



# The Booklist Project

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Focus: Pam Muñoz Ryan  
Author Study  
Grade Span: K-8  
Developed by: Becky Bueno  
SU I 2012

# Pam Muñoz Ryan

[www.pammunozryan.com](http://www.pammunozryan.com)



Pam Muñoz Ryan is the author of more than thirty children's book and young adult novels. Born and raised in Bakersfield, California, she draws from her mixed heritage to create stories that resonate with readers of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. She lived close to both her Mexican grandmother and her Oklahoman grandmother. She recalls, "When I was with one, I often ate enchiladas, rice, and beans. When I was with the other, I ate black-eyed peas, fried okra, and peach cobbler." These influences and experiences come through in her stories. For example, *Mice and Beans*, although not autobiographical portrays a fun-loving grandmother, preparing a family feast for one of her grandchild's birthday. She was an avid reader as a child and spent many hours reading book in her local library.

She attended Washington Junior High where she became the editor of the Washington Junior Hornet newspaper. After high school she attended Bakersfield Junior College and then transferred to San Diego State University. She married and became a bilingual teacher. She taught for three years as a bilingual Head Start teacher in Escondido, California. After her four children were born, she stayed at home for twelve years and worked part time at a local pre-school.

Once her children were in school she returned to college to receive her master's degree. This is where shortly before graduating a professor encouraged her to write. As fate may have it, shortly after, a colleague asked her to help her write a book for adults. This experience was the impetus that encouraged Ryan to pursue her career as a writer. Today her breadth in writing explores cultures, women's history, multicultural experiences, racial divides, and history. Readers of all backgrounds can identify with her characters in different situations as her stories transcend time. She is the recipient of the Civil and Human Rights Awards, The Virginia Hamilton Award for Multicultural Literature and twice the recipient of the Willa Cather Literacy Award for Writing.

Today, Ryan writes full time and lives in San Diego County, California with her husband and two dogs.



1.

Ryan Muñoz P. (2000). *Esperanza Rising*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press

**ISBN: 043912042**

**Online resources:** <http://home.jps.net/~gailhd/crossing/esperanza/student.htm>

[http://thebestnotes.com/booknotes/Esperanza\\_Rising\\_Study\\_Guide/Esperanza\\_Rising\\_Book\\_Summary01.html](http://thebestnotes.com/booknotes/Esperanza_Rising_Study_Guide/Esperanza_Rising_Book_Summary01.html)

Esperanza and her family live a comfortable life in their ranch in Mexico called “*El Rancho de las Rosas*.” Her dream of one day presiding over the ranch is suddenly interrupted when unforeseen tragic events force Esperanza and her mother to flee to California during the Great Depression. They settle in a farm camp where they are forced to face hard labor, financial struggles, and lack of acceptance. Although in a different era, ELLs can relate to the topic of racial and economic divide, and acceptance that are still relevant to many immigrant families today. Interweaved into the text are words and phrases in Spanish as well as stanzas from popular songs that Spanish speakers will enjoy and connect with.

Awards: Pura Belpre Award, American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults, IRA Notable Book for a Global Society, NCSS/CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Book for Young People, Smithsonian Institution Notable Book for Children, Jane Addams Children’s Book Award Winner, Willa Cather Award Winner, Los Angeles Times Book Prize Finalist, New York Public Library 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing, Publisher Weekly Best Book of the Year 2000.

Formats available:

- Hardcover, Paperback, Audio CD
- Audio book: unabridged
- Spanish Edition: *Esperanza Renace*

Interest Level: Grade 6 -8

Grade Level Equivalent: 5.5

**WIDA: Expanding/Bridging**

Lexile® measure: 750L

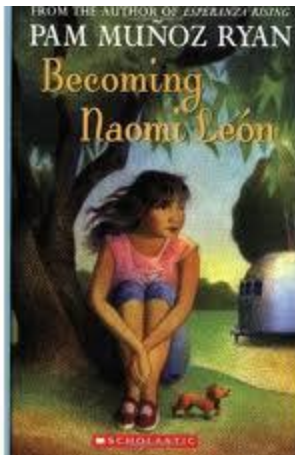
DRA: 50

Guided Reading: V

Genre: Historical Fiction

Themes/Topics:

- Great Depression
- Hispanic and Latin American
- Social Issues and Conditions
- Equality, Fairness and Justice



2.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (2004). *Becoming Naomi León*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press  
**ISBN: 0-439-26969-5**

**Online resource:** <http://naomileon.wikispaces.com/Culminating+Activities>

*Becoming Naomi León* is the heartwarming story of a young Mexican-American girl that lives with her grandmother (Gram) and her younger brother, Owen in Avocado Acres Trailer Ranch in Lemon Tree, California. Their life is peaceful until her American mother re-appears after abandoning them years earlier. The themes of change, new experiences, as well as cross cultural differences and family relations are topics that connect with language learners and children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Formats available:

Hardcover, Paperback, Audio CD

Spanish Edition: Yo, Naomi León

Kindle: Spanish ebook

Awards: ALA Notable Books for Children 2005, ALA Schneider Award, Americas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature, 2006 Pura Belpre Honor Book, Book Sense Book of the Year Honor 2005, 2004 Parent's Choice Silver Honor.

Interest Level: Grade 5 - 8

Grade Level Equivalent: 5

**WIDA: Bridging**

DRA: 50

Guided Reading: V

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Changes and New Experiences, Families and Social Structures, School Life



3.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (2010). *The Dreamer*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press

**ISBN-13: 978-0-439-26970-4 and 10: 0-439-26970-9**

**Online resource:** <http://www.poemhunter.com/pablo-neruda/>

This story tells the inspirational journey of the shy and oppressed young Chilean boy, whom with imagination, inner strength, and perseverance becomes one of the most widely read poets in the world, Pablo Neruda. Ryan combines biography, poetry and literary fiction to narrate this beautiful story of self-discovery and triumph. This is a great story to inspire ELL's and children of all ages to follow their dreams and never allow outside forces to negate their true calling.

Available formats:

Hardcover, Paperback, Audible Audio Edition

Spanish Edition: El Soñador

Interest Level: Grade 6 - Grade 8

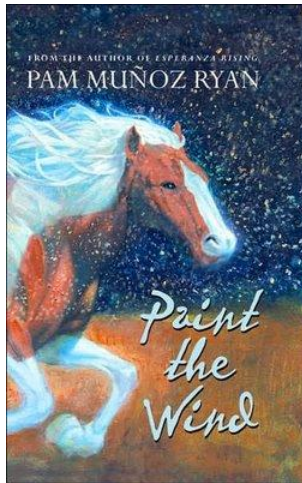
**WIDA LEVEL: Expanding**

Grade Level Equivalent: 3.7

Lexile® measure: 650L

Genre: Biography; Historical Fiction; Poetry

Themes: Creativity and imagination; Shyness; Cleverness



4.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (2007). *Paint the Wind*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press

**ISBN: 13: 978-0-439-0-439-87362-8**

*Paint the Wind* is an epic story about the journey of a sheltered girl and a wild horse. Maya lives like a captive. At Grandmother's house in California, everything is forbidden: friends, fun, even memories. And her life is built on lies: lies Grandmother tells her about her dead mother, lies Maya tells to impress or manipulate. But then she moves to the vast Wyoming wilderness where her mother's family awaits – kind, rugged people who have no tolerance for lies. They challenge Maya to confront the truth about who she is. And a mysterious mustang called Artemisia waits, too. She holds the key to Maya's freedom. But to find it, Maya will have to risk everything, including her life. This story is relevant to ELL's and multicultural audiences for its themes of perseverance and life changes that at times may not be welcomed or expected.

Available formats:

Hardcover, Paperback,

Audio CD, Audiobook, Audible Audio Edition: Unabridged

Spanish Edition: *Pinta el Viento*.

Interest Level: Grades 4- 6

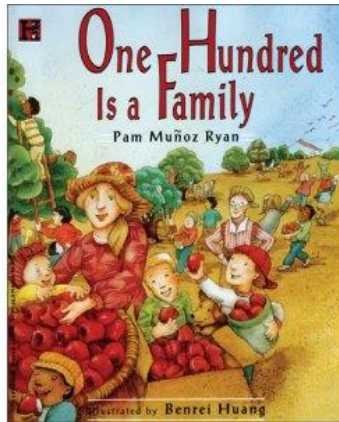
Grade Level Equivalent: 4.5

**WIDA Level: Expanding/Bridging**

Lexile® measure: 780L

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Grandparents, Animal Stories: Horses



5.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (1994). *One Hundred is a Family*, New York, NY: Hyperion Books for Children.

**ISBN: 1-56282-672-7**

In *One Hundred is a Family*, Ryan introduces young readers to counting from 1 to ten and then counts by tens until 100 using multiethnic representations of family. Each illustration shows how community members work together harmoniously and contribute to make the world a better place. The rhyming pattern and multicultural representations are beneficial to language learners and students with non-conventional family settings.

Available Formats:

Hardcover, Paperback, Board Books

Interest Level: Grades K-2

Grade Level: 1

**WIDA Level: Beginning**

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Family and Community



6.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (2001). *Mice and Beans*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press  
**ISBN: 0-439-18303-0**

This is a whimsical and funny story about Rosa Maria, a fun loving grandmother that decides to celebrate her youngest grandchild's birthday with a huge feast. She sets out to gather important items, such as, her wooden spoon, her big *bolsa*, for grocery shopping, but everything is disappearing; even her mousetraps!! Filled with clues, readers will have fun uncovering the truth. This book has many print styles, phrases in Spanish with English translation, dialogue and text features that will engage language learners. In addition, the topic of large family gatherings and celebrations will help children make connections and share their own families and traditions.

Available Formats:

- Hardcover and paperback
- Spanish Edition: Arróz con Frijóles y unos Amables Ratones

Interest Level: Pre K - Grade 2

Grade Level Equivalent: 2.7

**WIDA Level: Developing**

Lexile® measure: 440L

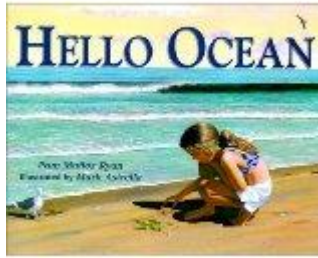
DRA: 28

Guided Reading: L

Genre: Fiction: Comedy and Humor

Theme: Multicultural, Family, Extended Families,





7.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (2001). *Hello Ocean*, Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge Publishers

**ISBN: 13:978—0-88106-987**

**10:0-88106-987-6**

**Online Resource:** [http://www.homeschoolshare.com/hello\\_ocean\\_lapbook.php](http://www.homeschoolshare.com/hello_ocean_lapbook.php)

In this colorful book, a child uses her five senses to describe her visit to the ocean. The use of rhythmic patterns and vivid illustrations are engaging. Each page corresponds to the text in meaning as well as colors and actions. This will allow language learners to access meaning. The text is also a good springboard to teach language learners how to use adjectives, descriptive, and figurative language as well as vocabulary and word choice for writing.

Formats available:

- Hardcover and paperback

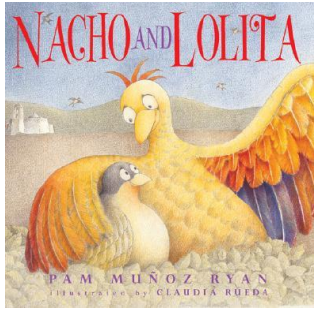
Interest Level: Kindergarten - Grade 2

Grade Level Equivalent: 3.1

**WIDA Level: High Developing/Expanding**

Genre: Realistic Fiction/Poetry

Themes: Ocean, Senses, Family



8.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (2006). *Nacho and Lolita*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press

**ISBN: 10: 0439837839/13: 978-0439837835**

**Online resource:** [http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/clas/outreach/k-12/clas\\_lessons/story-nacho\\_and\\_lolita.pdf](http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/clas/outreach/k-12/clas_lessons/story-nacho_and_lolita.pdf)

This is a heartwarming story of friendship and the acceptance of cultural differences. Using personification, Ryan creates the story of Nacho, a proud and majestic pitacoche, a brilliantly feathered bird with “haunting songs”. One day the swallows come to nest and Nacho meets Lolita. Could two different birds find lasting love and friendship? What will happen when the swallow (and Lolita) migrate back to South America? The topics of theme, acceptance, cultural/social differences, and friendship are appealing to all students, but especially to language and culturally diverse learners whose families are often divided and far from one another.

Awards:

Child Magazine best book of the year

Available formats:

- Hardcover and paperback

Interest Level: Grade 3 - Grade 5

Grade Level Equivalent: 4.8

**WIDA Level: Developing/Expanding**

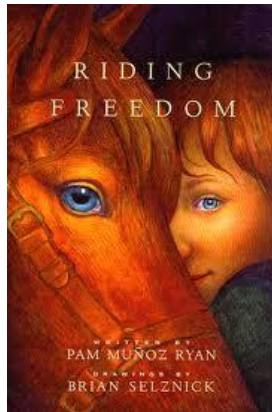
Lexile® measure: 810L

DRA: 40

Guided Reading: Q

Genre: Fiction

Themes: Friendship, acceptance, cultural differences



9.

Ryan Muñoz, P. (1998). *Riding Freedom*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press.

**[ISBN: 0-439-08796-1]**

*Riding Freedom* is the fascinating story of Charlotte Parkhurst who fulfilled her dream of training and working with horses and ultimately owning her own horse ranch in California in the mid 1800's. The only problem is that in order for her to live her dream she must live her life as a man. In her journey she sacrifices many things including having her own family. Charlotte represents the courage, determination, and will needed at a time when Women's Rights were part of a future few could imagine. Although this story does not have multicultural elements, readers of all ages and cultures will identify with this inspiring true story because it demonstrates the need we all have to live fulfilling lives and belong to a community. This is also a good introduction to history and geography as Charlotte travels across the country in her incredible journey.

Available formats:

- Library binding and paperback
- Audio CD and audible audio edition: unabridged
- Spanish edition: Un Caballo Llamado Libertad

Interest Level: Grade 3 - Grade 6

Grade Level Equivalent: 4.8

**WIDA Level: Expanding/Bridging**

Lexile® measure: 720L

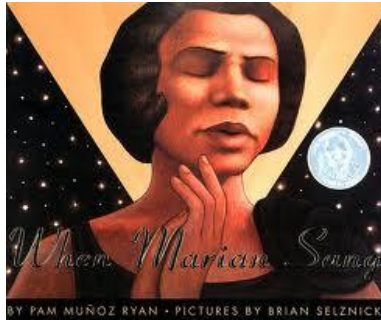
DRA: 38

Guided Reading: P

Genre: Historical Fiction/Biography

Themes/Topics: Westward expansion, women's rights, women's history, courage and honor, and overcoming obstacles.

10.



Ryan Muñoz, P. (2002). *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson*, New York, NY: Scholastic Press.

**ISBN: 10: 0439269679 / 0-439-26967-9**

Online resources: <http://www.mariananderson.org/>

<http://www.liveoakmedia.com/client/guides/29486.pdf>

<http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit292/lesson1.html>

This inspiring picture book tells the journey of the singing career of Marian Anderson. This beloved contra-alto faced prejudice, discrimination, and rejection in the 1930's. With fierce determination she accepts an invitation to sing at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial for an integrated crowd of over 75,000 people during the pre Civil Rights era. The chronological sequence of her life journey, as well as, the illustrations provide the reader a unique glimpse into the magnitude of Anderson's accomplishments and how she faced it all with dignity and grace. Marian's story is a great example of the struggles and adversities African American endured and how their accomplishments and pluck have paved the way for other cultural groups and minorities.

Available formats:

- Hardcover and paperback student edition
- Audio CD

Interest Level: Grade 3 – Grade 5

Grade Level Equivalent: 3.9

**WIDA Level: Developing/Expanding**

Lexile® measure: 780L

DRA: 34-38

Genre: Biography/Picture Book

Themes: African American History, Civil Rights Movement, and Women's History

## Resources

Colorín Colorado: <http://www.colorincolorado.org/index.php?langswitch=en> (visited June 18, 2012)

### **Images: (retrieved: June 1-15, 2012 from world-wide-web)**

<http://www.amazon.com>

ISBN and cover images

[http://thebestnotes.com/booknotes/Esperanza\\_Rising\\_Study\\_Guide/Esperanza\\_Rising\\_Book\\_Summary05.html](http://thebestnotes.com/booknotes/Esperanza_Rising_Study_Guide/Esperanza_Rising_Book_Summary05.html)

Pam Muñoz Ryan Image

### **Books and Author's information: (retrieved: June 1-15, 2012, from world-wide-web)**

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/contributor/pam-munoz-ryan-1>

Author Visit from Scholastic

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collection/pam-mu%C3%B1oz-ryan-author-study>

Author study from Scholastic

<http://www.pammunozryan.com/>

Pam Muñoz Ryan official website

<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/video.jsp?pID=1640183585&bcpid=1640183585&bclid=1683701961&bctid=1688353619>

Video interview from Scholastic website

### **Online Book Resources: (retrieved June 22, 2012 from world wide web)**

#### ***Becoming Naomi León:***

<http://naomileon.wikispaces.com/Culminating+Activities>

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans/bookfairs/currconnection/naomi\\_leon.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonplans/bookfairs/currconnection/naomi_leon.htm)

Lesson plans and extension activities

#### ***The Dreamer:***

[http://www.commonbook.rctc.project.mnscu.edu/index.asp?Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC=%7BDA952F01-A892-4068-989E-C2B0176D0609%7D](http://www.commonbook.rctc.project.mnscu.edu/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7BDA952F01-A892-4068-989E-C2B0176D0609%7D)

<http://www.poemhunter.com/pablo-neruda/>

Pablo Neruda information

#### ***Esperanza Rising:***

<http://home.jps.net/~gailhd/crossing/esperanza/student.htm>

[http://thebestnotes.com/booknotes/Esperanza\\_Rising\\_Study\\_Guide/Esperanza\\_Rising\\_Book\\_Summary01.html](http://thebestnotes.com/booknotes/Esperanza_Rising_Study_Guide/Esperanza_Rising_Book_Summary01.html)

Extension activities

***Hello Ocean***

[http://www.homeschoolshare.com/hello\\_ocean\\_lapbook.php](http://www.homeschoolshare.com/hello_ocean_lapbook.php)

Extension activities

***Nacho and Lolita***

[http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/clas/outreach/k-12/clas\\_lessons/story-nacho\\_and\\_lolita.pdf](http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/clas/outreach/k-12/clas_lessons/story-nacho_and_lolita.pdf)

Lesson Plans and online resources

***When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson***

<http://www.liveoakmedia.com/client/guides/29486.pdf>

Activity Guide

<http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit292/lesson1.html>

Lesson Plan

REACH. INSPIRE. CONNECT.



## The Booklist Project

A Project of the  
M.Ed. In TESL Program,



Feinstein School of Education and Human  
Development  
Rhode Island College

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