

Study Guide For Teachers

David Gonzalez

In

**“Cuentos: Tales from the
Latinx World”**

presented by
Young Audiences
(866) 500-9265
www.yanjep.org



BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

The Latinx world has created a vast treasury of literature. There are the Arab-influenced mythic fairy tales of Iberia, the adventures of the magico-religious deities of Cuba, the home-spun wisdom of Puerto Rico's "Juan Bobo" stories and the fantastical images of Nobel Prize-winning author Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

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.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

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 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 Latinx World* offers solid entertainment and an educational introduction to the marvelous world of Latinx literature and culture. Spanish words spice up the stories and songs of *Cuentos* so that children can repeat and retain their sound and meaning.

Audience Limit: 300
Intended for grades K-6

LEARNING GOALS

- To acquaint students with the art of storytelling.
- To share the rich cultural heritage of the Latinx world through storytelling.
- To encourage storytelling, dramatic play, fantasy, and non-verbal communication.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

1. Present the vocabulary words from this page and ask 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 following artists:
Yomo Toro
Larry Harlow and the Fania Allstars
Bobby Snabria Y Ascencion
Dance to it and then discuss the similarities and differences between this music and the popular music that your students enjoy.
5. Is there a Spanish speaking student, teacher, parent or grandparent in your school who might be able to visit with your class?

VOCABULARY WORDS

arboles (ARE-BOWL-ES): trees
madera (MAH-DER-AH): wood
martillo (MAR-TEE-YO): hammer
serpiente (SER-PEE-EN-TAY): snake
oro (O-ROW): gold
bruja (BREW-HA): witch
aguila (AH-GI-LAH): eagle
pescado (PES-CAH-DOH): fish
garita (GAR-EE-TAH): watchtower
soldado (SOUL-DAH-DOH): soldier
mar (MAR): ocean
tambor (TAM-BOR): drum
caracoles (CAR-A-CO-LES): seashells
El Yunque (EL YOON-KAY): the rainforest of Puerto Rico
plaza (PLA-ZA): town square
arco y flechas (AR-CO EE FLECH-AS): bow and arrow
pajaro (PA-JA-RO): bird

AFTER THE PROGRAM

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.
5. Have students split into groups to study Spanish speaking countries. Draw a map of one Latin American country. Prepare a short report on the culture, economy, and history of that country. Also find one folktale from that culture. When all reports are done, each group can present their report to the class, including a telling of the folktale.

ARTIST INFORMATION

David Rafael Gonzalez is a master storyteller, musician and radio host. He has a doctorate from New York University's School of Education, where his research examined the use of stories in education and rehabilitation. Over the past ten years, he has performed for hundreds of thousands of kids. David grew up in the Bronx with his Puerto Rican mother and Cuban father and has traveled in the Latinx world, regularly performing and teaching in Spain. For eight years, David was the host of *New York Kids*, an award-winning radio program for

RESOURCES

Storytelling: Process and practice. Livo and Rietz. Libraries Unlimited, Littleton Colo. 1986.

Storytelling: Art and technique. Baker and Greene. R.R. Bowker and Co., New York 1977.

Mollie is Three, Vivian Gussin Paley. University of Chicago Press, 1988. How children use fantasy and story to construct their reality, and how a teacher entered the child's world through storytelling.

www.storynet.org The National Storytelling Network, listings of festivals, resources, and local events. Many links to collections of stories and tales.