the native peoples of the Caribbean by the Spanish along with the mixing of Spanish and native blood that now forms the vast majority of Latin America. Told from several points of view, the story captures the rhythm and sounds from a time long ago and encourages readers to explore Latino culture on their own.



I Lived on Butterfly Hill

By Marjorie Agosín, Lee White (Illustrator)

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9781416953449

When warships appear, in "I Lived on Butterfly Hill," Celeste's idyllic life is shattered. As people disappear, Celeste's parents go into hiding, and she is sent into exile. When she returns home, she works to reunite people she loves and to move her country forward. Lyrically written by acclaimed poet, Marjorie Agosín, this Chilean story offers a refreshing perspective on resiliency.

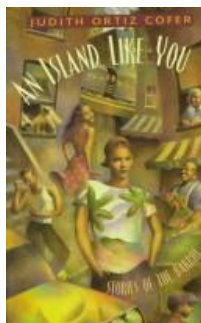


Iguanas in the Snow

By Francisco X. Alarcón, Maya Christina Gonzalez (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780892392025

"Iguanas in the Snow," a collection of seventeen bilingual poems depicting winter in San Francisco and nearby mountains, surprise and delight like peppermint candy on the tongue. Alarcón's rich verbal imagery peppers the pages with Latino children's experiences in a multicultural setting.

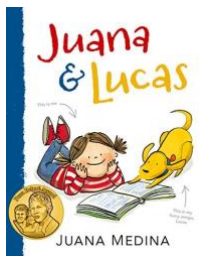


An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio

By Judith Ortiz Cofer

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780531068977

A collection of inter-connected stories about Puerto Rican American teenagers growing up in New Jersey, who struggle daily to make choices that will give meaning to their lives.



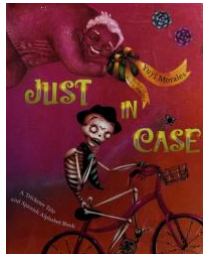
Juana Lucas

By Juana Medina

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780763672089

Juana, a spirited young girl in Bogotá, Colombia, shares her frustrations and successes in learning English.

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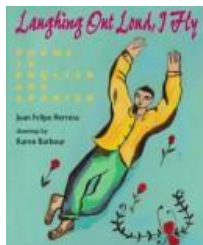


Just in Case

By Yuyi Morales

Fiction, General Fiction, Alphabet Books ISBN 9781596433298

In "Just in Case," Morales' vibrant, shimmering jewel-tone colors masterfully capture the exuberant and playful story of Señor Calavera's quest to find the perfect birthday gift for Grandma Beetle. Part ghost story, part trickster tale, the book features motifs from Mexican culture that represent each letter of the Spanish alphabet.

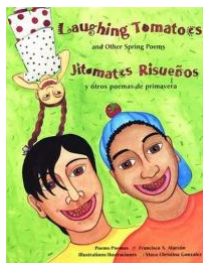


Laughing out Loud, I Fly: Poems in English and Spanish

By Juan Felipe Herrera,, Karen Barbour (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780060276041

Herrera's poems create a bicultural experience full of flavors and intense feelings that carry readers into a rhythm of laughter. The text has rich poetic language and the images are full of vivid concepts with playful, but serious, poems.



Laughing Tomatoes and Other Spring Poems/Jitomates Risueños y otros poemas de primavera

By Francisco Alarcón, Maya Christina Gonzalez (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780892391998

A bilingual collection of humorous and serious poems about family, nature, and celebrations by a renowned Mexican American poet. (Library of Congress summary)

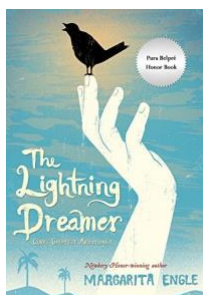


Lety Out Loud

By Angela Cervantes

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781338159349

While spending the summer volunteering in an animal shelter, English language learner Lety Muñoz learns to use her voice to stand up for others.

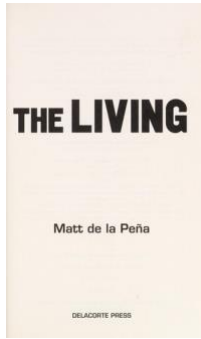


The Lightning Dreamer: Cuba's Greatest Abolitionist

By Margarita Engle

Nonfiction, History, Biography ISBN 9780544541122

Tula fights for freedom and education for herself, and ultimately for women, slaves and dissenters, in Margarita Engle's poetic story of the nineteenth-century Cuban abolitionist and writer, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda.



The Living

By Matt de la Peña

Fiction, Action, Adventure ISBN 9780385741200

In a thrilling survival story, Shy's summer job on a cruise ship becomes a fight for his life. This page-turner adventure also raises important cultural and sociological issues.

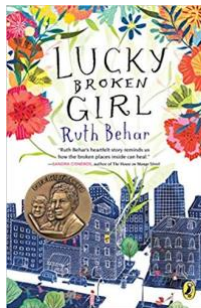


Los Gatos Black on Halloween

By Marisa Montes, Yuyi Morales (Illustrator)

Fiction, Scary Stories ISBN 9780805074291

Rhyming text describes spooky monsters of many types gathering for a ball. However, the rollicking fun is interrupted by the scariest creatures of all in a surprise ending that will delight readers of all ages. Morales' eerily glowing illustrations capture the blend of traditional Halloween and Día de los Muertos symbols, matching the humorous interplay of Spanish and English in the text. Historical allusions and whimsical figures delight the eye in this timeless story.

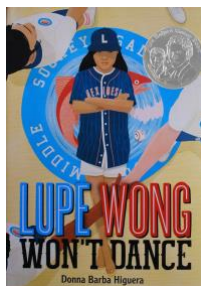


Lucky Broken Girl

By Ruth Behar

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780399546440

In this emotionally charged tale, Ruthie is uprooted from Cuba to NYC. An unexpected accident traps her in a body cast, and, surrounded by her Cuban-Jewish family and a diverse group of neighbors, Ruthie finds strength and courage to heal and grow.



Lupe Wong Won't Dance

By Donna Barba Higuera

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781646140039

When a dance threatens her chance to meet pitching idol and fellow Mexinese/Chinacan, Fu Li Hernandez, Lupe takes up the cause against square dancing in gym, which proves both challenging and enlightening.



Mango, Abuela, and Me

By Meg Medina, Angela Dominguez (Illustrator)

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780763669003

When Mia discovers that her Abuela can't speak English, she finds the perfect gift that helps them both with their language barrier. Vibrant illustrations and Spanish words blend together to create a warm family story.



Martina the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale

By Carmen Agra Deedy, Michael Austin (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Folklore Fairy Tales ISBN 9781561453993

In "Martina the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale," Martina is 21 days old and ready to give her leg in marriage. With the help of her Abuela's shocking advice, she interviews a cast of unlikely suitors to find her true love. Deedy's lively and humorous retelling of this classic Latino folktale sparkles with wit as well as aspects of the Cuban culture.

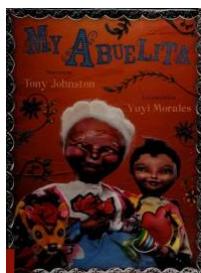


Maximilian and the Mystery of the Guardian Angel: A Bilingual Lucha Libre Thriller

By Xavier Garza

Fiction, Mystery ISBN 9781933693989

Xavier Garza successfully captures the excitement that Max, an eleven-year-old Mexican-American boy, displays when he discovers that his favorite Lucha Libre wrestler is coming to town and might have a strange connection with his own family! This action packed bilingual mystery novel uses playful language that reinforces elements of Mexican-American culture and overflows with almost unbridled excitement for Lucha wrestling.

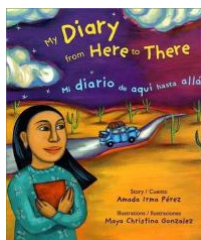


My Abuelita

By Tony Johnston, Yuyi Morales (Illustrator)

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780152163303

As a grandmother flows through the book pages in her robes as flamboyant as the stories she loves to tell, she inspires her grandson to want to be just like her when he grows old.



My Diary from Here to There/Mi Diario de Aquí Hasta Allá

By Amada Irma Pérez

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780892391752

"My Diary from Here to There/ Mi diario de aquí hasta allá," is a touching account of a family emigrating from Mexico to California. A bilingual picture book, this young girl's diary chronicles the family's anxiety, excitement and uncertainty as they leave home and experience the same journey made by many families



The Only Road

By Alexandra Diaz

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781481457507

Jaime and his cousin Ángela undertake the arduous journey to the North after a gang in Guatemala threatens their family. Diaz portrays with empathy the dangers, decisions, and regrets faced by unaccompanied minors as they migrate in search of refuge.



The Other Half of Happy

By Rebecca Balcárcel

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781452169989

As Quijana enters seventh grade, she feels in between, grappling with a new school, new friends, and her half-Guatemalan heritage. She struggles to find her place within her friendships and family, stumbling and succeeding on her path to discovering her authentic self.

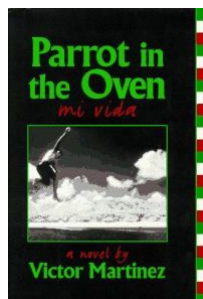


Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale

By Duncan Tonatiuh

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781419705830

Duncan Tonatiuh has written the emotional story of the effects of undocumented immigration on those who leave and those who stay behind. Through traditional folk elements, readers follow young Pancho Rabbit in his arduous journey across the border in search of his father as he tries to keep his family together.



Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida

By Victor Martinez

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780060267049

Poetic, moving, and harrowing, these vignettes paint a realistic portrait of a Chicano boy's coming of age in Fresno, California. Graphic realism and lyrical imagery highlight not only familial and societal tensions, but also unexpected moments of humor, insight, and tenderness.

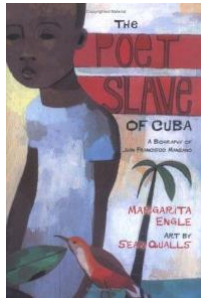


Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré

By Anika Aldamuy Denise, Paola Escobar (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Biography, Literature ISBN 9780062748683

This riveting picturebook biography of Pura Belpré, following her from Puerto Rico to her new life in Nueva York, captures her professional life, legacy, and lifelong passion for storytelling and public libraries.

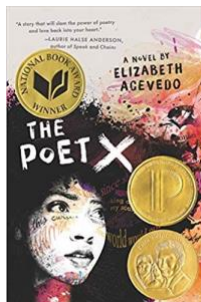


The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano

By Margarita Engle, Sean Qualls (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780805077063

"The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano," a collection of haunting poems, uses multiple voices to illuminate the daily terror and hypocrisy of the slave system. Celebrating Manzano's irrepressible spirit and creativity, this book is based on Manzano's autobiographical notes and poems. After witnessing young Manzano's harsh punishments for reading and writing, readers will marvel at his enduring strength and persistence to attain freedom.



The Poet X

By Elizabeth Acevedo

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780062662804

Poetry provides teenage Xiomara an outlet to express herself as she struggles with her demanding mother's religious expectations, a secret romance, and self acceptance.

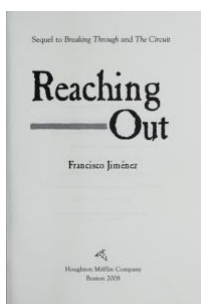


Portraits of Hispanic American Heroes

By Juan Felipe Herrera, Raúl Colón (Illustrator)

Nonfiction, Biography ISBN 9781501912931

Juan Felipe Herrera celebrates the lives of 20 Hispanic people who up to now have been in the shadows to many despite their significant contributions to American society. These poignant biographical sketches succinctly present the essence of each hero's life and legacy to the future generations of their culture.

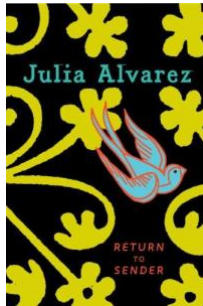


Reaching Out

By Francisco Jiménez

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780618038510

In this poignantly written autobiography, Jimenez recounts his days as a young Mexican American student who is the first in his family to attend college. Against great odds, he is determined to complete his education.

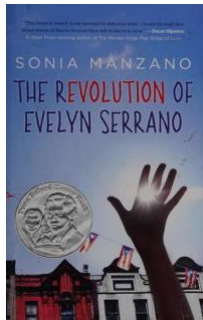


Return to Sender

By Julia Alvarez

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780375858383

When Tyler's father is unable to maintain the family farm, he hires undocumented workers, resulting in an interdependent relationship that mirrors current social and political conditions in the U.S.



The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano

By Sonia Manzano

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9780545325059

In her debut novel, Manzano beautifully recreates a world of turmoil in 1969 Spanish Harlem. Fourteen-year-old Evelyn Serrano is caught in a whirlwind of events led by the revolutionary Young Lords. Navigating the tensions between her activist abuela and conservative mother, Evelyn learns to value her own culture and history.

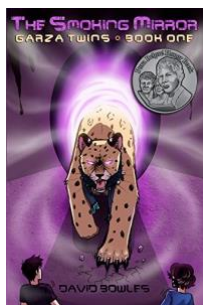


Sal and Gabi Break the Universe

By Carlos Hernandez

Fiction, Science Fiction ISBN 9781368022828

Sci-fi adventure and Cuban culture blend as thirteen-year-old magician Sal Vidón and his friend Gabi Reál, an aspiring journalist and student council president, travel to parallel universes and try to survive middle school.

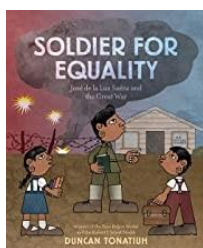


The Smoking Mirror

By David Bowles

Fiction, Action, Adventure, Fantasy ISBN 9781925148640

In an action-packed, fantasy novel, that combines Aztec and Mayan mythology with life in contemporary South Texas and Mexico, 12-year-old twins descend into the Land of the Dead to find their mother.

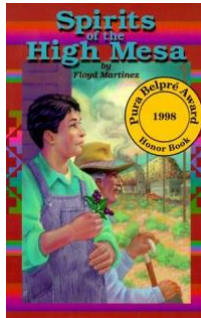


Soldier for Equality: José de la Luz Sáenz and the Great War

By Duncan Tonatiuh

Nonfiction, History, US History, Biography ISBN 9781419736827

A fascinating picturebook biography of Mexican American José de la Luz Sáenz's fight for equality as a U.S. soldier during WWI.

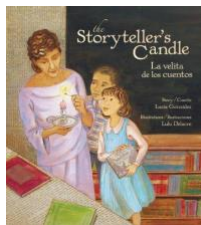


Spirits of the High Mesa

By Floyed Martinez

Fiction, Mexican American ISBN 9781558851986

In this moving coming-of-age novel set in rural New Mexico, the young protagonist, Flavio, is torn between the seductiveness of progress and new technology and his loyalty to village traditions so steadfastly preserved by his grandfather, El Grande. (Arte Publico Press summary)

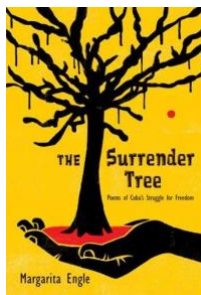


The Storyteller's Candle / La velita de los cuentos

By Lucía González, Lulu Delacre (Illustrator)

Fiction, Historical Fiction ISBN 9780892392223

Text and sepia tone illustrations present the biographical story of Pura Belpré, the first Puerto Rican librarian hired by the New York Public Library, who introduces the public library to immigrants living in El Barrio and hosts the neighborhood's first Three Kings' Day fiesta.

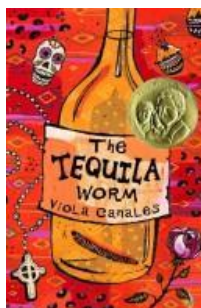


The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom

By Margarita Engle

Nonfiction, Poetry ISBN 9780805086744

Compelling free verse in alternating voices lyrically tells the story of Cuba's three wars for independence from Spain. Combining real-life characters (such as legendary healer Rosa La Bayamesa) with imagined individuals, Engle focuses on Rosa's struggle to save everyone—black or white, Cuban or Spanish, friend or enemy.



The Tequila Worm

By Viola Canales

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780385746748

In her debut novel, Canales shows, through a series of vignettes, how a Latina child maintains her cultural integrity with pride and humor while living within another culture. Without sentimentality, Canales develops fascinating characters who provide wonderful insights into the Latino cultural experience.

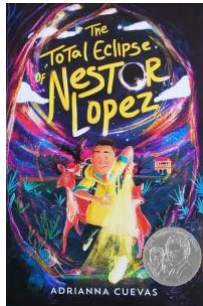


They Call Me Güero: A Border Kid's Poems

By David Bowles

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781947627062

Güero describes his neighborhood on the Mexican border, his hard-working family, and his growing love of poetry in this novel-in-verse.

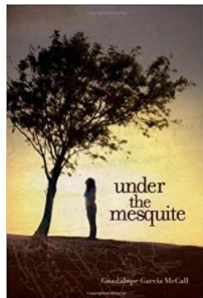


The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez

By Adrianna Cuevas

Fiction, Fantasy ISBN 9780374313609

When animals begin disappearing and Abuela starts acting suspicious, Nestor must use his secret ability to communicate with animals to save his town from a tula vieja, a witch that transforms into animals.

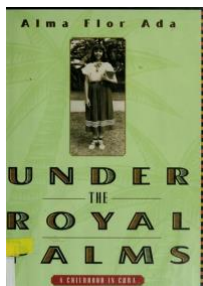


Under the Mesquite

By Guadalupe Garcia McCall

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9781600604294

In "Under the Mesquite," Guadalupe Garcia McCall, writing in emotionally riveting free verse, gracefully manages to convey the experience of growing up in a bicultural community in Texas with geographical accuracy and a radiating authentic voice for its main protagonist fourteen-year-old Lupita, the oldest of eight children who is dealing with her mother's terminal illness.

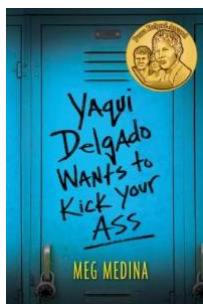


Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba

By Alma Flor Ada

Nonfiction, Literature ISBN 9780689806315

In a heartwarming and loving portrayal of her childhood days in Cuba, Ada describes her deep friendship with a beloved dance teacher. Readers meet relatives and share the tragedy of the loss of Ada's beloved uncle.



Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass

By Meg Medina

Fiction, General Fiction ISBN 9780763658595

Piedad "Piddy" Sanchez's life is turned upside down when she finds out that Yaqui Delgado wants to kick her ass. While struggling to deal with the threat on her own, Piddy is forced to explore her identity, her culture and the role of others in her life. Meg Medina writes a powerful story about bullying and resilience.