



# The Booklist Project

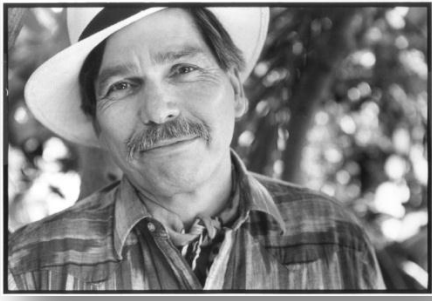


Focus: Culturally Responsive Author Study Book List

Victor Villaseñor

Developed by: Danielle Smith

Fall, 2012



“We are all one race. The human race.”

-Victor Villaseñor

## Introduction

Victor Villaseñor was born in Carlsbad, California in 1940. Victor Villaseñor grew up on a ranch with his Mexican family and spoke only Spanish when he entered school. Victor and his family faced many cultural obstacles throughout their lives. Victor struggled with second language development and immense discrimination, which ultimately forced him to drop out of high school. Villaseñor then transferred his life back to Mexico where he discovered his Mexican roots. He indulged himself into Mexican Literature, Music and art to assist him rediscover and appreciate his heritage.

Victor returned to the United States at the age of 20. He continually struggled with the constant discrimination to the Mexican culture. Finally, Villaseñor made the decision to use his inner thoughts and distaste for cultural disrespect in his creation of literature. Over time, Villaseñor produced 9 novels and 65 short stories and publishers constantly turned him down. After about 265 rejections, he finally sold his first novel, “Macho!” The publication of his first novel undoubtedly began his journey of popular and award winning publications.

Not only is Victor Villaseñor a gifted author but he is an acclaimed and powerful speaker. His inspirational lectures have earned him several awards and recognitions, including the Founding John Steinbeck Chair appointment. Villaseñor is dedicated to promoting world peace and harmony. He is the founder of a nonprofit organization called *Snow Goose Global Thanksgiving*, and he continues to spread the belief that “We are all one race. The human race!”

The following booklist contains a variety of fiction and nonfiction works by Victor Villaseñor. The components of this book list can be applied in classrooms of English Language Learners. The audience of this book list is primarily targeted to the secondary ELL population. Victor Villaseñor's Pulitzer Prize winning literature contains a variety of fiction and nonfiction, short stories, memoirs, and picture books. Villaseñor's literature concentrates on cultural identity of Mexican-American members of society and obstacles faced throughout immigration.

### **Supplementary Resources**

- Victor Villasenor's official web site:

<http://victorvillasenor.com/about/>

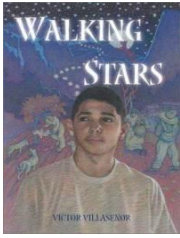
- Interview with Victor Villasenor:

<http://victorvillasenor.com/2011/04/american-latino-tv-interviews-victor/>

- Book talk/interview with Victor Villasenor:

<http://ccdlib.claremont.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/cmt/id/320/rec/2>

## Book List



Villaseñor, V. (1994). *Walking stars*. Carmel, CA: Hampton Brown.  
[ISBN-13:978-0-7362-3136-7]

**Interest Level:** Ages 13-17

**Grade Level:** 5.6

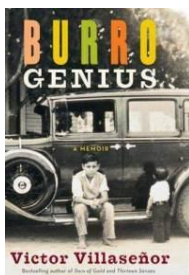
**WIDA Level:** Developing/Expanding

**Cultural Focus:** Latino

**Summary:** In *Walking Stars*, Victor Villaseñor tells the magical tales of his childhood. Throughout each short story, Villaseñor expresses cultural obstacles and struggles that he and his family experienced. This series of short stories takes place during the time of the Mexican Revolution while Victor and his family migrate to the United States. Villaseñor incorporates the generational tales that have been passed down from generation to generation in order to uphold a positive motivation to reach success. The topics and themes that are discussed in the short stories allow for the ELL population to use academic language to discuss their own personal experiences.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, E-Book

**Addition Resources:** <http://etls.dpsk12.org/documents/Alma/units/StudyGuideWalkingStars.pdf>



Villaseñor, V. (2004). *burro genius; a memoir*. New York: Rayo.  
[ISBN-13: 978-0060526122]

**Interest Level:** Ages 15-17

**Grade Level:** 7.9

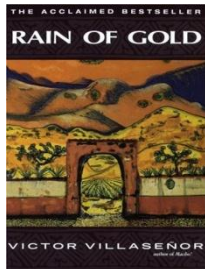
**WIDA Level** Expanding

**Central Focus** Latino

**Summary:** In *Burro Genius: A Memoir*, Victor Villaseñor gives an exceptional insight to his audience. This is a personal story of the trials Villaseñor faced as an English Language Learner with a learning disability in an American, “English Only” school. Villaseñor tells about his experiences as a Mexican-American student yearning for acceptance and creativity. This memoir

allows for all English Learners to feel safe in a new educational setting and culture. Allowing the students to read about other successful English Learners ultimately lowers the affective filter and support second (or third) language acquisition.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, E-Book



Villaseñor, V. (1992). *A rain of gold*. (1st ed.). New York: Dell Publishing.

[ISBN-13: 978-0385311779]

**Interest Level:** Ages 15-17

**Grade Level:** 5.6

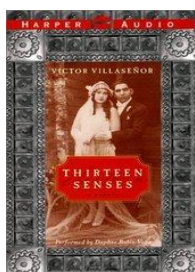
**WIDA Level:** Developing/Expanding

**Central Focus** Latino

**Summary:** In *Rain of Gold*, *Lluvia de Oro*, Victor Villaseñor tells a story of two very different families from two different countries and cultures. Villaseñor is able to blend the stories and tales that have been passed down from generation to generation. In *Rain of Gold*, Victor Villaseñor articulates the true cultural issues that Mexican-Americans faced on a daily basis during the migration period and ultimately brings his mother's family back together. This collection of stories is great for ELL students who have knowledge of folk tales and generational tales. This bi-lingual story can facilitate English learning by providing support in both English and Spanish.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, E-Book

**Additional Resources:** <http://www.perma-bound.com/ViewDetail/380978-rain-of-gold-teachers-guide>



Villaseñor, V. (2001). *Thirteen senses*. (1st ed.). New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers Inc.

[ISBN-13: 978-0060935672]

**Interest Level:** Ages 15-17

**Grade Level:** 5.3

**WIDA Level:** Developing/Expanding

**Central Focus** Latino

**Summary:** In *Thirteen Senses*, Victor Villaseñor continues the family narrative from *A Rain of Gold*. This sequel tells the continuous story of love, hope, and family adventure. This memoir begins with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of an old married couple. When the priest asks the couple to repeat their vows, Lupe, rejects her husband and causes the Villaseñor family to re-evaluate the love that has been holding the family together for so long. This bilingual story is great for Spanish speaking ELLs and gears itself toward higher proficiency learners.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, E-Book, audio, cassette, abridged, audiobook.

**Additional Resources:** [www.mexico-insights.com/judysblog/?tag=/victor+villasenor](http://www.mexico-insights.com/judysblog/?tag=/victor+villasenor)



**Villasenor, V. (1996). *Wild steps of heaven*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press; Bantam Double Dell Publishing Group, Inc.**

**[ISBN-13: 978-0385315692]**

**Interest Level:** Ages 15-17

**Grade Level:** 10.1

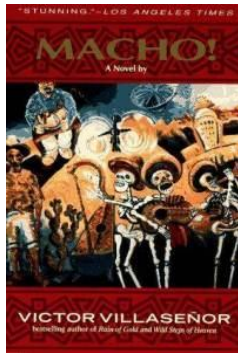
**WIDA Level:** Expanding/Bridging

**Central Focus** Latino/Indian

**Summary:** In the prequel of *Rain of Gold*, *Wild Steps of Heaven*, Victor Villaseñor breathes life into his father's family, and in particular, the Villaseñor women. The setting of the story is around the year of 1910 during the Mexican Revolution and puts clear focus on a character named Margarita. Margarita is the Indian matriarch who guards her family and expresses unconditional love in order to overcome enemies. This story is great for high proficiency learners who come from a mixed background of Spanish and Native American.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, MP3, CD, Audio book, unabridged, E-Book.

**Additional Resources:** <http://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/3324299>



**Villasenor, V. (1984). *Macho!*. Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press:**

**University of Houston**

**[ISBN-13: 978-0385311182]**

**Interest Level:** Ages 15-17

**Grade Level:** 4.9

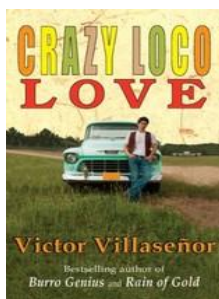
**WIDA Level:** Developing

**Central Focus** Latino

**Summary:** *Macho!* is a novel that reflects on the spiritual, economic, and social issues and struggles of a 17 year old Mexican boy. Roberto Garcia illegally travels from Michoacan, Mexico to the United States. This novel has been compared to the best of John Steinbeck. The theme of this novel is appropriate for ELLs who have personally experienced immigration as a teen. The theme of dealing with cultural identity is constantly portrayed throughout this novel and most of Villasenor's work.

**Available Formats:** paperback, school binding, E-Book, audio, cassette.

**Additional Resources:** <http://www.enotes.com/macho-salem/macho-0209303230>



**Villasenor, V. (2004). *Crazy loco love*. Houston, TX: Arte Publico**

**Press: University of Houston.**

**[ISBN-13: 978-1558853157]**

**Interest Level:** Ages 15-17

**Grade Level:** 6.4

**WIDA Level:** Developing/Expanding

**Central Focus** Latino

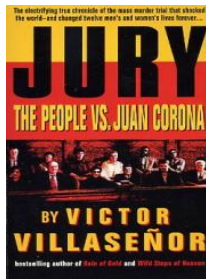
**Summary:** In *Crazy LoCo Love*, Victor Villasenor tells his personal memoir regarding the struggles and stereotypes of the Latino population. He continues to weaken the “macho” personality that most Latino men and perceived as and continues to express his sensitivity and

vulnerabilities. This book is not only appropriate for ELLs who are constantly searching for their identity but for all teens who are trying to rise above and become responsible members of society. Villasenor offers us a memoir that allows (ELL) teachers to open up conversations regarding the theme of cultural, spiritual and social identity.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, E-Books.

**Additional Resources:**

[http://www.latinoteca.com/search?sort\\_order=reverse&b\\_start:int=380&sort\\_on=Date&Creator=arhess](http://www.latinoteca.com/search?sort_order=reverse&b_start:int=380&sort_on=Date&Creator=arhess)



**Victor , V. (1977). *Jury: The people vs. juan corona*. Canada: Little, Brown and Company Limited.**

**[ISBN 13: 978-0316903004]**

**Interest Level:** Ages 16-17

**Grade Level:** 12.4

**WIDA Level:** Bridging/Reaching

**Central Focus** Latino

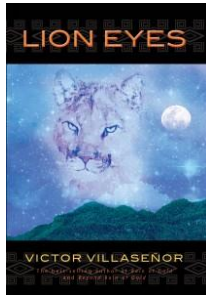
**Summary:** The documentary, *Jury: The People vs. Juan Corona* is a hour by hour breakdown of the shocking truth behind the doors of the trial between the people and John Corona. Throughout this documentary, the audience takes a look behind closed doors that faced the verdict from the jury. Due to the high complexity of language in this documentary, the ELL student would need to be highly proficient. Like many of Victor Villasenor's works, this documentary lends itself toward the issue and theme of cultural identity.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, cassette, audio book, E-Book.



**Additional Resources:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan\\_Corona](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan_Corona)

<http://maamodt.asp.radford.edu/Psyc%20405/serial%20killers/Corona%20Juan%20-%20fall%2020051.pdf>



**Villasenor, V. (2012).** *Lion eyes*. New York, NY: **Publisher: Hay House, Inc.**

**[ISBN-13: 978-1401932008]**

**Interest Level:** Ages 14-17

**Grade Level:** 12.4

**WIDA Level:** Developing/Expanding

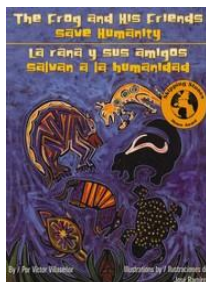
**Central Focus** Latino/Native

**Summary:** *Lion Eyes* is an exciting tales based on the American Indian beliefs that one really doesn't know who he/she is until one meets his/her totem. In this thrilling tales, Jan Milburn actually comes face to face with his totem and virtually "changes." Jan takes a spiritual route in his life and becomes the youngest minister ever known in California. Although, this book is focused mostly around the American Indian culture, the theme of cultural and social identity can be used throughout ELL classrooms and with all populations and cultures.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, E-Book

**Additional Resources:** <http://oclatinolink.ocregister.com/tag/victor-villasenor/>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vev2I0x06c&safe=active>



**Villasenor, V. (2005).** *Frog and his friends save humanity*(La Rana y Sus Amigos Salvan a la Humanidad) Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press: University of Houston.

**[ISBN-13: 9781558854291]**

**Interest Level:** Ages 12-16

**Grade Level:** 6-10

**WIDA Level:** Emerging

**Central Focus:** Latino

**Summary:** In the picture book, *Frog and His Friends Save Humanity/La Rana y Sus Amigos Salvan a la Humanidad*, irony is used to create a sense of humor. This picture book can be used to discuss the theme of irony and unity with all ELL students. Although this book is a picture book, high school students will enjoy reading this book and enjoying reading. This bilingual picture book provides a support for the Latino ELLs because of the use of their first language, however, the ironic humor and unity themes are beneficial for all.

**Available Formats:** Hardcover, paperback, E-Book.

**Additional Resources:** [http://www.teachersdomain.org/resource/tdc02.sci.life.cyc.lp\\_lifecycle/](http://www.teachersdomain.org/resource/tdc02.sci.life.cyc.lp_lifecycle/)

<http://www.papertigers.org/reviews/USA/papertigers/TheFrogAndHisFriends.html>

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## The Booklist Project

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



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