

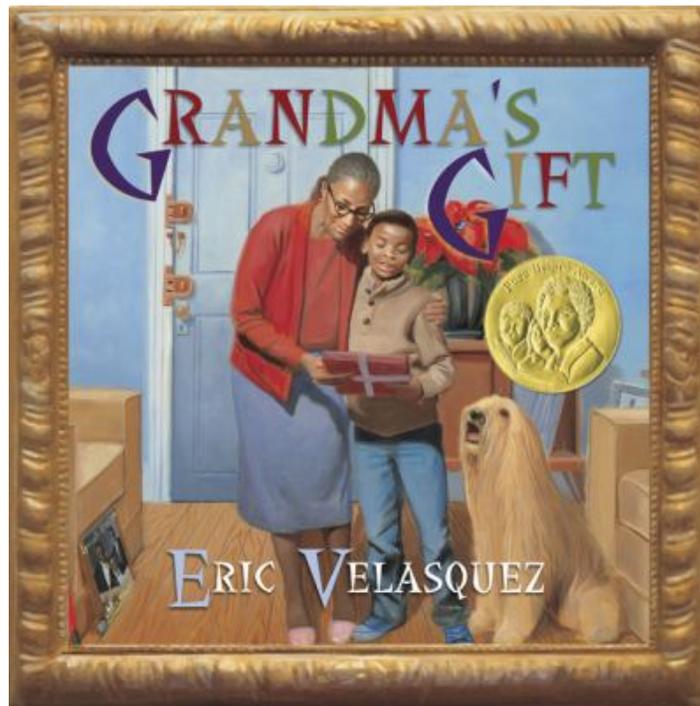
# **PASS THE PASTELES!:** **FAMILY, CULTURE, AND TRADITIONS**

## *Grandma's Gift* Programming Guide

For 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade, with supplemental material for alternate age groups

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**Grandma's Gift**  
**written and Illustrated by Eric Velasquez**  
**New York: Walker, 2010**

Grandma's Gift follows Eric and his grandma over Eric's winter break. Eric shares in Grandma's Christmas tradition of shopping for and creating *pasteles*, meat filled pastries traditional to Puerto Rico. In return, Grandma journeys with Eric to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The book explores the relationship between Eric and his grandma and how the museum visit and Grandma's gift to Eric impacted his life.

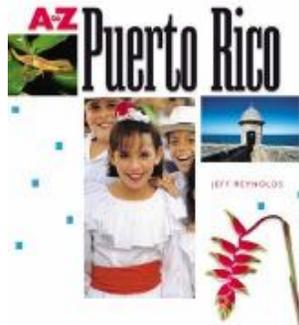
## RELATED BOOKS



### Grandma's Records

Written and illustrated by Eric Velasquez  
New York: Walker & Co., 2001

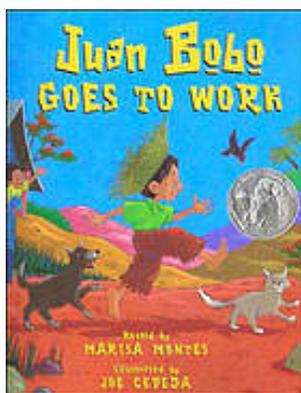
Eric spends every summer with his grandma while his parents work. Grandma plays records with music from Puerto Rico, such as merengue and samba, sharing her memories of Puerto Rico and the things that she loves. This tale of mixing cultures and family bonding is heartfelt and moving.



### Puerto Rico

By Jeff Reynolds (A to Z series)  
New York: Children's Press, 2004

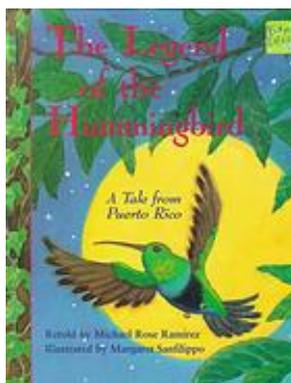
Puerto Rico offers an overview of Puerto Rico's culture, geography, history, economy, and government. Organized by topic, this book allows young elementary school readers to gain a better understanding of the richness of Puerto Rico.



Juan Bobo Goes to Work

Retold by Marisa Montes and illustrated by Joe Cepada  
New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000

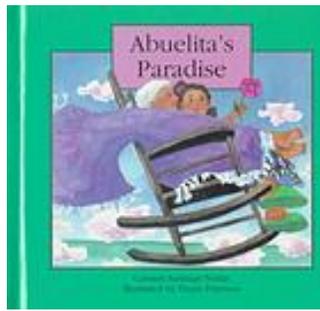
Juan Bobo is a character with many stories in Puerto Rican folklore. In this story, Juan Bobo tries to find work for himself, but he somehow keeps making silly mistakes, despite trying very hard to do well. Juan Bobo is able to redeem himself and help his family by making a sick girl laugh with his antics, curing her illness. Her grateful father promises to take care of Juan Bobo and his mother.



The Legend of the Hummingbird

Retold by Michael Rose Ramirez and illustrated by Margaret Sanfilippo  
Greenvale, NY: Mondo, 1998

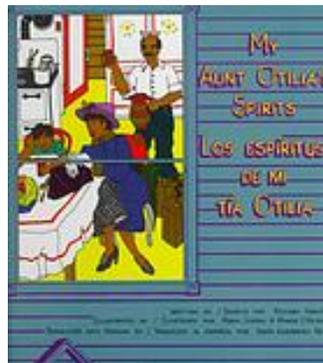
A Puerto Rican girl and boy from different and antagonistic tribes have their love protected forever when they are changed into a red flower and a hummingbird.



Abuelita's Paradise

Written by Carmen Santiago Nodar and illustrated by Diane Paterson  
Morton Grove, IL: A. Whitman, 1992

After her grandmother's death, Marita sits in her grandmother's rocking chair. As Marita rocks, she is able to remember and cherish the stories her grandmother shared with her about her homeland of Puerto Rico.

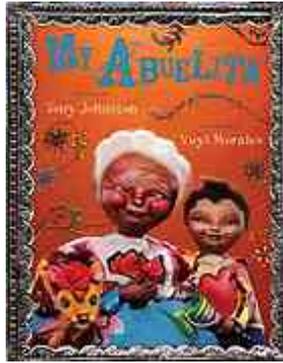


My Aunt Otilia's spirits = Los espíritus de mi Tía Otilia

Written by Richard Garcia and illustrated by Robin Cherin & Roger I. Reyes  
San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press, 1987

When Aunt Otilia comes to visit from Puerto Rico, her nephew finds out about her magical powers. This is a bi-lingual Spanish and English book.

## RELATED BOOKS FOR ALTERNATE AGE GROUPS

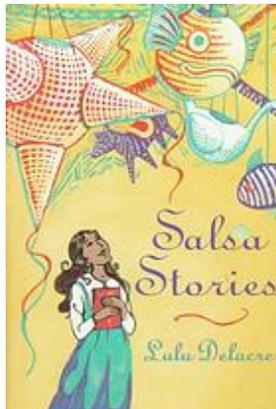


### My Abuelita

Written by Tony Johnston and illustrated by Yuyi Morales  
Orland, FL: Harcourt Children's Books, 2009

(For Toddler/Preschool to Kindergarten)

A grandson describes his Abuelita (grandma), who is a Mexican storyteller, in vivid and colorful detail.



### Salsa Stories

By Lulu Delacre

New York, NY: Scholastic Press, 2000

(For Third to Sixth Graders)

Friends and family from all over Latin America come to Carmen Teresa's house for a large family gathering. Carmen Teresa receives a gift of a notebook, and all the relatives try to one up each other by telling stories about their pasts in the countries that she should put in her notebook. One of the threads that tied all the stories together is food and the book includes recipes.



I, Juan de Pareja or Yo, Juan de Pareja  
By Elizabeth Borton de Treviño  
New York, NY: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1984

(Fourth Grade and up)

The novel is in the form of an autobiography from the point of view of Juan de Pareja, a slave and assistant to the famous painter Diego Velazquez. Juan de Pareja was freed and became a painter in his own right. This novel is available in Spanish.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- Children will know more about different aspects of Puerto Rico and Puerto Rican culture.
- Children will have a better understanding of the ways they are similar to people from other cultures.
- Children will reinforce their connection to their own family history and traditions.

## ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY:

“Who am I?”

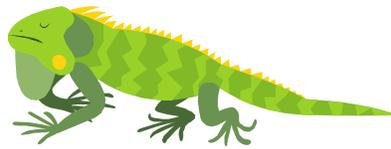
Have printouts of various animals, include animals from around the world, but be sure to include animals from Puerto Rico, such as an iguana, a tree frog, a mongoose, and a black panther. Have the name of the animal in Spanish and in English on the print-out, so that children who speak one or both languages can learn new animal names. Include a pronunciation as well.

Tape a print out onto each child's back. Have them walk around and ask questions to see what animal they have. Questions need to have “yes” or “no” answers, such as “Do I have a tail?” or “Do I have fur?” There are different ways to conduct gameplay. You can split participants into pairs and have the winners be the person in each pair to guess their animal first. You can have participants

in two concentric circles where one circle moves to the left after each question so that partners ask a different question from a different person each time. Game play can end either when the first person has guessed their animal or when all participants have.



Panther *Pantera* (pan-tay'-rah) Tree Frog *Coquí* (ko key) Mongoose *Mangosta*(man-gos'-tah)



Iguana *Iguana* (I-gua-na)

After the ice breaker activity would be a good time to settle everyone down and read *Grandma's Gift* aloud to the group. After you have read the book, you can ask the children some of the questions below to get them talking about what happens in the book and how they connected to it.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In the book, Eric helps his grandmother make *pasteles*, part of their traditional Christmas (*Navidad*) celebration. What are some foods that are traditions in your family? Do you ever help to make the food?
2. Eric and his grandmother experience something very unfamiliar when they travel to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Have you ever been in an unfamiliar situation? How did that make you feel?
3. The portrait of Juan de Pareja was something familiar that made Eric and his grandma feel more like they belonged at the museum. What are some things that you think schools, museums or other public places can do to help all people feel like they belong?
4. Eric has to translate the note for his grandmother. He mentions that he translates a lot for her and sometimes it seems like he is going to school for two. Have you



ever had to translate or interpret something for someone you know? This does not have to mean just translating written word. It could also mean explaining how to use a television, cell phone or i-Pod music player.

5. Eric puts on a record to “set the mood” for Grandma to cook. Can you think of music that your family likes to play around the house? What kind of music is it?

## ACTIVITIES

### From El Barrio to the Museum (Social Studies Activity)

Mark out on a map of New York City the city blocks that make up El Barrio. Put a pin on the map where the Metropolitan Museum of Art is located. You can have the children count the blocks in El Barrio and how many blocks it takes to get to the museum. You could discuss why the cultures are so different, even though the locations are close together. You can also use this activity to mark and discuss on the map other locations in El Barrio, such as El Museo del Barrio at 1230 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10029 and La Marqueta, a food market, at 1590 Park Ave, New York, NY 10029.

### What order? Activity – Making Pasteles (Math/Ordering and Language Activity)

Grandma must follow a specific order to make *pasteles*. Can you remember what order the *pasteles* are made in? Cut out sets of words or have the words in random order on a worksheet with blanks next to the words for filling in numbers. This activity could be done by cooperating pairs or individually. You can have the children complete this activity in both English and Spanish, since most of the ingredients are listed in both languages in the book. Ingredients in order:

1. hoja del banana/banana leaf
2. aceite de achiote/annatto oil
3. la masa/the dough
4. la carne/the meat
5. la salsa/the sauce

### How does your *pastel* grow? (Science/Biology Activity)

The dough that Grandma uses in the *pasteles* is made up of peeled and grated taro root, green bananas, plantains, *calabasa* (tropical pumpkin), and russet potato. Talk about how each fruit and vegetable grows, and show whole versions of the produce if it is available in your area. Use pictures if they not available.

Taro root grows next to water paddies. The bottom of the plant should be submerged:



\*Photo "Sajal Sthapit" by Ecoagriculture Partners found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ecoagriculture/2609693896/> - Creative Commons License-Attribution

Plantains and Green Bananas grow on trees in bunches:



\* Photo "Plantain Tree" by Erik Hungerbuhler, found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/erik2481/305299549/> CC license-attribution

Pumpkins grow on vines along the ground.



Photo "023" by keepsps found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/isg-online/4937176583/> Creative Commons license - attribution

The part of the potato used is the root of the potato plant. Potatoes grow in fields and are flowering plants.



Photo "Potato Field" by Colin aka Colin-47\_Away for a while found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/colinsd40/3661879455/#/> Creative Commons license – attribution

# CRAFT OR FOOD ACTIVITY

## Make Pasteles! (Math and Art activity)

Because serving and creating food can be a limiting factor, there are two options presented for allowing the children to create their own *pasteles*. You can have the children create real edible *pasteles*, or you can have them create a salt dough craft *pastele*. Children will use math concepts to measure amounts and will practice following ordered steps in either activity.

### Food:



Photo: "los pino pasteles" by krista aka scaredy\_kat found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/scaredykat/4589822396/> Creative Commons license - attribution

Eric Velasquez provides his grandma's recipe for *pasteles* on his webpage at <http://www.ericvelasquez.com/pdf/Grandmas-Gift-Pasteles-recipe.pdf>

For this age group, you will most likely need to have the leaves, dough, meat, and sauce prepared beforehand. You can then have the children put together the *pasteles* the way Grandma does in the story. Explain to the children how the starch in the vegetables works like a glue to hold the dough together. This website provides a short article that explains how starch works as a thickener in sauces, and the explanation is applicable to the dough as well.

<http://www.thekitchn.com/thekitchn/food-science/food-science-how-starch-thickens--083665>

## Salt Dough Craft:

Create a large batch or several batches of salt dough. This salt dough recipe was found in Celebrating Cuentos: Promoting Latino Children's Literature and Literacy in Classrooms and Libraries on p. 297.

### Recipe:

1 cup salt

1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water (dissolve salt in water BEFORE adding flour)

3 cups flour

1. You can add the water to a bowl  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup at a time and have the children count how many  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups there are in 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup as a way to discuss fractions.
2. You can do the same with adding the 1 cup of salt into the water.
3. You can add the flour in one whole cup at a time, or take the opportunity to do more counting and fraction activities by adding the 3 cups in half, third, quarter, or combined cup increments.
4. Mix until the ingredients have a dough consistency.
5. Divide the dough into four sections, one for each "ingredient" – use green food coloring for the banana leaf, leave the "dough" the original color, color the meat red, and the sauce orange or yellow.
6. Have children make their own salt dough *pasteles* following the order Grandma does in the book, but with their dough "ingredients." If you would prefer to have the children create whatever they want from the dough, follow steps 1-4, then let the kids get creative! You can also provide them with cookie cutters for shaping the dough.
7. Allow the *pasteles* (or dough creations) to harden.
8. Bake at 200 degrees
9. Paint with acrylic paints if desired and shellac the item to make it last!

# TAKE HOME CRAFT

## Make Your Own Maracas!

Eric puts on a record to entertain his grandma while she cooks. After creating this craft the children will be able to make their own entertaining music.

History of maracas: Maracas are musical instruments created by the Native Indians of Puerto Rico, the Tainos. They are made in pairs from the dried out fruit of the Higüera tree. The pulp is removed from the fruit, then small holes are created in the dry fruit shell and pebbles are placed inside of it. A handle is then fitted to the dried fruit. You put an unequal number of pebbles into the pairs to create the distinctive maraca sound.

Maraca history site:

<http://www.musicofpuertorico.com/index.php/instruments/maracas/>



Left Photo: "Hand Painted maracas at Mercado Modelo" by Kraftwerk found at

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/kraftwerckk/4287293313/> Creative Commons license - attribution

Right photo: "Hacienda Berdiel Torres / Higüera tree" by Jose Oquendo found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/oquendo/558892470/> Creative Commons License - attribution

### Options for the Maraca Craft:

1) Purchase plain maracas and have children paint them or color on them with wood markers:

<http://www.orientaltrading.com/design-your-own-wood-maracas-a2-57/1020.fltr>

2) Create maracas out of common items and recyclables.

a) Make a maraca using clean and dry soda or water bottles filled with rice or dry beans, then decorate them by gluing beads, sequins, or glitter to the outside.

<http://familycrafts.about.com/od/musicalcrafts/a/instnoisemak.htm>

b) Paper plate maracas: Fold a paper plate in half and staple it together, leaving a corner to fill. Fill the paper plates with dry rice or

dry beans. Staple the corner shut. The paper plates can be decorated with crayons, markers, colored pencils, glue, glitter and sequins, or paint. This option can be dry quickly, so the children will be able to use them right away in a song activity.

<http://www.sproutonline.com/sprout/crafts/detail.aspx?id=db20680d-06aa-4d29-9d9a-997a01819c96>

## CRAFT ACTIVITY

Draw a Self-portrait

Appropriate for All Ages



Photo: "Diego Velazquez: Juan de Pareja" by free parking, found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/freeparking/2616348182/> Creative Commons License – attribution

After seeing the painting of Juan de Pareja, Eric begins to be excited about art. The gift that Grandma gives him, a sketchbook and colored pencils, starts Eric on the path he takes towards becoming an artist and illustrator. In this activity, have the participants draw a self-portrait using colored pencils, crayons, markers or other drawing materials. If time and materials allow, you can also have them draw a picture of a good memory with their family.

## Craft Activity for Older Children



Photo: "Jimi" by Squirrel Cottage found at [http://www.flickr.com/photos/squirrel\\_cottage/3189041857/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/squirrel_cottage/3189041857/) Creative Commons License  
Photo right: "Coqui, Puerto Rico" by Ricardo Hernandez found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dejav1988/310009994/> Creative Commons License

### Bean Bag Frog

(For age 12 and up)

More than 16 different species of tree frogs, called coqui, live on the island of Puerto Rico. Visit this site for more information on coqui: <http://www.elboricua.com/coqui.html>

Directions for creating a bean bag frog and a free pattern that can be printed out and blown up are found at this website: <http://www.craftbits.com/project/bean-bag-frog-plushie>

These directions calls for filling with plastic beads, but dry rice works very well. You can also choose to substitute buttons for the googly eyes.

## SONG ACTIVITY



“*Si mi dan pasteles*” is a Puerto Rican Christmas Carol about children buying *pasteles* at Christmas time. The singing activity can be combined with the “Create your own maraca” craft. Allow the children to create and decorate their maracas, then have them join together and sing the *song* while they shake their maracas.

Song: *Si mi dan pasteles* (If you give me pastries)

Si me dan pasteles dénmelos calientes, que pasteles fríos empachan la gente	(See me dan pas-tel'-les) (di-en-mā'-los cah-le-en'-tays) (kay pas-tel'-les free'-os) (em-pah-chahn lah hen'-tay)	If you give me pastries, Give them to me hot please If I eat them co-old My tummy will be achy
--	--	---

Si me dan arroz no me den cuchara, que mamá me dijo que se lo llevara.	(See me dan ar-roth') (no me dan coo-chah'-rah) (kay mah-mah me dee'oh) (kay say lo lyay'-va-rah)	If you give me rice No spoon should you give me 'Cuz my mother told me, Bring the rice right home, please
---	--	--

refrain: le lo lai (x4)      (lay lo lie) (x4)

This song may be sung a cappella or with music. The links below offer places to purchase the song as well as free clips to listen to an example of the rhythm.

Music can be purchased here for \$.99:

<http://www.amazon.com/Si-Me-Dan-Paste+les/dp/B000SH0J5Q>

You can purchase this song with a recording, translations, and sheet music for recorders here for \$1.95 each:

[http://www.worldmusicpress.com/wmp/detail.php?product\\_group=819](http://www.worldmusicpress.com/wmp/detail.php?product_group=819)

## SONG ACTIVITY



### Fingerplay for Preschool and Below

Pon, pon, pon el dedito en el pilón (Put, put, put your finger in the pestle)

Pon, pon, pon,	(pohn, pohn, pohn)
El dediito en el pilón	(el day-deel'-lyo en el pe-lone')
Pon, pon, pon,	(pohn, pohn, pohn)
El dinerito en el bolsón.	(el de-nay'-ree'-to en el bol-sone')

Put, Put, Put  
Your finger in the pestle  
Put, Put, Put  
Your money in your bag.

The baby hits the forefinger on the palm of the other hand to the rhythm of the song as if pounding grains in a pestle.

<http://www.mamalisa.com/?t=es&p=1413&c=92>

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

Spanish-English online dictionary – offers pronunciations clips for words as well as verb conjugation:

*SpanishDict.* by Curiosity Media <http://www.spanishdict.com/dictionary>

“Juan de Pareja” entry at the Metropolitan Museum of Art site.

[http://www.metmuseum.org/works\\_of\\_art/collection\\_database/european\\_paintings/juan\\_de\\_pareja\\_born\\_about\\_1610\\_died\\_1670\\_velazquez\\_diego\\_rodriguez\\_de\\_silva\\_y\\_velazquez/objectview.aspx?collID=11&OID=110002322](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/european_paintings/juan_de_pareja_born_about_1610_died_1670_velazquez_diego_rodriguez_de_silva_y_velazquez/objectview.aspx?collID=11&OID=110002322)

Eric Velasquez’s Official Website

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

Mama Lisa’s World – Puerto Rican children’s songs in Spanish and English

<http://www.mamalisa.com/?p=613&t=ec&c=92>

Videos of Rafael Cortijo’s Combo – Grandma’s Favorite Artist in *Grandma’s Records*

CORTIJO Y SU COMBO. "QUITATE DE LA VIA PERICO"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z04CHRrGFZI>

RAFAEL CORTIJO Y SU BOMCHE. : PICA QUE PICA-canta FE CORTIJO

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSoCmbBTWw8>

Official Website for the Territory of Puerto Rico

<http://welcome.topuertorico.org/index.shtml>