

Promoting Cross-Cultural Learning through Caribbean Children's Literature and Themes

Nancy Cloud, Ed. D.

Graham Oakland, M.Ed.

With Assistance From Toni Gravel

M.Ed. in TESL Program, Rhode Island College

Participants will access a wealth of resources for promoting language and literacy, academic achievement and cross-cultural learning around Caribbean children's literature and culturally relevant themes. Learn how to plan standards-based lessons that meet dual language program objectives for language, literacy and content learning while keeping cross-cultural learning front and center.

Single Language Versions

The Secret Footprints/Las huellas secretas. Julia Alvarez (Raised in the Dominican Republic). New York: Dragonfly Books; Fabian Negrin (Italian), Illustrator

English: ISBN-13: 978-0440417477; Spanish: ISBN-13: 978-0440417644

Format: Paperback, Hardcover

Illustrations: mural style paintings

Grade Level: Middle Grades

Reading Level: 4.0

Featured Latino Culture: Dominican

Premise of the Book: Dominican legend about ciguapas, secret underwater creatures who only come onto land at night and whose feet are on backwards so humans cannot follow their footprints.. The narrative follows Guapa, a ciguapa who ventures on land during the day and encounters humans.

Genre: Legend (Fables, Folk Tales and Myths; Fantasy)

Themes: Fantasy, Magic and the Supernatural, Legends

The Color of My Words/El color de mis palabras, Lynn Joseph (*Trinidadian*), Lectorum, ISBN978-1-930332-75-1, Translated by Alberto Jiménez Rioja

English Version available in *In Zone* Book Format (designed for ELLs), Hampton Brown; ISBN 0-7362-2805-5

Format: Paperback, Audiobook

Illustrations: none, except cover art

Grade Level: Middle Grades

Reading Level: 5.5; Lexile 840

Featured Latino Culture: Dominican

Premise of the Book: Contains a social justice theme around speaking out and its consequences

Interesting Feature: Interspersed poems into the prose

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Death, Grief, Loss, Communities and Ways of Life, Caribbean Islander, Siblings, Writing

Salsa Stories/Cuentos con Sazón, Lulu Delacre (*Cuban*), Scholastic, ISBN 0-439-26649-X, Translated by Susana Pasternac; English version: ISBN 978-0545430982

Format: Hardcover, Paperback, Kindle

Illustrations: none, except cover art

Grade Level: Middle Grades

Reading Level: 5.9, Lexile 760, DRA 40, GR S

Featured Latino Culture: Latin Americans in Maryland; Some stories and recipes from Puerto Rico (Also from Mexico, Argentina, Guatemala, and Peru)

Premise of the Book: Contains a social justice theme around speaking out and its consequences

Genre: Short stories

Themes: Cooking, Growing Up, Extended Families

Awards: Americas Award Books

When This World Was New. D.H Figueredo (*Cuban*), Lee & Low Books Inc. Illustrated by Enrique Sanchez (*Dominican*); Spanish version "Un mundo nuevo" translated by Eida de la Vega

ISBN: 978-1-880000-86-1

Format: Hardcover, Paperback

Grade Level: K-2

Reading Level: 2.2, GRL J (English) M (Spanish), Lexile 440

Illustrations: Acrylic on paper

Featured Culture: Dominican, Cuban

Premise of the Book: A little boy recently moves to the United States from his warm island and is scared. He plays in the snow for the first time with his father and this helps him overcome some of the fear of his first day in an English speaking school. Also illustrates the family support give newly arrived families to help them adjust to life in their new country.

Genre: Fiction

Themes: Identity/Self Esteem/Confidence, Overcoming Obstacles

Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest, Immigration, Fathers, Cultural diversity, Childhood Experiences and Memories

Teacher's Guide Available on Lee and Low Website.

De cómo dicen que fue hecho el mar/How the Sea Came to Be. Mrinali Alvarez Astacio (Puerto Rican), La Editorial, Universidad to Puerto Rico. ISBN 978-0847715862

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: Textile styled collage

Grade Level: Lower primary

Reading Level: Unknown, simple text appears written for lower primary.

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Rican

Premise of the Book: Taken from a myth captured by Fray Ramón Pané in 1498, this Taino legend explains how the sea was formed.

Interesting Feature: Beautiful colorful illustrations produced by the same author that evoke a feeling of canvas and textiles of the native peoples of the Caribbean.

Genre: Taino Legend

Themes: Legends, Natural world, Literature of Indigenous Peoples

How Tía Lola Came to (Visit) Stay/ De cómo tía Lola vino (de visita) a quedarse, Originally published as *Cuando tía Lola vino de visita de quedarse*, Julia Alvarez (*Dominican*), Dell Yearling, ISBN 978-0307707703, Translated to Spanish by Liliana Valenzuela

Format: Hardcover, Paperback, Kindle, Audiobook [Spanish and English editions]

Illustrations: none, except cover art

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 4.8; Lexile, 740, Guided Reading R; DRA 40

Featured Latino Culture: Dominican

Premise of Book: Tía Lola visits her family members in Vermont and transforms their lives by reviving their Dominican traditions.

Interesting Feature: Includes some English phrases to create an authentic Dominican-American reality.

Genre: Fiction

Themes: Changes and New Experiences, Family Life, Divorce, Remarriage and Blended Families, Friends and Friendship, Moving

The Magic Shell/Regalo mágico, Nicholasa Mohr (Puerto Rican; Nuyorican). Translator Osvaldo Bianco. Illustrations by Rudy Gutierrez (Puerto Rican; Nuyorican). New York: Scholastic; ISBN-13: 978-0590471107. Spanish Edition is out of print.

Format: Hardcover, Paperback, [Spanish and English editions]

Illustrations: Realistic Black and White Illustrations

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 4.5; Lexile, 740,

Featured Latino Culture: Dominican

Premise of Book: A book about a boy who doesn't want to leave his home in the Dominican Republic to move to New York City where his father gets a new job. He struggles with differences in culture, climate, language and loneliness. A shell his uncle gave to him helps him get through the time by thinking of favorite memories from home.

Interesting Fact: The illustrator, a professor at the Pratt Institute, received a Gold Medal from the Society of Illustrators.

Genre: Fiction

Themes: Changes and New Experiences, Learning English, Making Friends

Dual Language Versions

The Storyteller's Candle/ La velita de los cuentos, Lucia González (Cuban), Lee & Low Books Inc., ISBN 978-0-89239-222-3, Illustrated by Lulu Delacre (*Cuban*)—*About Puerto Rican Librarian Pura Belpré*

Format: Hardcover, Paperback, Audiobook; Dual Language, English on right and top/Spanish on bottom and left

Illustrations: Layered oil washes and paper collage (using newsprint)

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 3.9, Lexile 730, GR level O

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Ricans living in New York

Premise of the Book: The effect of Pura Belpré's life and work on Puerto Rican immigrants living in New York in the early 21st century

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Awards: 2009 Pura Belpré Award Honor Book for Narrative; 2009 Pura Belpré Award Honor Book for Illustrations; Jane Adams Children's Book Award

Themes: Migration, Libraries, the Depression and Puerto Rican migration, Winter, Biography of Pura Belpré, first latina librarian, and her influence on New York City Puerto Rican families.

Classroom Guide Available on Lee and Low Website.

Drum, Chavi, Drum!/;Toca Chavi, toca!, Mayra L. Dole (Cuban), Children's Book Press and Imprint of Lee & Low Books Inc., ISBN 978-89239-302-2, Illustrated by Tonel (Cuban).

Format: Paperback, English on Left, Spanish on the right; Spanish and English onomatopoeia for sounds and Latin rhythms

Illustrations: Watercolor, colored pencil and pen

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 3.1, GRL L

Featured Latino Culture: Cuban American; About Calle Ocho in Miami Florida

Premise of the Book: Story tells about a girl who is determined to play the conga drums on the school float during Miami's Calle Ocho Festival, even though the role is usually assumed by boys. Chavi overcomes gender stereotypes about who can be a drummer and ends up gaining the admiration of all. The book shows festival foods, bands, dancing and visual art displays.

Genre: Fiction

Themes: Music, musical instruments, street festivals, daily life in Latin American homes, family, overcoming obstacles

Awards: New Voices Award

Classroom Guide Available on Lee and Low Website.

Shake it, Morena! And Other Folklore from Puerto Rico, by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand (Puerto Rican), Illustrations by Lulu Delacre (Cuban), Milbrook Press

Format: Paperback and e-book

Illustrations: Paintings

Grade level: 3 and up, best for ages 5-10

Reading Level: 4.3

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Rican

Premise of the Book: Through the experiences of a young girl, the reader gains access to traditional songs, games, riddles and stories from Puerto Rico. Taken from classrooms and playgrounds, each entry is accompanied by a brief footnote that explains cultural background or clarifies differences in Puerto Rican Spanish. The book gives directions that are clear and easy to follow, and music for the songs is appended. The watercolor illustrations are filled with tropical plants, landscapes, and animals, including 27 lizards that children can hunt for in the book.

Genre: Folklore

Themes: Well known riddles, games, songs, recipes and stories from Puerto Rico; daily life and activities of Puerto Rican children.

Mi carnaval/My Carnival. Elizabeth Balaguer (Dominican). Editora Manati; Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. English Translations by Karla Cordero & Virginia Moore. ISBN 978-9945-405-90-3

Format: Paperback

Illustrations: Watercolor

Grade Level: Middle Grades

Reading Level: 8.4

Featured Culture: Dominican

Premise of the book: The narrator takes the reader from a cold February in New York to the warm island of the Dominican Republic for Carnival! The book contains many facts about the island and gives descriptions and history behind many of the costumes that can be seen during the festival. The story is told from a child's perspective.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Cultural traditions, festivals

El Mejor Regalo del Mundo/The Best Gift of All. Julia Alvarez (Raised in the Dominican Republic). Illustrated by Ruddy Nunez (Dominican). Spanish Translation by Rhina P. Espaillat. Santillana USA Publishing Company; Miami, FL. ISBN- 978-1603963251

Format: Hardcover, Paperback

Illustrations: Colored pencil and watercolors

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 3

Featured Latino Culture: Dominican

Premise of the book: An old legend from the Dominican Republic tells about a hard-working woman who spends her days accommodating others, but not taking the time to enjoy their company. La Vieja Belen learns a valuable lesson when three kings visit her.

Genre: Legend (Folk Tale)

Themes: Traditional Customs

Mis Amigos/My Friends. David Ancona. Children's Press, New York. ISBN- 978-0516-25087

Format: Paperback, Hardcover

Illustrations: Color Photographs

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 1.8, Lexile 370, DRA: 8, GR E

Featured Latino Culture: Dominican

Premise of the book: A young girl describes in detail the various activities she does with both her friends and family.

Interesting Feature:

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Cross-Cultural Friendships

Pye-Kokoye-an/The Coconut Tree. Ghyslaine Rochelin (Haitian). Netherlands: International Step by Step. Illustrations by Olivier Bertoni. English: ISBN 9781601953223; Haitian-Creole: ISBN 978-1601953193
Format: Paperback, Audiobook
Illustrations: Olivier Bertoni
Grade Level: Primary
Reading Level: unknown, appears written for lower primary students
Featured Culture: Haitian
Premise of the book: A young girl's coconut tree is destroyed from a hurricane. When replanted, the young girl is witness to the plant's cycle of life.
Genre: Realistic Fiction
Themes: Native Plants, Natural Disaster (Hurricane)

English with Some Native Language

Isla, Arthur Dorros, Viking Penguin, ISBN 978-0-14-056505-8, Illustrated by Elisa Kleven—*About Puerto Ricans in NYC and in Puerto Rico—Also available in Spanish with some English.*

SEE ALSO Abuela (ISBN 0-140056225-7) by same author and illustrator team.

Format: Hardcover, Paperback [English edition with Spanish phrases]; Hardcover, Paperback [Spanish edition with English phrases]

Illustrations: Paintings with collage technique

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 2.7; Lexile 410

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Rico; any Caribbean nation with Hispanic heritage

Premise of Book: Cross-generational journey of a little girl and her *abuela* back to the island where *abuela* grew up.

Genre: Fiction

Themes: Island life (plazas, villages & cities, rain forest, beach life, foods and markets), family.

Tap-Tap. Karen Lynn Williams. Clarion Books, New York. Illustrated by Catherine Stock. ISBN 978-780395656174

Format: Hardcover, Paperback

Illustrations: Watercolor

Grade Level: 2-3

Reading Level: 3.5, Lexile 560

Featured Culture: Haitian

Premise of the book: A young girl accompanies her mother for the first time to the market to sell fruit. Determined to prove that she can handle her first day of work, she is careful not to complain about the long walk carrying all their supplies. When a little extra money materializes, Sasifi and her mother are able to ride the *tap-tap* home after a long day working at the market. Some words in French/Haitian Creole.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Haitian village life, occupations, transportation

English With Code Switching

Get ready for Gabi: A Crazy Mixed-up Spanglish Day, Marisa Montes (*Puerto Rican*), ISBN I 0-439-47519-8, Scholastic, Illustrated by Joe Cepeda

Format: Paperback

Illustrations: Black and White Line Drawings

Grade Level: Primary Grades

Reading Level: 3.9, DRA 40, Guided Reading Q, Lexile 420

Featured Latino Culture: Multiple countries represented by the characters (Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Argentina)

Premise of the Book: Represents a bilingual child's reality speaking two language-- sometimes together in the same sentence; expressing some information in one language and other information in the other

Genre: Comedy & Humor; Fiction

Themes: Code switching, befriending a new student, Bullying experiences, family life

English Only

My little Island, by Frané Lessac, ISBN 978-0064431460, Harper Collins (Monsterrat before the volcano erupted) ; illustrator Frané Lessac (see <http://www.balkinbuddies.com/lessac/>)

Format: Paperback , Reading Rainbow

Illustrations: Colorful naïve art style paintings

Grade Level: Primary Grades

Reading Level: 2.3, DRA 24, GRL M, Lexile 640

Featured Culture: African-Irish Montserratians; All Caribbean cultures

Premise of the Book: A boy has returned to visit and explore his roots with his friend. As students read this book, they will feel like they are on an actual tour of the island. The boy takes the reader through the main town where fresh fruits and vegetables are sold, interacts with the friendly people, and raves about the fresh fish coming right off the locals' boats. He also explores the wild forests and volcano with his friend.

Genre: Fiction

Themes: Geography, Maps, Friends and Friendship, Island Life, Transportation, Family, Volcanoes

Awards: Children's Book of the Year, Library of Congress

Teacher's Guide:

<http://www.franelessac.com/docs/teachersnotes/My%20Little%20Island.pdf>

Clip from Reading Rainbow: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zH-rO7kKfAQ&list=FL9hOkz3_PN56mU5uszrQyBw

Running the Road to ABC. Denize Lature (Haitian). New York: Alladin Books
Illustrated by Reynold Ruffins. ISBN 978-0689831652

Format: Paperback, Hardcover

Illustrations: Gouache paintings; Haitian folk art

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 3.5, Lexile 940, DRA 34, GR O

Featured Latino Culture: Haitian

Premise of the book: This story tells the story of six children who run to school long before the sun comes up. Using a chronological story structure, it begins with the children waking up and eating breakfast, then running through the village to school. The story ends with the children arriving at their school, ready to learn new things.

Genre: General Fiction

Themes: Children's school day activities; scenery, country life

Awards: Coretta Scott King Award-winning picture book

Eight Days: A Story of Haiti. Edwidge Danticat. Orchard Books. Illustrated by and Alix Delinois ISBN: 978-0545278492

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: double-page scenes in acrylics, pastel crayons and collage

Grade Level: Primary

Reading Level: 4.4, Lexile 820, DRA:35, GR O

Featured Culture: Haitian

Premise of the book: As a result of an earthquake, a young boy struggles for survival while buried beneath house rubble for eight days. In order to cope with the situation, his imagination instinct kicks in and takes him away to comforting visions of his friends, family, and fun activities to help him pass the time while he helplessly waits to be rescued.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Natural disaster, survival, imagination

Informational Texts

Single Language Versions

Next Stop: The Caribbean, by Ginger McDonnell, ISBN 978-143336126, Teacher Created Materials, Time for Kids Nonfiction Readers. Spanish Version “Próxima parada: El Caribe”. Part of the *Time For Kids Informational Text Set* Grades 2-3.

Format: Paperback

Illustrations: Color photographs

Grade level: Primary Grades

Reading Level: 2.1, GRL J, DRA 20, Lexile 610

Featured Latino Culture: All Caribbean Cultures

Premise of the Book: This 24-page book explores the Caribbean. It provides some information on island life, including the customs, foods, animals, plants, and the Caribbean Sea. It features maps, charts, photographs, and colorful pictures. Students view photographs of some of the islands, beaches, and beautiful scenery. Organized with a table of contents and a glossary

Themes: Plants and animals, Caribbean Sea, beaches, maps

Related Content Areas: Geography

Looking at Caribbean Countries, by Jillian Powell, ISBN 978-0836876741, Gareth Stevens Publishing; Spanish Version “Descubramos países del Caribe”

[Another title of interest in the series: “Looking at Cuba”]

Format: Hardcover (ISBN 0-8368-7957-0)

Illustrations: Color photographs

Grade Level: Elementary

Reading Level: 4.9, GR L, DRA 24, Lexile 950

Featured Cultures: All Caribbean cultures, including Dominican, Puerto Rican, Haitian, Cuban

Premise of the Book: This book helps readers experience what life is like in the Caribbean. It talks about the weather, landscape, people, and place. It features vibrant photographs that really capture the beauty and culture of some of the islands. Great features in this book include highlighted vocabulary, maps, diagrams, fun facts, a glossary, and web sites for further information.

Themes: Weather and seasons, landscape, people, dress, housing, food, work, leisure activities, religions, maps; coral reefs, hurricanes

Related Content Areas: Social Studies, Geography

English Title: Hurricanes, William B. Rice, Teacher Created Materials* *Spanish Title: Los huracanes*. ISBN 978-1433321566 (translation)

Format: paperback

Illustrations: illustrations, photographs, graphs, charts, maps

Grade Level: Grades 2-8

Reading Level: 2.5 (Spanish 3.0), GRL P, (Spanish = K), Lexile 660

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Rican

Premise of the Book: Includes many features of informational text, such as a table of contents, index, glossary, photographs, illustrations, an experiment and short biographies of two scientists. Provides information on how hurricanes form, how hurricanes move, how wind speeds are measured, how hurricane categories are established, how hurricanes are named and information about hurricane hunters, Themes: climate, extreme weather, scientific technology/meteorology, ocean effects, human costs, famous meteorologists.

Related Content Areas: Earth Science, Meteorology, Geography, Biographies

**See also single language English/Spanish Extreme Weather Hurricane paperback books produced by Weekly Reader Publishing and written by Jim Mezzanotte.*

Written as early chapter books with various topics in 4 chapters. Grade level readability from Gr. 1 to 3.3, depending on version purchased.

Dual Language Versions

Coqui y sus amigos/Coqui and His Friends. Alfonso Silva Lee (Cuban; biologist). Pangaea Publishing, Saint Paul, MN. ISBN: 9 781929 165032

Format: Paperback

Illustrations: Color photographs

Grade Level: Upper elementary, Middle School

Reading Level: 3.0 and higher.

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Rican

Premise of the Book: Introduces children to forty land and coral reef animals and their value to the ecology of Puerto Rico. Gives a brief history of the island of Puerto Rico and the arrival of plants and animals to the island.

Interesting Feature: Side by side Spanish and English text, with Spanish first.

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Fauna of Puerto Rico (Insects, Frogs, Lizards, Snakes, Birds, Bats, and Ocean dwellers)

Related Content Areas: STEM, Wildlife Conservation, Biological Science

Hurricanes/Hurricanes by Mari Schuh. Capstone Press/Pebble Bilingual Books Plus. ISBN # 978-14296-5356-5

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: color and black and white photographs

Grade Level: 1-3

Reading Level: 2.2, Lexile 450

Premise of the Book: Contains a table of contents, glossary, Internet sites, and index in both languages. Explains what a hurricane is, how and when they form, how meteorologists study hurricanes, how hurricane strength is measured, how to stay safe and how communities rebuild after hurricanes.

Themes: Hurricanes, storms, meteorology, satellites and airplanes, hurricane measurement

Related Content Areas: Earth Science (weather and atmosphere)

Mommy Tell Me About Haiti/Manmi, rakonte m Ayiti. Jeanine Agnant (Dominican). Educa Vision Inc., Pompano, FL. Illustrated by Alexandra Barbot (Haitian). ISBN 978-1584325475

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: Alexandra Barbot

Grade Level: 3-5

Reading Level: Unknown reading level, designed for grades 3-5

Featured Culture: Haitian

Premise of the book: This book describes the beauty of Haiti, and highlights some of the island's notable achievements. The story is told from a grandmother's perspective and goes into detail about the history of Haiti before and after slavery.

Interesting Feature:

Genre: Nonfiction

Themes: Memories of Haiti, land, culture, achievements

Related Content Areas: Social Studies, Geography, History

English With Some Native Language

Parrots Over Puerto Rico, Susan L. Roth and Cindy Trumbore, ISBN 978-1-62014-004-8, Lee and Low Books, New York, Collages by Susan L. Roth

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: Paper and fabric collages.

Grade Level: Primary Grades

Reading Level: 5.7; Lexile 960, GRL Q, DRA 40

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Rican

Premise of the Book: Puerto Rican parrots, once abundant in Puerto Rico, came close to extinction in the 1960s due to development and habitat destruction. In 1967 only 24 Puerto Rican Parrots survived. The book shows the work of scientists through the *Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Program* to protect, manage, and ensure the survival of an endangered species. Tells the history of Puerto Rico from 5000 BE to 2006 in relation to the survival of the Puerto Rican parrot.

Themes: Endangered Species, Wildlife Rescue and Recovery, Environment, Puerto Rican History, Life Cycle and Animal Adaptations, and Overcoming Obstacles/Perseverance.

Related Content Areas: Science (STEM-biodiversity, sustainability) and Social Studies

Awards: Winner of the Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Medal by ALA, 2014

Classroom Guide Available on Lee and Low Website, along with author/illustrator interview.

Selavi, That is Life. A Haitian Story of Hope. Youme Landowne. Cinco Puntos Press; El Paso, TX. ISBN 978-0938317845

Format: Hardcover, Paperback

Illustrations: Watercolor

Grade Level: 3-5

Reading Level: 3.5; Lexile 660, DRA: 24, GR M

Featured Culture: Haitian

Premise of the book: A true story of Sélavi, a young boy who is orphaned after his family is taken from him. He is living alone on the streets until others faced with the same reality befriend him. Together, the children survive by working and caring for each other. With hard work, they are able to construct a shelter for all to live, and start a radio station, which uses the airwaves to advocate for children in need.

Genre: Nonfiction

Themes: Social studies, character and values, survival, friendship

Related Content Area: Social Studies, Advocacy, Social Justice

Awards: 2005 Texas Bluebonnet Award

English Only

A Caribbean Journey from A to Y (Read and Discover What Happened to the Z). By Mario Picayo (Cuban, grew up in Puerto Rico), Illustrated by Earleen Griswold (Native American artist who lived a time in the Virgin Islands), ISBN 978-0972561181, New York: Campanita Press.

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: Colorful naïve art style paintings, maps

Grade Level: Elementary

Reading Level: Unknown; middle elementary grades

Featured Culture: All Caribbean Nations

Premise of the Book: This book, is organized by the letters of the alphabet with each letter explaining important facts about the Caribbean, its animals, plants and people as well as geography.

Themes: Caribbean reality from the perspective of native peoples, animals, plants, geography and geographical features of each island, famous people, foods, celebrations, music, paintings/artwork, harbors, island life, beaches and weather/climate.

Related Content Areas: Biodiversity, Social Studies (Geography, Cultures).

Life in the Sea: The Caribbean Sea, Leighton Taylor, ISBN 978-1567112443, Blackbirch Press; Features the photographs of Award-winning photographer Norbert Wu.

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: Paper and fabric collages.

Grade Level: 3-8

Reading Level: 4.6, Lexile 830

Premise of the Book: This book, written by Leighton Taylor, marine biologist, takes the students on an adventure through the Caribbean Sea. It features beautiful photographs accompanied by text showing the organisms, environments, and diversity in the sea. This book also helps students strengthen map skills and academic language. It includes an index and glossary.

Themes: life science topics of life cycles, organisms and environments, food webs, adaptation, survival, and diversity. Each title also strengthens map-reading skills, geographical literacy, and basic concepts about the earth's structure and systems.

Related Content Areas: Science (Life Science); Biodiversity, Social Studies (Geography).

A Coral Reef Food Chain: A Who-Eats-What Adventure in the Caribbean Sea (Follow that Food Chain), by Rebecca Hogue Wojahn and Donal Wojahn, Lerner Books, ISBN 978-0822576112

Format: Hardcover, kindle

Illustrations: Color photographs, illustrations, charts, graphs, maps and diagrams

Grade level: 3-6

Premise of the Book: In a game board format, choose producer primary, secondary and tertiary consumers and decomposers. Contains a table of contents, index, glossary, and websites.

Reading Level: 5.4, GRL U

Themes: Food chain, coral reef animals and plants, coral reef ecology

Related Content Areas: Life Science, Ocean Food Chains, Ecology

Puerto Rican Americans (One Nation Set 2), Nichol Bryan, ABDO Publishing Company
ISBN 978 1591975328 [See Also Dominican Americans in Same Series]

Format: e-book

Illustrations: illustrations, photographs, maps

Grade Level: Grades 3-6

Reading Level: 5.7

Featured Latino Culture: Puerto Rican

Premise of the Book: Includes many features of informational text, such as a table of contents, index, photographs, illustrations with captions and websites of interest. Provides information on the history of Puerto Rico and on the customs, language, religion, and experiences of Puerto Ricans living within the United States.

Themes: Territories, citizenship, culture, history of Puerto Rico; famous Puerto Ricans living in the US

Related Content Areas: Social Studies: History, Culture, Customs, Language and Religion; Geography

A True Book; Dominican Republic. Elaine Landua. Children's Press, New York. ISBN 10-0516211714

Format: Hardcover

Illustrations: Color Photographs

Grade Level: 3-5

Reading Level: 4.9, DRA:40, GR Q

Featured Latino Culture: Dominican

Premise of the book: A non-fiction book in which readers can find facts about the island including, history, geography, climate, and politics.

Genre: Non-fiction

Themes: Geography, climate, population

Related Content Areas: Social Studies, History, Geography