



# The Booklist Project



Focus: Culturally-Responsive Author Study  
Booklist

Alma Flor Ada

Developed by: Catarina Anselmo

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## **Alma Flor Ada- Author Study Book List**

### **Grade-Level: PreK-2**

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Alma Flor Ada was born in Camagüey, Cuba, in an old house in the outskirts of a town which the neighbors believed was haunted. After studying English and attending bilingual schools, at seventeen-years old she earned a scholarship to attend college in the United States. Her career as an author first began when she started developing text books for her high school students in Peru. She is the director of the Center for Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults at the University of San Francisco. She teaches and lectures internationally and guides research of doctoral students. She has provided in-service education and classroom demonstrations, and visited schools as an author. She is a widely published author, her books for children and young adults have received numerous awards, including the Christopher Medal (for *The Gold Coin*) and the American Library Association Pura Belpré Award (for *Under the Royal Palms*).

Ada, A. F. (1997). *The Christmas tree: El árbol de Navidad*. New York: Hyperion Book for Children. [ISBN 0-7868-2123-X]

The book tells the story about a family and how they prepare their Christmas tree in rhyme form. Each member of the family has a specific job that they do to make this holiday tradition

special. This book would connect well with ELLs because the students can relate to this tradition within their own family.

WIDA Level: Beginning

Book is available in print as a bilingual version.

Different, yet the same Thematic Unit:

<http://www.cedu.niu.edu/~carger/culture/casutt.html>

Ada, A. F. (1997). *Gathering the sun*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books.

[ISBN 0-688-13904-3]

The book takes the reader into the fields and orchards, and introduces the lives of the people who work them. It is an alphabet book in Spanish and English that introduces vocabulary related to the topic. The illustrations are so realistic that you can even see the sun over the pictures. This book is relevant for ELLs because it introduces the students to vocabulary that is specific to people who work in the fields. Many students might have even come from a similar native country where they had to do some of the tasks that the workers do.

WIDA Level: Expanding

Book is available in print as a bilingual version.

Ada, A. F. (1994). *The gold coin*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's

Publishing. [ISBN 0-689-71793-8]

The book is about a young thief who is determined to steal an old woman's gold coin. However, the young boy finds himself involved in a series of unexpected situations. This book would

connect well with ELLs because it teaches a moral and has the bilingual text next to the English that would help the students understand the theme.

WIDA Level: Bridging/Reaching

Book is available in print as a bilingual and native language version. Also, as a bilingual storytelling CD-ROM.

Ada, A. F. (2004). *I love Saturdays y domingos*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. [ISBN 978-0-689-87409-3]

Saturdays and Sundays are very special days for the little girl in this story. On Saturdays, she visits Grandma and Grandpa, who come from a European-American background, and on Sundays, *los domingos* she visits *Abuelito y Abuelita*, who are Mexican-American. While the two sets of grandparents are different in many ways, they also have a great deal in common in particular, their love for their granddaughter. The book would connect well with ELLs because there are Spanish words in the text and many students may be in a similar situation like the main character.

WIDA Level: High Beginner

Book is available in print in English, native language, and as a video for program Beyond the Page.

Ada, A. F. (1996). *Jordi's star*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons. [ISBN 0-399-22832-2]

Jordi is a man who lives alone on a barren, rocky hillside. Every day he chases his small herd of goats over the hills. But suddenly one day his life changes after a horrible thunderstorm and he finds an unusual friend. He never had a friend and is scared that she won't enjoy his difficult lifestyle. So he tries to gather the beauty of the mountainside to bring to her. However, he

realizes for himself that he does not have to live a lonely life anymore because there are so many beautiful things to discover. This book would connect well with ELLs because the setting may be similar to their native country and students would be able to relate the main character and how he feels.

WIDA Level: Developing

Book is available in print and as an English storytelling CD-ROM. Digital copy also available at International Children's Digital Library.

Ada, A. F. (1997). *The lizard and the sun: La lagartija y el sol*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc. [ISBN 0-385-32121-X]

A folktale in English and Spanish set a long time ago in ancient Mexico when the sun disappeared. Everything was dark, and the people were scared. The animals searched for the sun but the sun was nowhere to be found, so the animals stopped searching for the sun. However, the lizard did not want to give up so he kept searching until at last he found the sun and brought back the light with some help from the emperor and a woodpecker. The book is relevant because it is a bilingual folktale that takes place in Mexico. I also used this book when I was teaching different types of energy in science to bilingual students for students to understand solar energy.

WIDA Level: Developing

Book is available in print as a bilingual version.

Ada, A. F. (2003). *Pío peep!* New York: Harper Collins Publishers.  
[ISBN 978-0-688-16019-7]

A collection of bilingual nursery rhymes that celebrates childhood and Latin American heritage. From playing dress up to making *tortillas*. These are the type of rhymes that are passed down from generation to generation. This book is relevant because students can pick out the bilingual words that they hear at home and the beautiful illustrations help students to understand the rhyme, even if they are reading it for the first time. They may also know the rhymes from home literacy experiences.

WIDA Level: High Beginner

Book is available in print as a bilingual version, native language, and Spanish CD-ROM.

Ada, A. F. (2002). *The quetzal's journey*. USA: Santillana Publishing Co. Inc.

[ISBN 978-1-581-05963-2]

This book takes the reader on a journey from the Amazon rainforest to the Atacama desert through the eyes of a quetzal. Contains land features, animals, and the people of South America. This book is relevant for ELLs because it teaches about South America and students can make a connection to certain animals, etc that they have seen before in their native country.

WIDA Level: Expanding.

Book is available in print in English and native language. Part of the *Gateways to the Sun* series.

Online resource with literature resources website:

[http://www.santillanausa.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=1\\_256](http://www.santillanausa.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=1_256)

Ada, A. F. (1999). *Three golden oranges*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's

Publishing. [ISBN 978-0-689-80775-6]

Far on the other side of the mountains, next to an enchanted castle, grows a tree with three golden oranges. It is there that three brothers Santiago, Tomás, and Matías must journey if they wish to find a wife. Once they reach their destination, the brothers must carefully pick the oranges and bring them back to the old woman who lives in a cave on the cliffs overlooking the sea. But the brothers must work together even though each brother is looking for a different type of wife. This book would connect well with ELLs because the setting may be familiar to students and the names of the brothers are Spanish.

WIDA Level: Expanding/Bridging

Book is available in print in English.

Ada, A. F. (2004). *With love, Little Red Hen*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing. [ISBN 978-0-689-87061-3]

Hidden Forest has a new resident. Little Red Hen and her seven little chicks have moved into a cottage and plan to grow a crop of corn in a nearby field. However, none of the neighbors are willing to help. Goldilocks comes up with an idea for everyone to help in the garden. The book is told through letters from the different characters. This book would be good for ELLs because, even if students did not know about the fairytale characters, this is a great way to introduce and give that background information.

WIDA Level: Developing

Book is available in print in English.

Lesson plan using 6 Trait Writing lesson:

<http://ab.mec.edu/curriculum/traitspdfs/APS6TraitBestPractices.pdf>

Great teacher resources:

Ada, A. F. (2003). *A magical encounter: Latino children's literature in the classroom*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Official Author website: [www.almaflorada.com](http://www.almaflorada.com)

Has a link to an interview with Colorín Colorado. <http://www.colorincolorado.org/read/meet/ada>

The Alma Curriculum and Teacher Training Project:

<http://almaproject.dpsk12.org/units/pdfs/AlmaFlorAdaAnAuthorStudy.pdf>

Author study unit using several texts:

[http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/Planning\\_guides/Literacy/3/3\\_7\\_author\\_study\\_lit\\_response\\_reading\\_lessons\\_ada.pdf](http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/Planning_guides/Literacy/3/3_7_author_study_lit_response_reading_lessons_ada.pdf)

Teaching audience through interactive writing using Alma Flor Ada's books:

[http://198.104.156.44/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=242](http://198.104.156.44/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=242)

REACH. INSPIRE. CONNECT.

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# The Booklist Project

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



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