

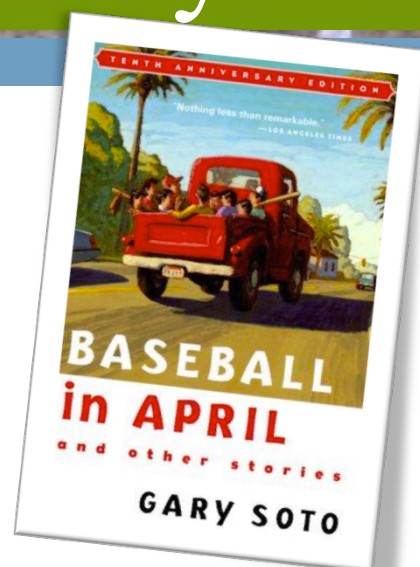


¿QUÉ ES TU CUENTO?

What's Your Story?

Baseball in April by Gary Soto

What would the diary of a neighborhood look like? How would all the stories mesh? What kinds of stories would be told – happy, sad, angry? *Baseball in April* is just that, a diary of a neighborhood, *el barrio*. Gary Soto's collection tells the stories of Latino teenagers who are in love, have dreams, make mistakes, and move through everyday life. Each story is told from a different character's perspective and can easily stand on its own. However, when these stories are read together, they give students a more holistic view of family and friendships, and ultimately, a glimpse of life growing up in the barrio.



List of Short Stories

1. "Broken Chain"
2. "Baseball in April"
3. "Two Dreamers"
4. "Barbie"
5. "The No-Guitar Blues"
6. "Seventh Grade"
7. "Mother and Daughter"
8. "The Karate Kid"
9. "La Bamba"
10. "The Marble Champ"
11. "Growing Up"

Icebreaker: Name Bingo

Students often sit in class with other students for an entire semester but know very little about their classmates. This activity allows students to learn not only their classmates' names, but they also learn about their hobbies, their families, and their homes. For this activity, the teacher will need to prepare the Bingo sheet ahead of time.

Preparation:

- ★ Create a 5x5 grid or table in a word processing document.
- ★ Make the center square a FREE space.
- ★ Fill the remaining 24 squares with phrases that may describe the majority of students (i.e. plays a sport, lives in a two-story house, writes left-handed, or has met someone famous).

Directions:

- ★ Handout the Name Bingo sheets to students.
- ★ Students will circulate the room asking each new classmate to sign a square that describes him or her on students' Bingo sheets.
- ★ Each student can only sign one square.
- ★ The first student to fill up their Bingo sheet with classmates' signatures wins.
- ★ The teacher will follow up the activity with a class discussion allowing students to see which of their classmates share similar interests.
- ★ Students should also be allowed to share personal stories about themselves, their friends, and their families.

NOTE:

Sample Bingo handout is attached to the end of this guide.

General Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe your neighborhood? Your community?
2. If someone painted a picture of your neighborhood what colors would they use light, dark, vivid, muted? Explain.
3. How could a negative view of a community affect the actual community and the people who live there?
4. Do you believe everyday stories can be interesting? If so, what makes them interesting?
5. Do you tell stories? If so, what types of stories do you tell?
6. Who are the people that you tell your stories to?
7. Which experiences do you believe change or influence people the most - positive or negative?
8. Can a negative experience direct someone's life in a positive way?



Cross-Curricular Activities

- ★ **Art:** Create a scrapbook, collage, or other visual representation of students' cultural heritage
- ★ **Geography:** Research Gary Soto's hometown of Fresno, CA using Google Earth
- ★ **Language Arts:** Cultural Storytelling - write narratives retelling their family's story
- ★ **Math:** Calculate probability with marbles
- ★ **Social Studies:** Research the Mexican Baseball League.
- ★ **Science:** Investigate the physics of throwing a baseball

“Broken Chain”

Objectives:

- ★ Show effective use of language to clearly communicate ideas by:
 - ✪ Correctly employing most conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics, with just a few, if any, errors
 - ✪ Using precise and varied vocabulary
 - ✪ Using a variety of kinds of sentence structures to vary pace and to support meaning

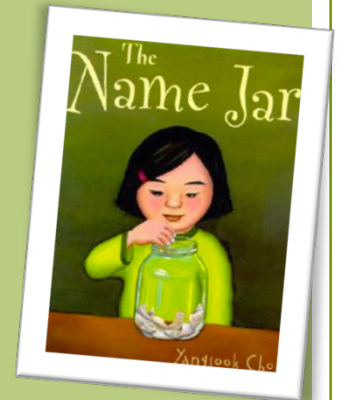
Today we are going to talk about the story “Broken Chain.” The main character Alfonso begins his story by looking in the mirror. Does he focus on his favorite things about his face or all the things he hates? If we did an experiment and each of us went to the mirror and looked at our reflections, I bet that almost 100% of us would look at the things that we didn’t like about our face first. Well today we are going to do the exact opposite. I want you to look at your face in these mirrors. I want you to find things about your face that you like or that make you unique and I want you to write them down. I want you to put down at least five things that you like about your face. Now, you don’t have to look in the mirror to tell me one thing that you don’t like about your face because it is stamped on your brain. I want you to write that one thing on your paper. Now these words are your own. Your task for today is to find a way to explain what these random words mean to you. You can write a narrative, a poem, a song, a rap, anything that is a written expression of what these words mean.

The Name Jar

by Yangsook Choi

Grades K – 2

Having just moved from Korea with her family, Unhei is nervous and a bit apprehensive about her first day of school. After being teased on the bus about her Korean name, Unhei decides to choose an American name that is easily pronounced. She tells her classmates that she will decide on a new name the following week. Eager to help their new no-name classmate, the children put their suggestions into a “name jar.” Unhei practices being a “Daisy,” or a “Suzy,” but none of the suggestions seem to fit. When one of Unhei’s classmates visits her, he discovers the special meaning behind her name and asks to be given a Korean name. The day has arrived for Unhei to choose a new name, but the name jar has disappeared. Encouraged by her new friends, Unhei decides she will keep her name and proudly shows her classmates her name stamp.



Summary

Seventh grader Alfonso hates the way he looks. Self-conscious about his crooked teeth and unable to afford braces, Alfonso presses his thumb against his teeth, trying to straighten them himself. After saving a little boy caught on a fence, he meets the boy’s sister who agrees to go on a bike ride. Since her bike has a flat tire, Alfonso asks to borrow Ernie’s bike for Sandra, but Ernie refuses. As he’s polishing his bike, the chain breaks leaving Alfonso with no bike at all. At the end, Ernie finally agrees to lend Alfonso his bike just as Sandra walks up. Although Ernie’s bike is filthy, Alfonso decides to ride anyway with Sandra balanced on the crossbar learning that sometimes appearances aren’t that important.



“Baseball in April”

Pre-Reading:

- ★ Discuss what it means to be part of a team.
- ★ Can you enjoy playing a game, even if you don't win?

Objectives:

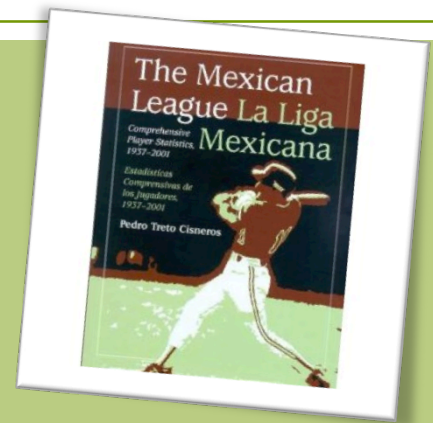
- ★ Understand the subtleties in relationships between people, ideas, and so on in virtually any passage
- ★ Understand implied, subtle, or complex cause-effect relationships in virtually any passage

Instruction:

- ★ Provide students with a brief history of the Mexican Baseball League.
- ★ Handout copies of **Roberto Clemente:** *American Legend* Reader's Theater scripts.
- ★ Assign parts to students and have them perform the play.

Assignment:

- ★ Research a famous Latino/Hispanic baseball player
- ★ What are some of the ways that you can tell a website or article is reputable?
- ★ How do you take information from a website and make it your own?
- ★ Remember to cite your information.
- ★ Create a flyer or a brochure and present your research to the class.



The Mexican League La Liga Mexicana: Comprehensive Player Statistics, 1937-2001

Opening with a brief history of Mexican professional baseball (established in 1925), this bilingual text is a comprehensive guide that features the statistics of every player on the Mexican Baseball League since 1937, the first year in which the league kept official records.



The Boy Who Saved Baseball

by John Ritter

Grades 5-8

Doc Altenheimer, an elderly rancher, is ready to sell his 320, land that makes up a good part of Dillontown and its baseball field, to developers. After a visit from young Tom, the rancher announces that his decision to sell the land will be decided by a baseball game between the local Dillontown Wildcats and the summer-camp team down the road. Despite the odds against Dillontown, a surprise ending is in store. A mysterious boy, Cruz de la Cruz, arrives on horseback claiming to know the secret of hitting, and brings hope and spirit back to the residents. He and Tom seek out an old baseball legend, Dante Del Gato, a recluse who walked away from the majors many years before, and convince him to be their coach. When game day arrives, Cruz disappears; nonetheless, the Wildcats emerge victorious, and Tom leaves the game with more than just the winning hit.



“The No-Guitar Blues”

Guitar Display

“No-Guitar Blues” is all about wanting something so bad and doing almost anything to get it. The line between right and wrong can be blurred. Sometimes we validate something that is wrong by saying it doesn’t hurt anyone. However, sometimes our wrongs hurt us more than anyone else.

The main character in this book wanted a Guitar more than anything else. Today we have a guitar display from all over the world. A lot of different cultures have guitar like musical instruments. Look at each of them and write down their similarities and differences.

After we get a chance to look at them, our friends from the music store are going to play each of them for us. When they do write down the differences you notice in the sound texture and tone of each instrument.

Singin’ The Blues

For this activity, students will write their own blues song. In the story, Fausto’s conscience was plagued with guilt for lying, which would make great material for a blues song. This is a creative writing project that can easily turn into performance art. Encourage students who play guitar to bring their instruments on performance day.

1.

- ★ Introduce this activity by playing the students some blues music by such artists as W.C. Handy or Stevie Ray Vaughn.
- ★ Then, explain the origins of the blues and have students pick out some traits or aspects of blues music.

2.

- ★ Have students brainstorm a topic for their blues song and write three to four stanzas.
- ★ Some sample titles: “Grounded for Lying Again Blues” or the “Essay Writing Blues”

As a blues writer, remember:

3.

- ★ Use repetition of words and whole phrases
- ★ Use dialect and slang expressions
- ★ Try not to sound completely hopeless.



“The Karate Kid”

Objectives:

- ★ Discern between fact and fiction
- ★ Maintain a clear focus on discussion of the specific topic and issue throughout the essay
- ★ Present a critical thesis that clearly establishes the focus on the writer's position on the issue

Introduction:

- ★ Discuss the idea of fact vs. fiction in books, movies, and television and the types of problems that can arise from not knowing the difference between the two
- ★ Ask students if they have ever been bullied and how they felt as a result
- ★ Show a movie clip of the signature “crane” move from *The Karate Kid* before reading the short story by the same name.

Martial Arts Demonstration

- ★ Contact a local martial arts instructor and ask if he would be willing to provide a brief demonstration of some basic Karate moves for your students
- ★ Be sure to have the instructor bring information about classes in case students wish to sign up for lessons.



Stop the Bullying

Assignment:

- ★ Bullying PSA - video or podcast
- ★ Divide students into small groups of 4-5
- ★ Students should brainstorm a script for their Public Service Announcement
- ★ Using Photo Story or another available podcasting software, have students create a Bullying PSA

Extension Activity:

Publish students' work to the school website, wiki, or present PSA's to the student body.

Karate Hour

by Carol Nevius, illus. Bill Thompson

Using rhyming couplets, the author illustrates an hour of a children's Karate class. She also conveys the honor, discipline, and respect that children learn through the study of martial arts. Additionally, the author's note offers not only a brief history of Karate, but she also provides information about the various belt colors and their symbolism.





Tie-Dyed T-Shirts

Mrs. Moreno tries to dye Yollie's white dress black, but with disastrous results. This activity not only provides a cool tie-dyed t-shirt to take home, but it also teaches students the proper way to dye clothing.

Materials:

- ★ Plastic tablecloth and tape
- ★ Large bowl of soapy water and paper towels
- ★ 100-percent-cotton T-shirts
- ★ Buckets or dish tubs (4-quart minimum)
- ★ 2 or more colors of fabric dye
- ★ Salt (1 cup per dye bath)
- ★ Rubber bands
- ★ Sealable plastic bags
- ★ Latex gloves

Instructions:

- ★ Determine where the center of the design will be on the shirt
- ★ Wrap rubber bands around the shirt in 2-3 inch sections starting from the top and working down to the end of the shirt within 1-inch from the bottom
- ★ Dip a section of the shirt into one dye color for 3-5 minutes (the longer it soaks, the more vibrant the color)
- ★ Once the shirt is dyed, wring it out and place it in a sealed plastic bag
- ★ Allow the shirt to set overnight
- ★ Begin rinsing with warm, then cool water until the water runs clear removing the rubber bands during the rinse
- ★ Wash the shirt by itself to prevent any leftover dye from bleeding on to other clothes and dry in the dryer.

“Mother and Daughter”

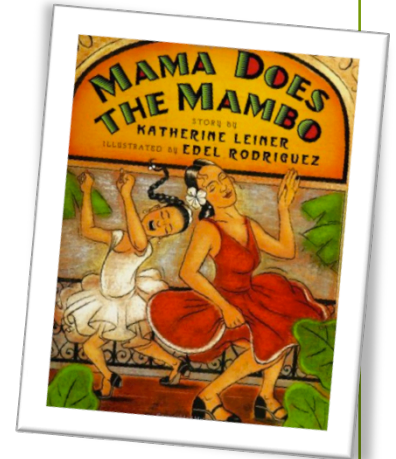
Mama Does the Mambo

by Katherine Leiner
Illustrated by Edel Rodriguez

Grades K-2

Sofia's Mama used to dance by herself all around the house, but her favorite dance partner was Papa. After her Papa's death, the music stopped along with Mama's dancing.

Men line up from all over Havana just to get the chance to dance with her, but she is not interested. Sofia worries that her mother will never find another dance partner.

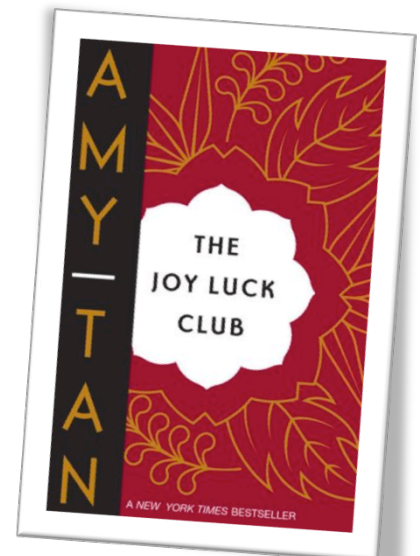


The Joy Luck Club

by Amy Tan

Grades 9-12

In this story of mother-daughter relationships and friendships, four Chinese women, all recent immigrants, gather to eat, play mahjong, and talk. They call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Told as a series of vignettes, each of which is introduced by a Chinese parable about



“Growing Up”

Objectives:

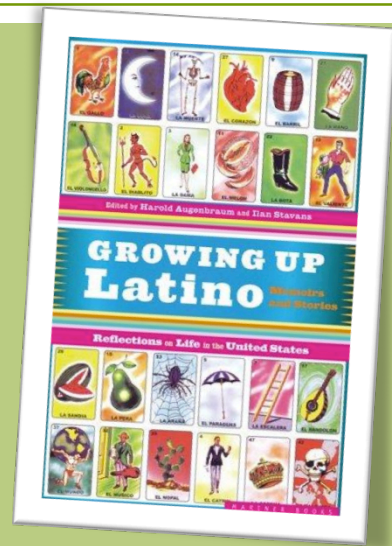
- ★ Investigate a variety of media sources
- ★ Evaluate the validity and significance of the information
- ★ Document sources accurately
- ★ Create a product from the research and present findings

Introduction:

- ★ Discuss family vacations
- ★ Tell about your least favorite family vacation. What happened and why was this vacation your least favorite?
- ★ What would you do if you had the house to yourself for a week?

Assignment:

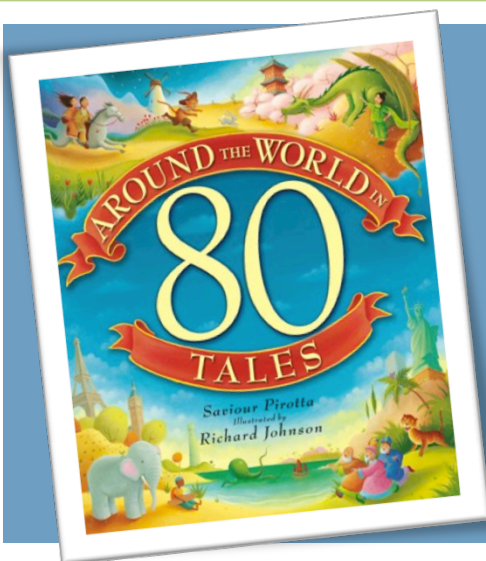
- ★ Most of the time we don't get to choose what vacations we take with our families. How we get there, what we do, and when we leave are often not our decisions to make. Today you have the opportunity to plan your dream vacation. Think about where you would go, how you would get there, what you would do, and how long you would stay.
- ★ Plan your dream vacation.
- ★ Research actual hotels, flights, directions, excursions, car rental, and any other trip-related cost.
- ★ Create a virtual poster (Glogster) or a virtual slide show (Ahead, Prezi, or Animoto) of your trip, and present it to the class.



Growing Up Latino

by Harold Augenbraum

This text is a collection of 26 essays and stories about coming-of-age as an Hispanic-American. Featured contemporary authors include Sandra Cisneros, Julia Alvarez, Oscar Hijuelos, and many other authors that represent the Cuban, Puerto Rican, Columbian, Mexican, and other Latin cultures.



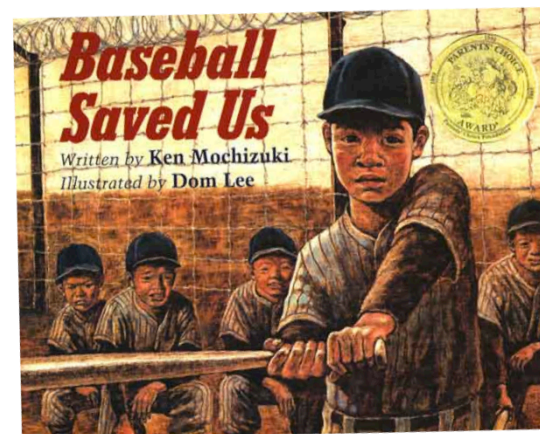
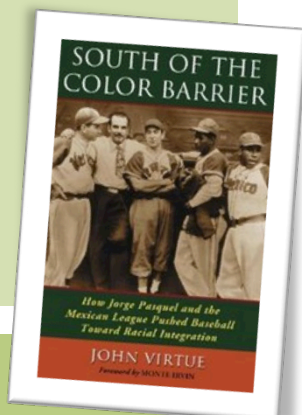
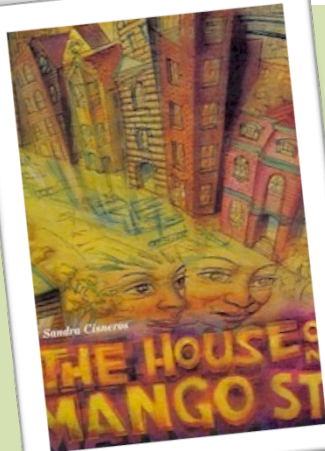
Around the World in 80 Tales

by Saviour Pirotta and illus. Richard Johnson

Grades 2 and Up

This collection of eighty folktales highlights eighty storytelling traditions and spans six continents. This text introduces children to an array of cultures and countries through the stories and traditions captured by these tales. Organized by the six continents represented, each story takes readers around the globe and immerses them in the richness that our diversity has to offer.

Supplemental Books



Movies

Children's

- ★ Barbie Word Book / Libro Barbie De Las Palabras by DK Publishing
- ★ Baseball Saved Us by Ken Mochizuki
- ★ Curious George at the Baseball Game/Jorge el curioso en el partido de beisbol (bilingual edition) by H. A. Rey
- ★ Seedfolks by Paul Fleischman

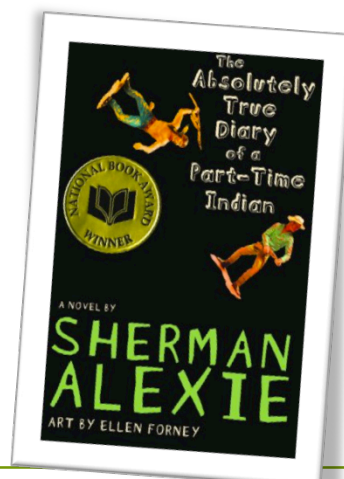
Fiction

- ★ How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents by Juia Alvarez
- ★ Living Up the Street by Gary Soto
- ★ My Name is Maria Isabel by Alma Flor Ada, illus. by K.D. Thompson
- ★ The Absolutely True Story of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie
- ★ The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros
- ★ You Don't Even Know Me: Stories and Poems about Boys Sharon G. Flake

Non-Fiction

- ★ 21: The Story of Roberto Clemente by Wilfred Santiago (graphic novel)
- ★ Adios, Barbie: Young Women Write About Body Image and Identity by Ophira
- ★ I'm Happy if You're Happy: 515 Things Only Mothers and Daughters Understand by Lorraine Bodger
- ★ Satchel Paige: Striking Out Jim Crow by James Sturm (graphic novel)
- ★ South of the Color Barrier by John Virtue
- ★ The Good, the Bad, and the Barbie: A Doll's History and Her Impact on Us by Tanya Lee Stone

- ★ Baseball: A Film by Ken Burns (Includes The Tenth Inning) Starring n/a (2010)
- ★ Baseball's Greatest Legends Starring Mudcat Grant, Mickey Mantle, Dave Winfield, et al. (2009)
- ★ MLB Bloopers: Baseball's Best Blunders Starring Jose Canseco, A.J. Burnett and Yankees (2010)
- ★ Modern Marvels - Baseball Parks (2005)
- ★ Only the Ball Was White Starring Roy Campanella, Paul Winfield, Satchel Paige (2008)
- ★ The Ultimate Baseball Collector's Collection (2007)
- ★ Everyone's Hero Starring (animated) (2007)
- ★ La Bamba (1987)
- ★ The Sandlot (2002)



Sample Ice Breaker Bingo Sheet

ICE BREAKER

HAS NEVER BEEN ON A PLANE	HAS A FEAR OF HEIGHTS	HAS A BIRTHDAY THE SAME MONTH AS I DO	PLAYS A SPORT FOR BTHS	HAS MORE THAN THREE SIBLINGS
LIKES TO PLAY GOLF	WATCHES SATURDAY AM CARTOONS	SPEAKS MORE THAN ONE LANGUAGE	HAS TRAVELED OUT OF THE COUNTRY	LIVES IN A TWO-STORY HOUSE
LIKES THE SAME MUSIC AS I DO	WEARS A SIZE 12 OR LARGER SHOE	HAS MRS. HUSKEY FOR A TEACHER	HAS BEEN TO HAWAII	HAS MET SOMEONE FAMOUS
WORKS A PART-TIME JOB	IS THE OLDEST IN THE FAMILY	HAS BEEN WATER / SNOW SKIING	OWNS MORE THAN ONE PET	HAS NEVER LIVED ANYWHERE OTHER THAN ALABAMA
HAS READ MORE THAN 10 BOOKS THIS YEAR	WEARS A SIZE 5 OR SMALLER SHOE	HAS WON AN AWARD	HAS BEEN TO A PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL / FOOTBALL GAME	IS THE YOUNGEST IN THE FAMILY

SOURCES



- ★ **Creative Commons Search**
<http://search.creativecommons.org/>
- ★ **Family Fun: Tie-Dyed T-Shirts**
<http://familyfun.go.com/crafts/tie-dyed-t-shirts-666905/>
- ★ **Gary Soto**
<http://www.garysoto.com/>
- ★ **Marble Magnets**
<http://crafts.kaboose.com/holidays/seasons/summer/summertime-marble-magnets.html>
- ★ **LMB: The Official Site of the Mexican Baseball League**
<http://web.minorleaguebaseball.com/index.jsp?sid=1125>
- ★ **Microsoft Office Clipart**
<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/images/>
- ★ **Roberto Clemente: American Legend** (Reader's Theater)
http://www2.scholastic.com/content/collateral_resources/pdf/s/snonline/sn_ClementePlay_grades3to5.pdf

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