

Interdisciplinary Ideas

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Reread the scene of the family gathering in Grandfather's house in which "The walls bulge with talk and remembering." Think of a time when your extended family got together for a holiday or special visit. Describe the relatives and how they showed love and excitement about being together.
2. Talk about the town of La Perla (the pearl). How did your town get its name? Look on a map for examples of towns named for something beautiful or precious.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Research and discuss what a Mexican immigrant would need to do to enter and work in the USA. Find out about illegal farm workers and what dangers, challenges, and issues they might face.*
2. Compare your city or town to La Perla. Note similarities and differences.

MATH

Make a bar graph of the numbers of immigrants arriving in the USA from different countries in 1900, 1950, and today. Discuss the patterns and changes.

ART

1. Create your own art in the style used by David Diaz in *Going Home*. Make a drawing of your family or home. Mat or frame it on a photograph from a magazine or calendar, trying to match the theme or colors of the photo and drawing.
2. Look at the paper cut-out on the first page of the book. Make a paper cut-out with black construction paper and mount it on a colorful background.

* Visit www.heartwoodethics.org and choose Teaching Heartwood, Culture Keys, for more on the history, culture, and geography of this book.

Going Home

Eve Bunting
1996
New York: Harper Collins Publishers

LOVE
Mexico/USA
Realistic Fiction
Reading Time: 12 minutes

CONCEPTS

Love
Hope
Sacrifice

SUMMARY

Eve Bunting's story tugs at the reader's heartstrings as Carlos comes to understand the depth of his parents' sacrificial love. This story of Mexican migrant farm workers tells of their love for their home village and the sacrifices they have made to open up new opportunities for their children in the United States. David Diaz's color-rich woodcuts framed with Mexican folk art enhance the expressive text.

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to define and discuss love and hope as they apply to this story and will recognize sacrifice as a form of love.

After the Story

Going Home

DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think the children were not as excited about going home as their parents? Why was La Perla special to Mama and Papa?
2. If they loved La Perla so much, why did the parents leave home? What do you think the parents meant by "opportunity"?
3. What signs of love did you see in the story?
4. Reread the conversation at the party at Grandpa's house (picture of family around the table). What was Carlos beginning to understand? Now reread the conversation between Carlos and Dolores at the end of the story (next to last page). Why did he have an ache in his chest? What did he finally understand?
5. What is the meaning of sacrificial love (giving something up for someone or something you love)? Talk about examples of sacrificial love in your family, community or school. When have you given up something for someone you love? It could be your time or a treasured item.

ACTIVITIES

1. Find California and Mexico on the world map.
2. Find newspaper articles with examples of sacrificial love. Talk about different kinds of sacrifice—giving up a little (e.g., donating \$1 to a neighborhood charity) and giving up a lot (e.g., giving up a life for someone else, donating bone marrow).
3. Make a list of opportunities family members have made possible for you.
4. Invite an immigrant to come and talk to your class about his or her homes "here and there," reasons for moving, and what is special about each place.

JOURNAL

1. Write a short paragraph about how the family in the story shows love to one another. Give examples. Then write about how your family shows love.
2. Write about a place where you feel loved.
3. Write about the turning point in the story, when Carlos begins to understand his parents and finds answers to his questions about their lives. (See Discussion #4.)

HOME CONNECTION

1. Ask grown-ups at home about opportunities they have provided for you.
2. Collect and record stories of sacrifice in your family or community, including stories from past generations. Ask permission to share with the class.

VOCABULARY

Papeles
burro
angelitos
labor

manager
border
opportunities