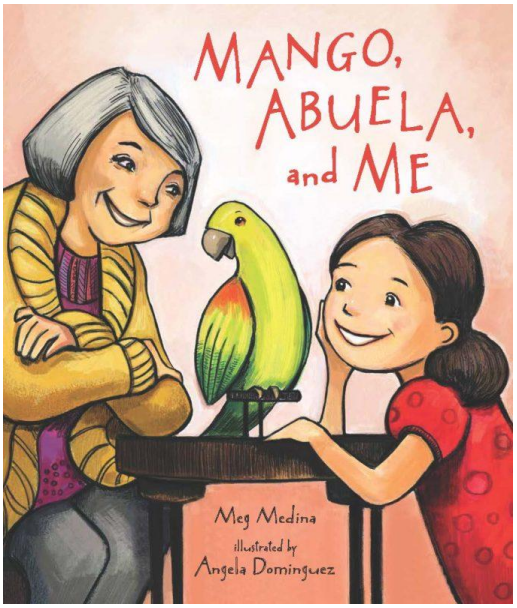
Book Review: Mango, Abuela, and Me

Author: Meg Medina

Illustrator: Angela Dominguez

Grade Level: DK-2

Guided Reading Level: M



Book Synopsis from Amazon:

https://www.amazon.com/Mango-Abuela-Me-Meg-Medina/dp/0763695130/ref=sr_1_1?crid=YNLPKV0DJCZ2&keywords=mango%2C+abuela%2C+and+me&qid=1664857794&qu=eyJxc2MiOiIwLjM2IiwicXNhIjoiMC4zNCIsInFzcCI6IjAuNTEifQ%3D%3D&sprefix=mango%2C+%2Caps%2C172&sr=8-1

Mia's abuela has left her sunny house with parrots and palm trees to live with Mia and her parents in the city. The night she arrives, Mia tries to share her favorite book with Abuela before they go to sleep and discovers that Abuela can't read the words inside. While they cook, Mia helps Abuela learn English ("Dough. *Masa*."), and Mia learns some Spanish too. But it's still hard for Abuela to learn the words she needs to tell Mia all her stories. Then Mia sees a parrot in a pet-shop window, and she gets the perfecto idea for how to help the whole family communicate a little better.

Review Highlights...

- Features a Hispanic female protagonist, Mia.
- Features a multi-faceted/multi-generation house..
    - Illustrates the family working together to support each other; Abuela can no longer live alone, so the family takes her in to live with them.
    - Shows a developing relationship between an abuela and her granddaughter.
        - Illustrates the struggle to get to know each other.
- Positively and respectfully demonstrates the rich and dynamic Hispanic culture.
- Respectfully shows the struggle to communicate when there is a language barrier.
- **Picture book. (Beautiful illustrations.)**
- Universal theme: Abuela tries to feel home in this new place and form a bond with her granddaughter.
- Spanish vocabulary is introduced in the story; provided in the glossary.

Information researched/reviewed/organized/created by Bridgette Blue, DEI Consultant. 2022

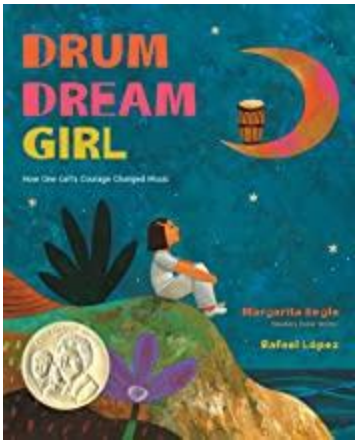
Book Review: Drum Dream Girl

Author: Margarita Engle

Illustrator: Rafael Lopez

Grade Level: DK-8

Guided Reading Level:



Book Synopsis from Amazon:https://www.amazon.com/Drum-Dream-Girl-Courage-Changed/dp/1520018177

Girls cannot be drummers. Long ago on an island filled with music, no one questioned that rule—until the drum dream girl. In her city of drumbeats, she dreamed of pounding tall congas and tapping small bongós. She had to keep quiet. She had to practice in secret. But when at last her dream-bright music was heard, everyone sang and danced and decided that both girls and boys should be free to drum and dream. Inspired by the childhood of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga, a Chinese-African-Cuban girl who broke Cuba's traditional taboo against female drummers, Drum Dream Girl tells an inspiring true story for dreamers everywhere.

Review Highlights...

- The story is written in poetry. DK-3 students will enjoy the story and illustrations, while older elementary students and middle school students will be able to relate to the poem.
- This story was inspired by the life of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga.
- Features a strong female protagonist,
- Features a multi-faceted, dynamic culture/society.
- Positively and respectfully illustrates a girl's dream to play drums and defy societal norms and expectations for girls.
- Connects to Title IX and recent developments in the news surrounding women in sports and school sports programs.
- **Picture book. (Beautiful illustrations.)**
- Universal theme: Desire for equality and the opportunity to follow one's passion.
- Spanish vocabulary is introduced in the story.

Book Review: Martina

Author: Carmen Agra Deedy

Illustrator: Michael Austin

Grade Level: 1-4

Guided Reading Level: R



Book Information from Amazon
https://www.amazon.com/s?k=martina+the+beautiful+cockroach&crid=39T99IFRDHYR5&sprefix=Martina+%2Caps%2C162&ref=nb_sb_ss_deep-retrain-0-ops-acceptance_3_8

Martina Josefina Catalina Cucaracha is a beautiful cockroach living in Havanna, Cuba who needs to find a husband. Her Cuban grandmother gives her some wise advice as she begins her search: spill coffee on the suitor's shoes as a test to reveal his true colors. Martina does not take to the idea, however after meeting her first suitor, Don Gallo, she realizes "the coffee test" might be just the trick. After Don Gallo, the rooster, comes Don Cerdo, the pig, followed by the lecherous Don Lagarto, the lizard. It goes from bad to worse. However just when Martina is about to give up on finding her perfect mate, she spots Perez, the shy little mouse living down in the garden. Because Martina instantly likes Perez' kindness, she is reluctant to do "the coffee test" on what seems like a perfect suitor. Will Martina's Cuban grandmother get her way and force Martina to spill coffee on perfect Perez' shoes? You will have to read, *Martina the Beautiful Cockroach, A Cuban Folktale*, to find out!.

Review Highlights...

- A retelling of a Cuban culture folktale.
- Features a multi-faceted/multi-generation house.
    - Show working together to solve problems.
    - Strong relationships with grandparents.
    - Shows the dynamic complexity of a family.
- Positively and respectfully demonstrates the rich and dynamic Cuban culture.
- The retelling is beautiful and humorous.
- **Picture book. (Beautiful illustrations.)**
- Universal theme: Finding love.
- Spanish vocabulary is introduced in the story.