

Novel Resource 1

Ann Jaramillo, La Linea; 2006, Roaring Brook Press

- About the author- Ann Jaramillo is an English as a Second Language teacher in Salinas, California. She teaches Mexican-American seventh and eighth graders. The “seed” was planted for this book by one of her students. Jaramillo felt that there were not books available for her students that reflect their lives and experiences. She was determined to write a book for them. Jaramillo has developed a joint county program in California for ESL students. She found that though their speaking English may be progressing, they were not able to acquire mastery for the California test. The name of the program is “California Tomorrow”. La Linea is Jaramillo’s first book.
- The only information I could find on Jaramillo was on <http://us.macmillan.com/annjaramillo/> . I could not locate her snail mail or web address.



Ann Jaramillo

Annotation (for book list). Fifteen year old Miguel is determined to reunite with his parents and twin sisters he has never seen. So begins Miguel’s journey from Mexico to the United States. He knows there could be danger along they way. He meets Javier, a man from El Salvador who helps Miguel along the way. Miguel also discovers Elena, his sister, has disguised herself and followed him. Miguel and Elena encounter hardships along they way and also find the meaning of loyalty and determination.

Genre

La Linea falls into several genres including, adventure/survival fiction, multi-cultural fiction as well as realistic fiction.

Point of View

La Linea is written in first person, specifically, Miguel's point of view.

Theme

The theme of the book is realizing your dreams may not always be what you think they may be.

I think the theme of the book could also include determination and loyalty. I picked up the book because of the title; I have a large population of Latino students and I was looking for something for them. When I saw the title, I assumed the book would be about immigration and the danger that immigrants can encounter.

Conflict

There is dual conflict in this book. The first conflict is between Miguel and his sister. He is joining his parents in the United States and she isn't. The second conflict is between Miguel and Elena and the process of coming to America.

Resolution

Miguel realizes that he will have to keep Elena with him. He decides that they need to work together in order to survive. He also learns that Elena is resourceful and can help him.

Miguel and Elena are determined. The process of immigrating has not gone according to plan. I think that the conflict is resolved because of their determination. They will not give up.

Characters:

Miguel-main character; age 15. Miguel is loyal, caring, and hopeful. He is probably strong and athletic. He has played soccer and still loves the game. He has been the man of the house and has had to fulfill those physical responsibilities.

Elena - Miguel's younger sister. She appears to be sullen with quiet determination. She is good at many of the farming aspects of their daily life where Miguel is not.

Abuelita- Miguel and Elena's grandmother. She has been their guardian for about eight years. She is caring, wise, and encouraging.

Javier- A man from El Salvador Miguel meets on his journey. Javier is a person who remains positive no matter the situation. He is loyal and unselfish.

Setting

The setting of this story is Mexico.

Interest Level and Reading Level

The reading level for this book is 6th grade. The interest level is 6th grade through high school.

Book Talk

Miguel has been in Mexico for about eight years while his parents have been in the USA. Finally, on Miguel's 15th birthday he gets the letter he has waited for what seems to be his whole life. He is to join his parents in the USA. Miguel begins what seems to be a well-planned journey to his parents. Things begin to go wrong when the federales pull over the bus he is on. From this point on nothing seems to go the way Miguel had planned, including finding his disguised, younger sister has followed him. Read *La Linea* to find out if Miguel makes it to the USA, or is destined to never see his parents again.

Discussion Questions

Pre-read

By looking at the title and cover of this book, predict what you think this book might be about.

Is there a time that you have ever been separated from your parents?
Describe how that felt.

What would you need to do to prepare yourself to go and live another country?

During Reading

Do you think Miguel is right when he says to have any chance at a good life, he will need to leave San Jacinto? Why or Why not?

Do you think Miguel's father was correct in not asking Don Clemente for help in sending for Miguel? Support your answer. (Chapters 1-5)

What do you think about Javier? Is he honest? Can Miguel trust him? Should Miguel befriend him? Support your answer. (Chapters 11-13)

What would have happened if Miguel would not have met Javier? (Chapters 18-20)

After Reading

How do you think Miguel's journey would have been different if Elena had not followed him?

Compare and contrast Miguel and Elena. Think about their personality differences, their courage and determination.

Was it worth all the risks that Miguel and Elena took to immigrate to the USA? Do you think you would have the courage to do some of the things they did to achieve their dream?

Were you surprised that Elena ended up back in San Jacinto? Support your answer?

Vocabulary

I think that the vocabulary in this book is unique because of the amount of Spanish in the book. I also think that the English vocabulary is very basic and easy to understand. I think that Ann Jaramillo was purposeful in the use of basic language because she wrote this book specifically for Spanish speaking students with limited.

If you read this book to your students, know the Spanish words and phrases. Much of the Spanish is easy to translate because Jaramillo uses it with context clues or it is a conjugate.

Academic Standards

Social Studies

6.1.19, 6.3.3, 6.3.4, 6.3.16, 6.4.9, 6.4.10, 6.5.5

Language Arts

6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 6.2.7, 6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.3, 6.3.5, 6.3.6

Anticipation statements

Anticipation Guide

La Linea

Put an X in front of the statement if you agree with the statement. Leave the line blank if you do not agree with the statement.

Keep this paper in your reading folder. We will review these statements after reading the story.

____ No one wants to live in Mexico.

____ There should be a limit on the number of immigrants coming to America.

____ Illegal immigrants should be sent back to their home country.

____ Parents should do whatever they can to reunite with their children.

____ America affords opportunity for many immigrants.

____ A person should help a person in their family regardless of the consequences.

____ "Train-hopping" is a safe way to travel.

If You Liked....

Crossing the Wire by Will Hobbs

I chose this novel because it is the same story line as *La Linea*. It follows a boy who illegally immigrating to the USA.

Ask Me No Questions Marina Budhos

Students who liked *La Linea* might like the aspect of immigration and/or adventure. *Ask Me No Questions* is about a Middle Eastern family who needs to leave America quickly after 9/11. They leave for Canada.

Across the Curriculum Connections

Social Studies

Activity- "Breaking News" Students will analyze current economic conditions in Mexico. (Indiana Academic Resource

Activity). 6.4.8

Students will need access to a computer and the black line master with the activity. Students can work in pairs or small groups.

Language Arts

Activity-”A Question of Character” Students will learn to recognize and comment on how the characters qualities contribute to shape the plot and the resolution. (Indiana Academic Resource Activity)6.3.2

Students can work alone or in pairs. Teacher will need to adapt the black line master.

Resources

The New Americans- A PBS series

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/newamericans.html>

Click on “The Mexican Laborer”.

This report and video follows a family from Mexico. The father lives in the USA and is trying to save money so his family can legally migrate to the United States.

Home Programs-PBS

<http://www.pbs.org/itvs/thecity/index.html>

This is the story of four different people who have immigrated and their stories.

Book Activity

You Have to Live in Somebody Else’s Country to Understand

Subject: Language Arts

Overview: Alienation of newcomers is common, but it is not always recognized nor understood. It is challenging for immigrants to become accustomed to a new place and adjust to the novelty of everything around them, from language to social mores. Others need to make them feel welcome by applying empathy and compassion, and imagining themselves in the shoes of the new arrival.

Objectives

Students will:

- Reflect on personal emotions associated with being an outsider

- Recognize newly-arrived Americans' feelings and experiences
- Empathize with new immigrants who encounter alienation and isolation living in a new land
- Analyze a poem about immigration

Materials

- Chalk and chalkboard, or chart paper and markers
- The poem "You Have to Live in Somebody Else's Country to Understand"

Procedure

Preparation: Invite an adult or student literate in a second language who will read the poem in his or her language to the class. Most students should not be familiar with the language. If there are several who do speak the language, it will offer interesting contrast to the majority's interaction with the reading.

1. Tell the class that a guest speaker has volunteered to read them the poem "You Have to Live in Somebody Else's Country to Understand," written in 1984 by Noy Chou, a ninth-grade student from a high school in suburban Boston who was born in Cambodia. Have the reader introduce him or herself in the second language. Expect students to express discomfort, surprise, confusion, etc.
2. Request that students close their eyes as they listen to the poem to remain free of distractions. Remind them to listen without talking. Invite the guest to read.
3. After the poem is read, instruct the guest to give students these instructions in the second language: "Please take out a piece of paper and complete this journal assignment in five minutes. Describe a time when you felt like an outsider, or when someone made judged you without knowing you and/or being aware of your circumstances."
4. Repeat the instructions in English, indicating that this is for the benefit of those who are non-native speakers of the guest's second language.
5. Ask students to describe their reactions during the first reading of the poem. Cluster student responses as they speak. Sample discussion questions include:
 - How did you feel when they did not understand the language?
 - What did you want to do when the reader begin to recite in a language with which you were unfamiliar?
 - Were you able to pick up on any aspect of the poem—cadence, emotion—despite not knowing the language?
 - For those who might have understood the language, how did the poem make you feel?
 - What was your thought about classmates who could not understand the poem? How might you have helped them?
 - How might the teacher and the reader have helped you to understand the poem?
6. Have students review the clustered responses. Ask them to consider more broadly how the feelings they experienced relate to those of new immigrants. Based on this activity, what are some of the issues

immigrants face when they arrive somewhere new? S/he might be feeling like an outsider?

If the guest has remained, students can engage in discussion with him or her about personal immigrant experiences, if the speaker is a foreign-born American.

7. Hand out copies of the poem in English. Have either the guest or you read it aloud or have students read it. Have students analyze and discuss the poem. Ask them to review it again to select phrases, lines, or passages that strike them. Ask students to write a corresponding personal experience that reflects the essence of the selected sections. Allow five to ten minutes for this activity. Invite students to share their thoughts.

8. Have students relate their experiences to those of immigrants. Some discussion questions include:

- What groups and individuals are treated like outsiders in America?
- What are the possible results or consequences when people feel like outsiders in their surroundings?
- What did you learn from this experience and the poem that might help you to better understand the feelings of outsiders in the future?
- How might you act differently toward someone when you recognize that s/he might be feeling like an outsider?

Standards-6.3.4, 6.3.6, 6.2.7, 6.2.8

Plan your immigration

This will be a class activity with individual reflection at the end.

Objective-students will discover the difficulty in immigrating.

Imagine that your family is facing difficult times and you need to leave the United States in order for your parents to locate work.

Procedure

- As a class we will choose by popular vote the country we are immigrating to.
- Brainstorm what students think the procedures are in immigrating and list those ideas.
- Using the computer and search engines, students will begin researching what they find about immigrating to the chosen countries.
- After students have recorded their findings, come back as a class to discuss what we have found.

- List the processes necessary to leave the US and immigrate to the chosen country.

When we have completed the activity, I will ask the following questions:

Is immigrating an easy process? Why do you think that it is not easy to immigrate?

What kind of choices do people have to make when immigrating?

What would you miss most in the United States?

What would you look forward to in a new country?

What are some of the obstacles you would face in a new country? (More questions could be asked as topics arise).

Standards 6.2.7, 6.4.5 6.4.6

Bibliography

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