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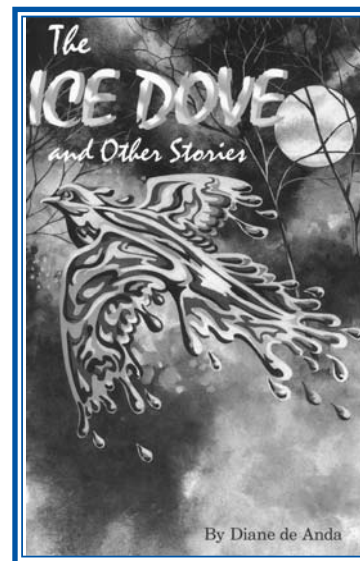
PIÑATA BOOKS



TEACHER'S GUIDE

# *The Ice Dove and Other Stories*

by Diane de Anda



## *Themes*

- Cultural acceptance
- Assimilation
- Coming-of-age

The children in *The Ice Dove and Other Stories* learn to accept what their families, community and culture have given them. This collection of four short stories highlights gaining respect for oneself by not being like everyone else and by valuing the beauty of simple things and special friendships.

## CRITIC'S PRAISE

"In four strongly upbeat stories, Hispanic American children find strength in their loving extended families . . . children will enjoy the warm celebration of cultures."  
—*Booklist*

## TEACHING OVERVIEW

*The Ice Dove and Other Stories* consists of four simple to read but separate short stories exploring the themes of uniqueness and self-respect. Geared for the upper primary or lower elementary grade reader, each story stands alone or the book can be worked with as a whole.

This teacher's guide contains four specific story summaries with story specific activities and comprehension strategies followed by ideas for additional reading and other activities, internet/technology applications, and a glossary of Spanish terms.

This Teacher's Guide offers Language Arts activities, which satisfy generalized content standards. The teacher is encouraged to expand upon the following activities and to creatively substitute and/or incorporate other reading and writing activities into their Language Arts instruction.

## COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Under each story title, the teacher will find Before, During and After Comprehension strategies which contain suggested activities for improving listening/speaking, reading, writing, and viewing skills. Where appropriate, the skill set addressed by each of the activities is noted in parenthesis.

While reading each of the following four stories, review the Spanish-language terms that appear as footnotes. Discuss the vocabulary, pronunciations of terms, and names they will encounter in the story (**Reading:** word identification, vocabulary development). Highlight use of accents, note similarities and differences of spelling and sounds (**Writing:** influence of other cultures/languages on English).

About the Book



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## I. “The Ice Dove” (pp. 5–14)

**STORY SUMMARY:** Catalina loves her collection of wooden forest animals carved by her grandfather. However, when they shop for supplies at Enrique’s General Store, she can’t help but wish that the perfectly carved, crystal dove could be hers. She knows her grandfather cannot afford it, and she would never ask him. He too, knows how she loves the crystal dove and feels a deep sad-

ness. He can barely buy the necessities. But since he is a master carver, he chisels an icicle into a hand-sized ice dove for her. She is so moved by its beauty that she wants to keep it forever. But instead of stashing it safely outside in the cold, she decides to keep it in a can in her bedroom. When it melts, her grandfather recreates its spirit in vapor form and sets the dove free.

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### COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

#### BEFORE READING

Talk about the special relationships between grandparents and children. What do these relationships offer grandparents and children?

Invite students to study the front cover and title of the book and make predictions about the story based on their observations (**Reading:** prediction, prior knowledge). Have students articulate what the illustration reveals about the ice dove and the story’s plot (**Viewing:** interpretation; how illustration extends meaning of story).

Invite a wood-carver or sculptor to class as a guest speaker (check with school personnel, parents, or tap into community resources.) If this is not possible, bring pictures of a creative project in stages. Have a discussion about the process of creating a piece as well as how the artist chose to do what they do. Prepare students ahead of time to draft questions (**Listening / Speaking:** purposes; to gain information/enjoy and appreciate). Discuss the concepts of metamorphosis / change and creation of art (including a discussion of the art of writing.)

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#### AS READING PROGRESSES

Assign “The Ice Dove” during one silent reading block and/or incorporate into assigned reading at home (**Reading:** fluency, reading silently). Have students refer to glossary regularly as they encounter Spanish vocabulary words (**Reading:** vocabulary development).

Pose your own or the following questions to students designed to improve or assess reading comprehension as story progresses (**Reading:** comprehension). The questions can serve as prompts for in-class large group or small group discussions (**Listening / Speaking:** listening / speaking / appreciation) and / or as take home written assignments (**Writing:** writing for a variety of purposes; to express, to discover, to record, to develop, to reflect on ideas, and/or to problem solve).

#### Sample comprehension and discussion questions :

1. Catalina has real pets and special pets. Describe the difference.
2. What kinds of details does the author use to let the reader know

- it is winter-time? Find at least three examples.
3. Why does Catalina hurry to the display window at Enrique’s General Store? What does she see there for the first time?
4. How does Catalina’s grandfather feel when he watches her cradle the special item in her hands? Why does he feel that way?
5. How does Catalina feel when her grandfather makes the ice dove for her? Why does she hide it?
6. Catalina’s grandfather has a special talent and uses that talent to make a special gift. What does he do for Catalina when they return home from the store?
7. Why does Catalina want to keep her gift forever? Have you owned or had something that you wanted to keep forever? Explain your response.
8. Catalina’s grandfather on pg. 12 says, “This was a wild dove. It needed to live outside.” What does he mean exactly?
9. How does Catalina’s grandfather turn a potentially upsetting situation into a positive one?

#### AFTER READING

##### Viewing Activities:

1. Ask students to note the illustration on pg. 9. Pose the question, “How does the illustrator Bob Pharr create a sense of grandfather’s character through a drawing only of the hands?” (**Viewing:** interpretation; illustrator’s choice/ extending meaning of text).
2. Share with students that hands are often difficult to draw. Encourage them to create their own drawing of a pair of hands and include details that reveal something about the kind of person the hands belong to (**Viewing:** representing, production).
3. Ask students to note the illustration on pg. 13. Pose the question, “Do you think this illustration captures the main idea of this story?” Have students explain why or why not (**Viewing:** interpretation).
4. Have students make their own vapor image drawing containing a hidden image that relates to some aspect of this story (**Viewing:** representing/production).

##### Writing Activities:

1. Ask students to write a descriptive paragraph about a winter scene without mentioning directly that it is winter. Encourage the use specific details that would indicate to the reader that the season is winter and that it is cold (**Writing:** purposes; to describe/narrate). See response to question #1 under reading comprehension and story for examples and ideas.
2. Have students write a short report or research paper on doves using a variety of resources (**Writing:** inquiry/ research).
3. Conduct a mini-discussion on how heat influences the different states or stages of water (i.e. liquid, solid, and vapor). Have students write a creative or humorous short story about their life and death as an ice-cube (**Writing:** purposes; to entertain).
4. As students to continue writing the story with Catalina and the new ice dove from where this story ends.

## II. “Pinto” (pp. 15-26)

**STORY SUMMARY:** Eight-year old Ricky decides to bring his brown-and-white spotted rabbit named Pinto to school for his science project. He goes to school prepared and full of excitement to share what he knows with his classmates. Although he is eager to give his presentation, two boys taunt him beforehand about the rabbit’s name and looks. They also make fun of Ricky being “half-

white” and “half-brown.” Upset, Ricky runs from school to his house and confides in his grandmother. She leads him to consider whether running away from the issue is the best way to handle the problem and also encourages him to explore his own sense of self as a whole person. He discovers that he just like Pinto who has the best aspects of both parents.

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### COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

#### BEFORE READING

Start a dialogue about cross-breeding in plants, animals, and other life forms. (Some examples are: trees, flowers, agricultural crops like corn, avocados, and squash; dogs; horses; etc.) Have students make a Venn Diagram with two large circles that overlap and intersect with a large section in the middle. Have students write one breed above one circle and another breed above the other. Ask students to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the two breeds and to write commonalities in the middle section (**Writing:** purposes; reflecting on ideas, organizing, summarizing).

Initiate a discussion with students about the advantages and disadvantages of cross-breeding (i.e. eliminating disease, birth defects, the hazards of inbreeding, hybridity, life-span of different breeds, natural selection and adaptations, etc.). Ask students to comment on what special attributes and advantages the cross-bred product would offer. In particular, ask them to write a short narrative in response to this question: How does this new product represent the best of both breeds? (**Writing:** purposes; to discover, reflect on ideas, to narrate).

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#### AS READING PROGRESSES

Assign “Pinto” during one silent reading block and/or incorporate into assigned reading at home (**Reading:** fluency, reading silently). Have students refer to glossary regularly as they encounter Spanish vocabulary words (**Reading:** vocabulary development).

Pose your own or the following questions to students designed to improve or assess reading comprehension as story progresses (**Reading:** comprehension). The questions can serve as prompts for in-class large group or small group discussions (**Listening / Speaking:** listening/speaking/ appreciation) and/or as take home written assignments (**Writing:** writing for a variety of purposes; to express, to discover, to record, to develop, to reflect on ideas, and/or to problem solve).

#### Sample comprehension and discussion questions

1. Ricky talks to his rabbit Pinto. Do you think that is strange? Why or why not?

2. Why did Ricky have to wait a long time before doing his science project at school? Does your classroom teacher do things the same way?
3. Why do you think Mark claims that Pinto is only a horse’s name? When you hear the name Pinto, what do you think of?
4. What does the name Pinto mean according to Ricky? Why does Mark tease Ricky and call him Pinto too? How does this make Ricky feel?
5. How does Ricky’s grandmother respond to his problem? Does she tell him what to do or let him decide? Why? What does Ricky decide to do about his science project?
6. What do the students learn about Rex rabbits? What makes Pinto so special?
7. Why does Ricky look Eddie in the eye? Why does Eddie clap at the end?
8. Why do you think Ricky thanks Pinto at the end of the story?

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#### AFTER READING

##### In-class discussion:

Initiate a discussion about bi-ethnic identities. Talk about the attributes of different cultures (or draw a specific example from this story using the Anglo-American and Mexican-American cultures.) What does a person gain from two different cultures?

Talk about teasing. Discuss the way that Eddie teases Ricky, and ask them to discuss how Ricky handles the situation. Would they have done the same thing?

##### Viewing Activities:

1. Ask students to note the illustration on pg. 16. Pose the question, “Do you think this illustration captures the main idea of this story?” Have students explain why or why not (**Viewing:** interpretation; images, messages and meaning).
2. Ask students to describe in their own words how this illustration adds to the meaning of the story (**Viewing:** interpretation; extending the meaning of text).

##### Writing Activities:

1. Have students make a graphic organizer on what they already know about rabbits using what they read in the story and their own knowledge (**Writing:** graphic organizer using prior knowl-

edge). Encourage them to expand upon their knowledge about rabbits in general and specific kinds of rabbits in particular using on-line sources, the library, periodicals, etc. With a different colored pen or pencil, have them add their new findings to their graphic organizer. Have them cite their sources (**Writing:** inquiry/research/bridging known to unknown). Ask them to write a report about the rabbits they’ve studied.

2. Ask students to write a short story from Pinto’s point of view about his day at school with Ricky. (**Writing:** purposes; to entertain).
3. Ask students to write a short essay about teasing in their school. Has the student ever experienced teasing (either first-hand or as a witness)? How did the student deal with the teasing?

##### Reading Activities:

1. Have students reread pg. 23. Ask students to analyze the relationship between Ricky and his grandmother. What kind of relationship do they have? What is his grandmother’s point of view regarding his problem? What changes does Ricky undergo after talking with his grandmother? (**Reading:** character analysis).
2. Ask students to read from a variety of sources about their favorite animal and give a short speech or report to the class based on their findings. Encourage them to use visuals to support their presentation (**Reading:** inquiry/research).

### III. “Something Special” (pp. 27–40)

**STORY SUMMARY:** The day has come for Luis Torres to share “something” with his class for a school assignment. But he hasn’t thought of what yet, and his time is up. At the family breakfast table, he hopes for an idea to come to him because he is determined to not share something typical like a pet or baseball mitt. What he

wants is to show his classmates something original and distinctive about him. His grandfather understands Luis’ resolve to dare to be different and reminds Luis of the Christmas tradition unique to the Torres family which dates back to almost one hundred years. Luis finally finds “something special” to share with his class.

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#### COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

##### BEFORE READING

Ask students to bring in “something special” from home unique to them to share with the class. Encourage them to think about why their “something” is special in terms of its uniqueness or personal/family value. Create the following expectations: 1) Have fun; 2) Tell the story behind the decision of choosing what to share; 3) Plan presentation to last for 3–5 minutes; and 4) Be prepared to answer questions that might arise from other class-mates

(**Listening / Speaking:** purposes; to enjoy and appreciate).

Inform students that the main character Luis has learned a special craft from his abuelo. Find out if any students have learned a skill, craft or special activity from their grandparents. Ask them to share their experiences with the class (**Reading:** comprehension/establishing purposes; to find out, to understand).

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##### AS READING PROGRESSES

Assign “Something Special” during one silent reading block and/or incorporate into assigned reading at home (**Reading:** fluency, reading silently).

Pose your own or the following questions to students designed to improve or assess reading comprehension as story progresses (**Reading:** comprehension). The questions can serve as prompts for in-class large group or small group discussions (**Listening / Speaking:** listening / speaking / appreciation) and / or as take home written assignments (**Writing:** writing for a variety of purposes; to express, to discover, to record, to develop, to reflect on ideas, and/or to problem solve).

**Sample comprehension and discussion questions for full story might include:**

1. What is Luis’ dilemma?

2. Why do you think he is determined to do “something special?” Have you ever felt the same way about an assignment? Explain your response.
3. On pg. 34, Luis’ father whispered something to tall, white-haired Abuelo. What do you think he whispered?
4. Why are the tin Christmas tree ornaments special?
5. What causes Luis to hesitate at first? Would you feel the same way? Why or why not? How does Abuelo respond to Luis’ hesitation?
6. How does the crystal unicorn fit into Luis’ presentation? What is the main message that Luis shares with his classmates?
7. Who made the huge tin angel? Why was it special?

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##### AFTER READING

###### Materials Activities:

Ask students to make artifacts that are specific to cultural or religious traditions in their family. Make sure to focus on other cultures in class discussion. Ask them to share some cultural symbols and cultural traditions that are important to them or their families. Bring a piñata to show an example of a secular cultural tradition in the Latino community. Share some Latino music with the students: Christmas carols, folk songs, or other music that represents the Latino community.

###### Viewing Activities:

1. Ask students to note the illustration on pg. 31. Pose the question, “How does this illustration extend the meaning of the story?” Have students include key details to support their response (**Viewing:** interpretation).
2. Have students look on pg. 37 and mention that the illustrator chose to draw the unicorn instead of some of the tin Christmas tree ornaments. Pose the question, “Why do you think the illustrator chose to do this? (**Viewing:** interpretation)
3. Have students imagine that pg. 37 had the set of five tin animal ornaments instead and ask them to make their own illustrations: the horse, the sheep, the reindeer and two doves (**Viewing:** production; to complement and extend meaning of text).

###### Writing Activities:

1. Ask students to think of things, situations or people that are special to them. Have them create a graphic organizer using “things that are special to me” as the main topic in the middle of their paper and draw lines to other categories like “things,” “situations,” “people,” and “experiences.” Have students brainstorm and list specifics under their categories (**Writing:** writing process). This could be extended into a pre-writing activity for a short narrative piece (**Writing:** purposes; to describe, narrate).
2. Mention to students that a central theme in this story is taking pride in oneself or in what one does. Have them write a short piece about something that makes them feel proud (**Writing:** purposes; to express).

###### Reading Activities:

1. Have students look back through the story and find examples of cultural details or references to Latino culture (i.e language, foods, traditions...). Ask students to write/ record their findings (**Reading:** culture; determine distinctive characteristics).
2. Ask students to reread the last paragraph of the story on pg. 40 in pairs or small groups and have them describe to each other the mental images that the paragraph evokes (**Reading:** comprehension; describing mental images).

## IV. “The Christmas Spirit Tree” (pp. 41–64)

**STORY SUMMARY:** Each year on the Saturday before Christmas, the Perez family decorates their outdoor twelve-foot-tall pine. Their tradition has evolved into an annual event for the whole neighborhood. But when seven-year old Marika wakes up on decorating day, she finds only the stump of the tree. The Perez family tries to maintain the Christmas spirit by wrapping presents and seeing Santa. When Marika visits with Santa, she asks him if he

can get their tree back. Santa says that he cannot make things like they were before, but he promises that something special still will happen on Christmas. Marika is convinced that Santa will return their tree. On Christmas morning, the Perez family wakes to a gathering of friends and neighbors outside their door singing “O Christmas Tree” for a reason.

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### COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

#### BEFORE READING

Explore the concept of “Traditions.” Elicit examples from students. Have students reflect on traditions in their household around family holidays (both secular and religious) and ask students to write a brief description of at least two of those traditions (**Writing:** purposes; to inform, to express and/or to describe). Collect student work and compile into a class book on Family Holiday Traditions.

Ask students if any of them have ever had anything of value to them or their family broken or stolen. Encourage students to share learnings and feelings associated with their unique incident or experience (**Listening / Speaking:** speaking / culture; connecting his/her own experiences and/ or insights with experiences of others).

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#### AS READING PROGRESSES

Assign “The Christmas Spirit Tree” during one silent reading block and/or incorporate into assigned reading at home (**Reading:** fluency, reading silently).

Pose your own or the following questions to students designed to improve or assess reading comprehension as story progresses (**Reading:** comprehension). The questions can serve as prompts for in-class large group or small group discussions (**Listening / Speaking:** listening / speaking / appreciation) and / or as take home written assignments (**Writing:** writing for a variety of purposes; to express, to discover, to record, to develop, to reflect on ideas, and /or to problem solve).

#### Sample comprehension and discussion questions

1. What did Marika show to Mrs. Sanchez? Why is she so excited to get home?
2. How does the Perez family traditionally spend their time on the

Saturday before Christmas? What are the specific roles or duties of the Perez children during this particular tradition? Does your family have set times or days for particular pre-Christmas tasks?

3. What does Marika discover on Saturday morning? How would you feel if you were a member of the Perez family?
4. On pg. 54, Marika’s father says, “...I think it is important that we don’t let the person who stole the tree also steal our Christmas spirit away.” What do you think he means?
5. What kind of promise does Santa make to Marika? What do you think Marika really believes will happen? Why is her mother concerned?
6. Describe the traditional Christmas wrapping roles of the Perez family. What happens in your household when it comes time to wrap presents?
7. What do the neighbors decide to do on Christmas morning? How does their gesture reflect the spirit of Christmas?

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#### AFTER READING

##### Viewing Activity:

1. Ask students to note the illustration on pg. 52 and pg. 63. Have them observe the similarities and differences of how Marika is portrayed. Pose the question, “What does the illustrator’s choice of detail reveal about Marika’s character?” (**Viewing:** representing/interpretation; understanding visual meaning and messages).

##### Writing Activities:

1. Ask students to imagine that they either live in the Perez neighborhood or that they are a member of the Perez family. Have them write a letter to the thief expressing how they feel and have them include what they think the thief needs to know or do about their crime (**Writing:** purposes; to express, letter-writing).
2. Encourage students to share their letters with the class out loud.

Have other students listen attentively and respond in constructive ways to each other’s writing and/or letters (**Writing:** evaluation).

3. Write a stolen tree report for the police station. (**Writing:** evaluation).

##### Reading Activities:

1. Find copies of the Christmas carol, “O Christmas Tree.” Have students read and/or sing the song as a whole group together (**Reading:** comprehension/purposes; to enjoy, to understand).
2. Have students bring in copies of the local newspaper (or provide students with copies). Instruct students to look find examples of announcements and/or advertisements about things that have been lost or stolen (**Reading:** variety of texts/newspaper; for information).

## OTHER FOLLOW-UP/EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Have students redesign the book cover. Have them experiment with one of the other stories as the main part of the title and recreate the book cover illustration and book title (i.e. Pinto and Other Stories). Encourage use of technology in their writing and designing (**Writing:** presenting information in various forms using available technology).
2. Conduct a discussion on the concept of "Respect." Explore what is meant by respectful behavior, who are respected people and why, what it takes to be respected by others, etc. Ask students to share examples and/or anecdotes that demonstrate a characteristic or aspect of the concept of respect (**Listening / Speaking:** purposes; to gain information, to appreciate). Discuss the way the adults treat children in these stories. Ask them to compare that to their lives.
3. Revisit the theme of grandparent/child relationships. Ask them to discuss how their perceptions have changed in reading the stories in this collection.



### About the Author

**Diane de Anda**, a professor in the department of Social Welfare at UCLA, is the author of one bilingual picture book, *Dancing Miranda/ Baila, Miranda, baila* (Arte Público Press, 2001), and two collections of short fiction for young readers, *The Immortal Rooster and Other Stories* (Piñata Books, 1999) and *The Ice Dove and Other Stories* (Piñata Books, 1997). Her stories and poems have been published in a number of journals and magazines. She is also the author of numerous articles and books including *Controversial Issues in Multiculturalism* (Allyn & Bacon, 1996) and *Project Peace* (Castalia Publishing Company, 1997).

### CONNECTING WITH THE INTERNET/TECHNOLOGY

#### Kid Friendly Search Sites:

**www.ajkids.com** (Ask jeeves for kids. Useful for specific topics/ research, projects. Site enables quick searches in an easy to use "kid question" format).

**www.kidshealth.org** (This web-site is for children and about children. Although health oriented, this site is useful for exploring key topics on emotions and behaviors. See link "Dealing with Feelings" and the article "The Story on Self-Esteem").

**www.kidinfo.com** (This site is useful for homework and students, teachers and parents, and as a reference resource in general and fun sites to visit in particular. For young children it has links for online readings and activities).

**www.yahooligans.com** (Kid friendly directory and topics).

### ADDITIONAL READING/OTHER BOOKS

Fierstein, Harvey. *The Sissy Duckling*. (40pg. Illus.) Elmer the Duck is teased because he is different, but he proves himself not only surviving the winter, but saving his Papa. (Easy level reading).

Krueger, Caryl W. *Family Traditions: 289 Things to Do Again & Again*. (176 pg.) Traditions can be as simple as popcorn and conversation on a cold night, or as profound as a family heritage of service to others. Families have traditions about birthdays and holidays, mealtimes, gifts, travel, worship, games, clothing, words and sayings. It is traditions that make a home more than a hotel.

Mills, Claudia and Catherine Stock. *Gus and Grandpa and Show and Tell*. (47 pg.) Together, words and pictures are an enjoyable "take" on the age-appropriate issue of "sharing and telling."

Silverstein, Shel. *The Giving Tree*. (64 pg.) The story of a boy who grows into manhood, and of a tree that gives him her bounty through the years. It is a moving parable about the gift of giving and the capacity to love.

Yep, Laurence. *When the Circus Came to Town*. (113pg.) An Asian Cook and a Chinese New Year celebration help a ten-year old girl at a Montana Stage coach station to regain her confidence after small pox scars her face. The novel captures both the overwhelming pain of being different and the simple comfort in finding the community to which one belongs.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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