



The Booklist Project



Focus: Culture-Specific Booklist

Cuban Culture

Developed by: Jean Civil

Fall, 2011

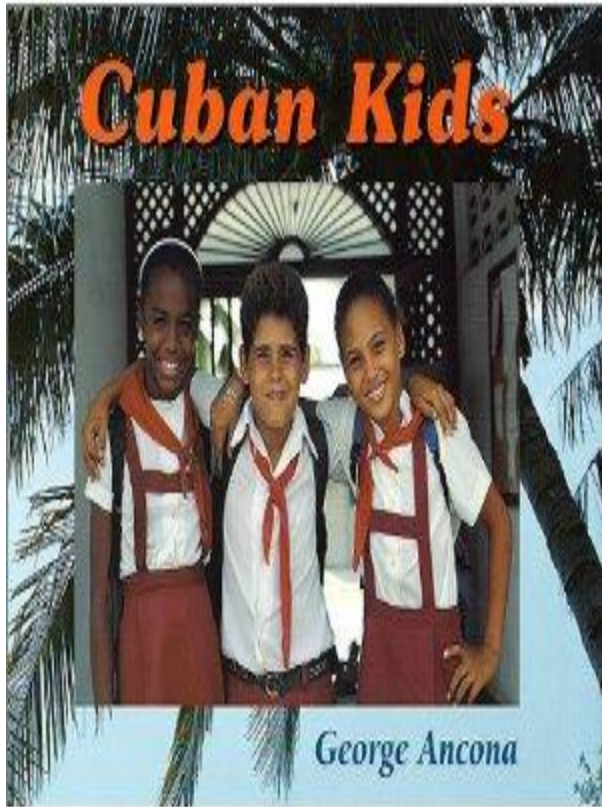
Jean Ocelin Civil Booklist

Cuban Authors

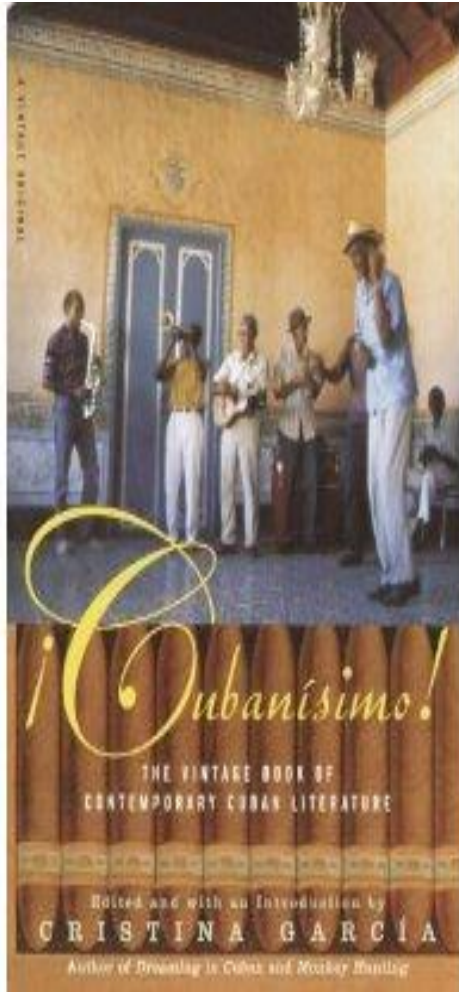
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- Gonzalez, C. D. (2010). The Red Umbrella, Florida : Knopf Books for Young Readers. ISBN-13: 978-0375861901
- **Reading level:** 5
- **Proficiency level:** HIGH OR LOW Intermediate Adult ESL
- This book is very important because Adult ESL students will be able to connect with main idea.
- The book reflects the paradox of happiness. Christina Diaz Gonzalez manages to weave intense dramatic scenes with bits of humor. Cuban ESL students will be captivated by the author's wonderful descriptions of the characters and beautiful way of making them feel like they instantly know and care about them. "Living through" the revolution through the eyes of the young Lucia will truly takes ESL students on a journey from the carefree innocence of childhood to the increasingly complicated life of a young Adults. It is a very real part of American and Cuban history to life!
- The Red Umbrella is a great book, the Cuban ESL students will identify themselves with Lucia. They will be able to use context clue to determine the meaning of words. Christina has a fantastic way of making readers visualize where the story takes place and makes them think they are physically there.
<http://www.amazon.com/Red-Umbrella-Christina-Gonzalez/dp/0375861904>
- <http://www.christinagonzalez.com>



- Ancona G. (2000). Cuban Kids, New York: Marshall Cavendish Children's Books. ISBN-13: 978-0761450771
- Reading level= 4.3
- Proficiency level: Low and high beginning ESL
- Language: English
- Cuban Kids by George Ancona provides Adults ESL students with information about Cuba and its residents. Ancona, a photographer, fills the pages with bright and colorful photographs that enhance the ESL students' understanding. ESL student will be able to locate object and select language patterns associated with facts.
- In this book adult ESL students will see Cuban children and their families in rural and urban settings . Low beginning adult student will be able to associate pictures with text, to use illustrations and print.
- ESL students will read this book to inquire about Cuban realities: Celebrations, school, doctor's office, farm work, sports, making music, and dance. Beginning ESL adult will be informed by the text; they will learn that education is free, even for university. Youngsters dressed in their school uniforms are depicted reading and writing in rustic classrooms. The photos also reflect a close-knit home life; the children are shown laughing and playing with makeshift sports equipment. The text alone suggests a life with few problems. The photos add balance, showing some of the challenges that the Cuban people face.
- This book will help ESL Adult student to see children at work and play, emphasizing the love and pride they have in their country. Many of their activities will be familiar: Cuban kids love playing baseball, blowing out candles on birthday cakes, and listening to stories, with a few variations, of course. The well-written text also touches on the impact of communism, Castro, and other important names like Che Guevara and Jose Marti. A very fine portrait of modern Cuba.
- <http://www.amazon.com/Cuban-Kids-George-Ancona/dp/0761450777>.
- Available at: RWU CMC [CMC F1788 .A745 2000](#)
- <http://www.georgeancona.com>



- Garcia C. (2003) Cubanissimo! The Vintage Book of Contemporary Cuban Literature, California: Vintage ISBN: 0-385-72137-4
- Reading level= 8
- Proficiency level= Proficient skills ESL
- Language: English
- ESL adult student will be able to learn to gather stories by means of this book because it is the first book to gather Cuban stories, essays, poems and novel excerpts
- Adult ESL be able to draw conclusions and broaden their views of Cuban life that goes beyond Cuba. They will be able to see Cuba from the turn of the century to the present, from Havana to Miami, New York, Mexico City, Madrid and beyond, the spirit and diversity of Cuban culture converge in one vibrant literary jam session.
- By reading this book, ESL students will be able to criss-cross, to keep their essence and acquire a new identity without crystallization etc.
- <http://www.amazon.com/Cubanissimo-Vintage-Contemporary-Cuban-Literature/dp/product-description/0385721374>
- Wheaton Stacks [PQ7383.5.E5 C83 2003](#)



- Deedy C. A. (2007) *Martina the Beautiful Cockroach*, Georgia: Peachtree Publishers ISBN-13: 978-1561453993
- Reading level = 3,1
- Proficiency level =Low intermediate High Beginner
- Language: English
- “Martina the Beautiful Cockroach” by Carmen Agra Deedy and illustrated by Michael Austin is a wonderful book for beginning ESL Adults or anyone who enjoys good children's literature. Beginning adults will enjoy the story because it is amazing, cute, and interesting .
- The Cuban ESL students will enjoy the Martina Josefina Catalina Cucaracha’s story who has just turned 21 and is now ready to be married. There are many potential candidates that Martina must meet and deal with before she becomes enchanted and head over heels for a particular suitor. Along the way Martina meets Don Gallo, Don Cerdo, Don Lagarto and a tiny brown mouse. Her abuela, her Cuban grandmother; a wise lady gives Martina the key to success for choosing the best potential husband. Martina then follows her abuela’s instructions and advice and sticks to the plan till she meets the chosen one
- Adult ESL students will be able to match icons and symbols to words, and identify concepts in the story.
- <http://www.amazon.com/Martina-Beautiful-Cockroach-Cuban-Folktale/dp/1561453994>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z28ChgqayU4>
- CCRI-Prov. [PZ8.1 .D3782 2007](#)



- Hayes J., Sayago M. T., (2008) Dance, Nana, Dance / Baila, Nana, Baila, Texas: Cinco Puntos Press. ISBN 9781933693613
- Reading level: 5
- Proficiency level: Low Intermediate ESL
- Language: English & Spanish
- This book is good for ESL students to learn Cuban rhythm. The title story relates the acquisition of fire from an old witch by two canny jimaguas, the Cuban term for twins.
- Adults students will be amazed about the reminiscent story which is similar in structure to Native American tales in which the thief is a Coyote or Raven. It is a typical folktale motif combined with uniquely Cuban elements. "You Can't Dance/No puedes bailar" tells how the animals of the forest join forces to rid themselves of a pesky family of devils. Tales such as this one which involve tricking an evil character into harming himself, are widespread, as is the element of using an animal's behavior (in this case that of turkeys tucking their heads under their wings) to drive the action.
- Like a warm sea breeze, these tales will capture ESL students' imagination away to the tropical island of Cuba. There, they'll meet a stingy old lady who owns the only fire in the world. She's just skin and bones, but she can dance for three days and nights without stopping. She'll give students a bit of her fire if their music is good enough to keep her high-stepping that long.
- Like the green island of Cuba, these thirteen tales are full of warmth, laughter, magic and wisdom. ELLs will have fun reading and re-telling it themselves. Then they will be participating in the wonderful spirit of Cuban storytelling.
- http://www.amazon.com/Dance-Nana-Baila-Folktales-English/dp/1933693614/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1317741008&sr=1-1

URI CML Juvenile [PZ73 H265 2008](#)



Osa N. (2003) Cuba 15, New York: De la Corte Press. ISBN: 9780385730211

Reading level= 7

Proficiency level = High Intermediate advanced

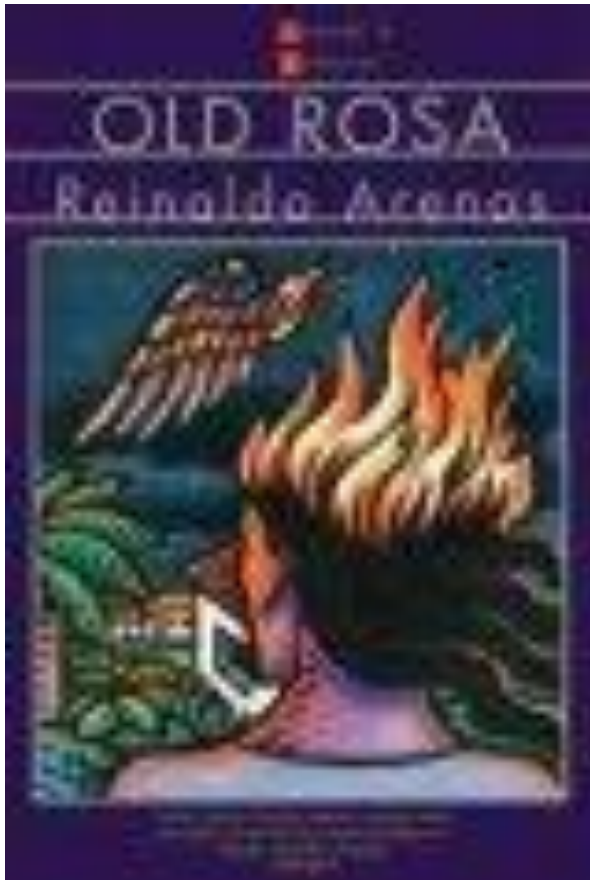
Language: English

Young adult ELLs will be interested in this story where a 10th grader in suburban Chicago, spends the better part of a year preparing for her quinceaneras, the celebration of her womanhood, that her Cuban grandmother longs for her to experience.

All ELLs young adults who struggle to make sense of traditions- including the formal gown, will find themselves in that story. Violet's father, born in Cuba and brought to the U.S. as a baby, refuses to discuss his native culture with his children, and Violet becomes increasingly anxious to learn more about her roots. Her two best friends are more than simply foils; they provide texture, humor, and tension to the story. In addition to speech team and family affairs, Violet's year includes a first crush and first date, each of which resolves pleasantly. Among the many strengths of this book are its likable and very real protagonist and its introduction to the nexus of politics and family. Too much goes on in this novel, but the characters are so charming that while ELLs are in their company, the experience is interesting and engaging rather than frustrating. This book is good for immigrant families. Many teens will recognize the cross-generational conflict between assimilation and the search for roots. ELLs will learn that Dad is still worth loving, even if he is different.

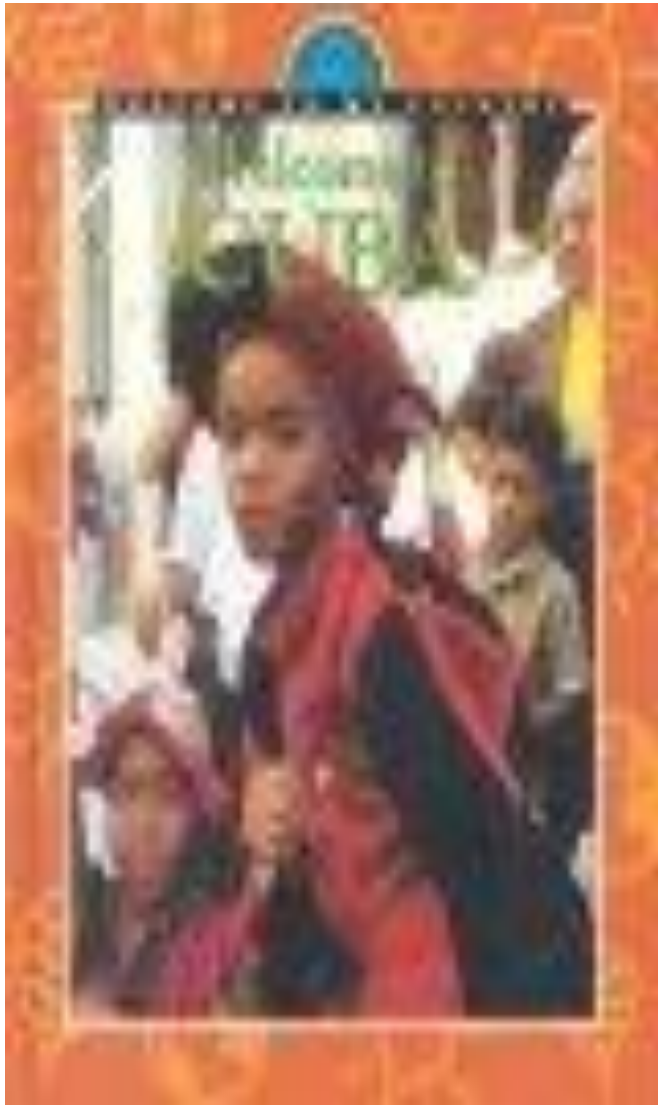
<http://www.amazon.com/Cuba-Belpre-Honor-Author-Awards/dp/0385730217>

AVAILABLE RIC Young Adult [YA PZ7.O785 Cu 2003](#)



- Reinaldo A. (1994). Old Rosa : a novel in two stories, New York: Grove Press. ISBN-13: 978-0802134066
- Reading level= 9
- Proficiency= Advanced Adult ESL
- Language: English
- Adult ESL students will be able to interpret information in this book. The heroine of the allegorical "Old Rosa" is a peasant who amasses a large property through hard work and self-sacrifice only to see her efforts destroyed when her farm is collectivized under Castro. With her oldest son ready to join the revolution, her daughter marrying a Negro and her youngest son Arturo a homosexual, Rosa literally goes mad.
- Arturo's personality changes when he is imprisoned for his homosexuality. At first he holds himself aloof, then becomes the most flamboyant of his fellow prisoners and finally retreats into a beautiful fantasyland. Because Arenas holds back nothing, giving free vent to his emotions, this densely charged tale crescendos to a shattering finale.
- ESL students will be able to identify unknown words and figures of speech, because the authors writes in the poetic and fantastic style of magical realism.
- "Old Rosa" recalls the life of a woman who puts herself and her farm to the flames rather than give up her land to the revolution. "The Brightest Star" chronicles the death and life of Old Rosa's youngest son, Arturo, an obsessive writer imprisoned by the revolutionaries in a work camp for gay prisoners. A fine novel that belongs in any contemporary Latin American literature collection.
- <http://www.amazon.com/Old-Rosa-Reinaldo-Arenas/dp/0802134068>

Availability: CCRI-Prov. [PQ7390.A72 A6 1994](#)



- Yip D. (2001). Welcome to Cuba, Wisconsin: Gareth Stevens Pub. ISBN: 9780836825169
- Reading level = 5
- Proficiency level= Intermediate
- Language: English
- Cuban Intermediate Adult ESL will enjoy this book that gives them an opportunity to reconnect with their history and Cuban geography
- A pastiche of information about the island nation is organized as brief blocks of text covering such topics as the geography, history, government, people, language, arts, and food. Given the title's organization and format, much of the subject matter is treated superficially, and some inclusions seem mundane at best. Color photos, a map, list of quick facts, and related websites are included. Cuban ESL learners will be happy to reconnect and keep their Cuban identity.
- Adult ESL student will be able to locate and classify information, identify fact and explicit messages.
- Availability: Salve Curriculum Library [F1758.5 .Y56 2001](#)
- [welcometocuba00yipd](#)



- Luis w. (2000). Culture and Customs of Cuba, Westford: Greenwood ISBN-13: 978-0313360954
- Reading level = 7
- Proficiency = advanced ESL
- Language: English
- ESL Cuban students will be able to react to multiple genre in this book. They will find out how Cuba continues to loom large in U.S. consciousness and politics. *Culture and Customs of Cuba* is a much-needed resource that gives students and other readers an in-depth view of Cuba. ESL students will have detailed, clear insight into the society, religions, customs, media, cinema, literature, performing arts, and art in the context of three interrelated periods in Cuban history: Colonial, the Republic, and Castro's Revolution and beyond. The contributions of Cubans in exile are considered an inherent part of Cuban culture and Luis includes them as well.
- ESL students will inquire about their cultural essence so to speak, and they will have a wider understanding of their origin.
- ESL students will update themselves while reading this book, that Cuba is an island of many cultural customs that have evolved out of a rich history.
- Your Cuban ESL students will re-explore Cuba's dynamic culture through this book. Luis also notes the spread of Cuban culture abroad, where a significant part of the Cuban population has lived since the early 19th century. Students and others interested in this country will find this book to be extraordinarily helpful and informative.
- http://www.amazon.com/Culture-Customs-Latin-America-Caribbean/dp/0313360952/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1318360161&sr=1-1#
- CCRI-Prov. [F1787 .L945 2000](#)

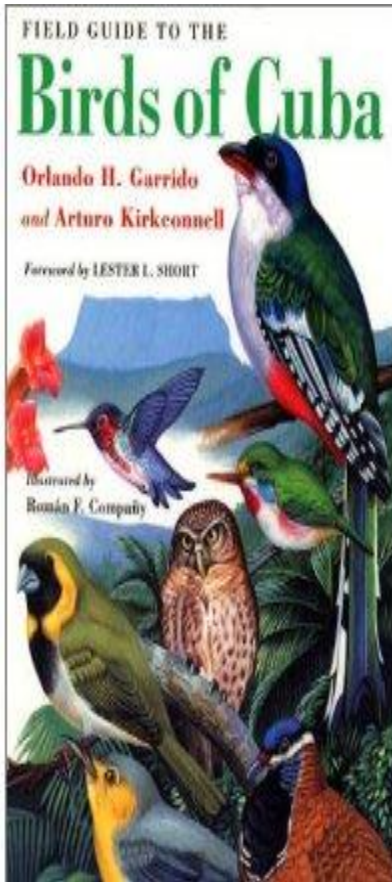
Garrido, O. H. (2000). Field Guide to the Birds of Cuba. California: Comstock Pub. ISBN-13: 978-0801486319

Reading level = 5

Proficiency = low intermediate

Language; English

ESL intermediate Adult will enjoy learning the name of the birds of Cuba in English. Most of the time, when they think about the birds of their homeland, it is impossible for them to know the names in English.



- ESL students will be happy to review the information on the geography, climate, geology, paleontology, and natural history of Cuba.
- ESL Cubans will be impressed by this piece of work, an exceptionally complete field guide to the birds of Cuba, a valuable book that will fill a void in the literature that has existed for a long time, written by folks who know Cuban birding best.
- Cubans love birds and this book is the first entirely devoted to Cuba's birds to appear in eighty years. Field Guide to the Birds of Cuba is a serious work with vast amounts of new information, range maps, and admirable illustrations.
- ESL students will be amazed to explore this anthology which is an excellent field guide.
- <http://www.amazon.com/Field-Guide-Birds-Comstock-books/dp/0801486319>

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

For Further Information, Contact:

Nancy Cloud, Ed.D., Director

ncloud@ric.edu

Rhode Island College

600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue

Providence, RI 02908