

David Gonzalez and RainArt Productions present

Cuentos!

Tales from the Latino World

With colorful tales from the Caribbean, South America, and La Republic of 'da Bronx', master storyteller David Gonzalez paints a vivid picture of the people and rich cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. From the enchanting Puerto Rican magician Milomaki to the friendship between young Delgadina and a magical snake, these stories are filled with memorable characters, fantastic plots and positive messages for children. Told with an upbeat rhythm, **Cuentos: Stories from the Latino World** offers solid entertainment *and* an educational introduction to the marvelous world of Latino literature and culture.

Spanish words spice up the stories and songs of **Cuentos** so that children can repeat and retain their sound and meaning.

Cuentos: Stories from the Latino World is the perfect way to enhance your facility's multi-cultural programming and give the kids a really fun time too!!!

Cuentos!
Tales from the Latino World
Performance and Study Guide by
David Gonzalez

From the Arab influenced mythic fairy tales of Iberia to the adventures of the magico-religious deities of Cuba...from the home-spun wisdom of Puerto Rico's "Juan Bobo" stories to the fantastical images of Noble Prize-winning author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the Latino world has created a vast treasury of literature.

With colorful tales from the Caribbean, South America, Spain and the Bronx, master storyteller David Rafael Gonzalez paints a vivid picture of the people and rich cultures of the Spanish-speaking

world. From the enchanting pre-Columbian Puerto Rican singer Milomaki, to the strength and magic of the Afro-Cuban Orisha's these stories are filled with memorable characters, fantastic plots and positive messages for children. Told with an upbeat rhythm, **Cuentos: Stories from the Latino World** offers solid entertainment *and* an educational introduction to the marvelous world of Latino literature and culture.

Cuentos! Stories from the Latino World may include some of the following tales and Spanish vocabulary:

El Rey Del Agua - A Dominican story about a father, son and daughter and the jealousy and violence that she escapes when she befriends a golden fish.

Delgadina - A fantastic Chilean story about a young girl, her magical red snake and the trouble that arises when he gives her a gift of gold.

serpiente (SER-PEE-EN-TAY): snake
oro (O-ROW): gold
bruja (BREW-HA): witch

The Man Who Could Make Trees Sing - A true story from when I was seven years old, about the time my Uncle Jose set up a workshop in my basement and built something very special for me...a guitar! (But please, don't tell the kids what it is...)

arboles (ARE-BOWL-ES): trees
madera (MAH-DER-AH): wood
martillo (MAR-TEE-YO): hammer

La Garita Del Diablo - The legend of the "Haunted Watchtower" has been told in Puerto Rico for many, many years. In this version of the story we learn what really happened to the Sanchez, the watchtower's lonely guard, on a terrible, windblown night long ago.

garita (GAR-EE-TAH): watchtower
soldado (SOUL-DAH-DOUGH): soldier
mar (MAR): ocean

Chango and the Power of the Drum - A Cuban/Yoruba tale about the "Orisha" Chango's wish to trade the power to tell the future for the power of music.

tambor (TAM-BOR): drum
caracoles (CAR-A-CO-LES): seashells

Obatala and the Creation of the World - Another Yoruba tale that explains the beginnings of all life.

Milomaki - A Puerto Rican creation story about how the Royal Palm Tree (La Palma Real), with all it's healing powers, came to the island.

El Yunque (EL YOON-KAY): The rainforest of Puerto Rico
plaza (PLA-ZA): town square

Vovo - A Colombian story of a boy whose kindness brings him magical treasures, but when his brothers ignore the rules that govern these gifts they are in for a rough time.

arco y flechas (AR-CO EE FLECH-AS): bow and arrow

pajaro (PA-JA-RO): bird

*** Please note that this is a partial list and that new stories are constantly being added to the program.**

A NOTE ON STORYTELLING

Storytelling is universal. Every culture in the world has a tradition of storytelling and for some non-literate societies it is the principal way for people to pass information and knowledge between one another and between generations. Storytelling maintains and sustains the body of shared beliefs of a community and thus serves to keep it alive. The children of traditional societies absorb the wisdom, knowledge and love of their culture through storytelling.

Today the storyteller is an artist dedicated to the transmission of these same important values. The storyteller is a master communicator who works to suspend the "real" world so that messages can be transmitted through imagery, sound and emotion. **By using language, voice, and body movement the storyteller can infuse the static one dimension of a printed story with the rhythms and music of life.** Careful attention is always given as to the content and message of the stories so that they are appropriate to the specific audiences that will hear them. Even today storytellers are often called upon to help celebrate the seasons, holidays, and ceremonies of our own culture.

Focus on Performance Values

On stage you will see one man, a chair, a glass of water, and maybe a bright colored scarf or two. The stage will be bare of any sets or props and yet a world of drama and imagery will be created. How does the performer (David Rafael Gonzalez) accomplish this? This question can be the focus of attention for your class. Some areas to consider are:

GESTURE AND MOVEMENT: How do I use my body to create the "pictures" of the story. What parts of my body are most used? When do I get up from the chair, and for what purposes? How and when do I use the rest of the performing area? Notice the use of mime and how I make use of imaginary objects.

VOICE: Notice the changes in my voice. What is my "normal" voice like? What is my "narrators voice" and what are my "character" voices? Notice

how often my voice changes during the telling of one story. How do I use silence? How is the emotional character of the story carried in my voice?

COMMUNICATION: What do I do to make the story entertaining and engaging? Do I make eye contact? How do I interact with the audience? How do I get the audience to participate in the stories?

It can be helpful to organize the class into three groups with each group focusing on a specific area: **MOVEMENT, VOICE and COMMUNICATION.** After the show they can report back about what they have found.

PRE-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION

1. Discuss storytelling and performance values with the children.
2. Discuss the importance of learning about other cultures as a way of developing respect and understanding among people.
3. Discuss the fact that one in ten Americans comes from a Spanish speaking heritage...whether it is Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Colombian, or any of the other countries of South and Central America.
4. If appropriate for your age group you may wish to discuss the history of Spanish colonization, the confused voyage of Christopher Columbus, and the proud civilizations that pre-dated his arrival (such as the Mayan, Aztec and Inca).
5. Ask if there are any Spanish speaking children in the class. Where do their families come from? Do they speak Spanish? What words can they teach the other students? Do they eat any traditional foods at home? What are they?

PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

1. Present the vocabulary words from the previous pages and assign children to listen for them.
2. Look up the following places on the globe or in the atlas: Spain, Chile, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Columbia and Mexico.
3. Draw a map of one Latin American country. Prepare a short report on the culture, economy and history of that country.
4. Listen to the music from one of the artists listed above. Dance to it and then discuss the similarities and differences between this music and the popular music that your students enjoy.

POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

1. It is important that the show be discussed and followed up on as soon as possible. It is also best if the teacher shares her own thoughts about the performance with the kids. Use a fun and light-hearted tone and the children will respond generously. Reflect back on the performance values to help focus a discussion about the show.
2. What did the children learn from the characters and situations in the stories? Which did they like best and why? If they were a character in one of the stories would they have acted in the same fashion?
3. Did they hear the Spanish words? Can they say them and their meaning again?
4. Talk about creation stories (like Milomaki) as ways people tried to understand the world around them, and at the same time to teach values to one another. Can you name any other stories like this? Ask your librarian to suggest a creation story and bring it in to your classroom for comparison. Ask the children to work together in small groups to make up their own creation stories. Write them down and try telling them to one another.