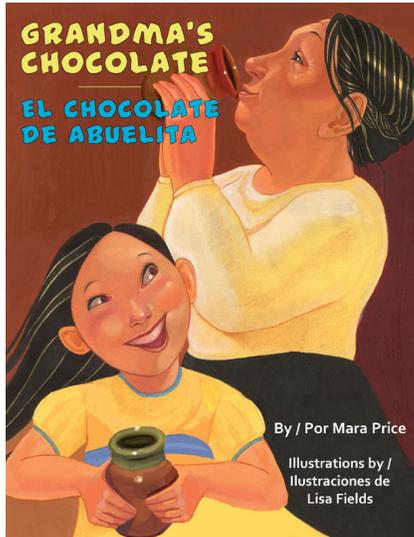


Grandma's Chocolate / El chocolate de abuelita

By Mara Price
Illustrated by Lisa Fields



SUMMARY

“Grandma, do you want to play a game? Let’s pretend that I’m a princess,” says young Sabrina in Mara Price’s *Grandma’s Chocolate / El chocolate de abuelita* (Piñata Books, 2010). This sweet story about the special relationship between a girl and her grandmother also paints a picture of Mexico’s indigenous and cultural past.

Grandma’s visits from Mexico are always full of excitement for young Sabrina. What will she find in her grandmother’s yellow suitcase this time? To her delight, Sabrina discovers colorful ribbons, a clay whistle shaped like a bird, a drum and the strong, sweet smell of chocolate! Grandma’s gifts make Sabrina wonder about her ancestors, especially Mayan royalty. With her grandmother’s help, Sabrina learns all about the cacao tree, which was first cultivated by Mexico’s indigenous tribes. Today, seeds from the cacao tree give us chocolate, but years ago the seeds were so valuable they were used as money. Young readers and adults alike will learn along with Sabrina that some things are priceless and timeless...like enjoying hot chocolate and a heart-warming story!

ABOUT THE BOOK

GENRE: Fiction	ATOS ENGLISH: 3.7
Hardcover	ATOS SPANISH: 3.5
978-1-55885-587-8	INTREST LEVEL: LG
32 pages, 8 ½ x 11	LEXILE: 690L
AR QUIZ: 138366	LEXILE (SP): 640L

THEMES

HISTORY, MEXICO, LATINO/HISPANIC INTEREST, ANCESTORS, CACAO, OLMECS, MAYANS, AZTECS, GODS, HERITAGE, CELEBRATIONS, IMAGINATION, TRADITIONS, FAMILY, OLD AND NEW, REMEMBERING, CULINARY ARTS, RITUALS, PROCESS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, DISCOVERY, GRANDMOTHERS, CHOCOLATE, SURPRISES, GIFTS, GAMES, FICTION

VOCABULARY

Grandma’s Chocolate / El chocolate de abuelita has a number of words that your students may not be familiar with. Before or after the reading, review some or all of the words listed below.

Content Specific

Mayan, cacao, Olmecs, god, Ek Chuah, rulers, emperor, Aztecs, Moctezuma II, jarros, metate, ritual, molinillo

Academic

treasure chest, clay, dove, messenger, plantations, ground, sweetened, allspice, chile, vanilla, flavoring, hexagon, sip, savored, tasted, encyclopedia

ELL / ESL Teaching Strategies

Encourage your Spanish-speaking students to translate the Spanish words in the English text for the class.

Act out the following words found in the text: sip and ground. Encourage your students to act out these words when they hear them during the reading.

Before Reading

(Pre-reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

Pre-Reading Questions

1. What is chocolate made of? How do you think chocolate is made?
2. What do you eat or drink that has chocolate in it? Do you like or dislike chocolate? Why?
3. What is a grandmother? What is your grandmother like? Where does your grandmother live? How often do you see your grandmother?



Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5, Key Ideas and Details, Strand 1 and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strand 7)



1. Read and talk about the title of the book. Ask the students what they think the title, *Grandma's Chocolate*, means. Then ask who and what they think this book might be about, and make a prediction about where this story may take place.
2. Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, introduction, English and Spanish text, illustrations, back-matter, dedications, author's and illustrator's notes.
3. Discuss the illustrations. Ask the students why they think the illustrator, Lisa Fields, mixes modern and ancient images.

Establishing a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3)

Ask students to read to find out:

- Why chocolate is so special
- How and why we celebrate our ancestors

Encourage students to consider why the author, Mara Price, wants to share this story with young people. Ask students to also consider why the text is presented in both English and Spanish.

After Reading

Discussion Questions

Use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension and facilitate a deeper appreciation of the story. Encourage students to refer to the text and the illustrations to support their responses. To build close reading skills, students should cite evidence to support their answers.

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1 and 3)

1. What is Grandma's suitcase covered with? What do these items show us?
2. What is Grandma's suitcase filled with?
3. What are two things Grandma believes birds do?
4. How does Grandma fix Sabrina's hair?
5. What is a huipil? What makes huipils special? Who wears huipils?
6. Who does Sabrina look like with her braids tied over her head and wearing a huipil?
7. What did Sabrina's ancestors have many years ago?
8. What is cacao?
9. What are two things that cacao seeds were used for?
10. Who were the first people to make chocolate?
11. Who was Ek Chuah?
12. Why did Mayan princesses go to school?
13. How did the Aztec emperor Moctezuma II like to eat chocolate?
14. How did the Mayan princesses make hot chocolate?
15. What does Grandma ask Sabrina to do to remember her?

Extension / Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft and Structure, Strand 6)

1. How do you think Sabrina feels about Grandma's visit?
2. Why do you think the Mayans had a god of cacao?
3. What kinds of messages do you think birds can carry from the earth to the sky?
4. What are rulers? Why do you think the children of the Mayan rulers had to learn to read and write?
5. What is the difference between how the Mayan princesses made hot chocolate and how Sabrina and Grandma make hot chocolate?
6. Why did Sabrina, Grandma and Sabrina's mom toast to their ancestors? Is it important to know about and celebrate your ancestors? Why or why not?



Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types and Purpose, Strands 1-3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)
(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3, Craft & Structure, Strand 4, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7-9)

1. Grandma brought Sabrina some games her mother liked to play when she was young. What games do you like to play? What are your favorite toys?
2. Long ago, cacao seeds were used as money. What makes something important or gives it value? Why?
3. Mayan princesses drank hot chocolate flavored with flowers, allspice, chile or vanilla. Do you like these flavors? What would you flavor your hot chocolate with? Why?
4. Grandma described to Sabrina the Mayan ritual of serving chocolate. What is a ritual? Why are rituals important? Do you practice any rituals?
5. Grandma uses a *molinillo* to make hot chocolate. What modern inventions do you or your family use to make traditional foods? Why?
6. What do you make or eat or drink that reminds you of your grandmother or a special person in your life?
7. Write about a time when a special person came to visit you. What did you do together? Where did you go? Did you eat anything? If so, what did you eat? How does this memory make you feel?

ELL/ESL Teaching Strategies

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4-6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4-7)

Below, please find strategies that may be helpful to use with English Language Learner students.

1. Review all of the vocabulary. Ask students to make predictions about word meaning and create and share an action for each word. Invite students to write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture or create a list of synonyms and antonyms.
2. Assign ELL students to partner-read the book with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another or listen to the more fluent reader. Students who speak Spanish can help with pronunciation of the Spanish or read the Spanish alongside a student reading the English text.
3. Have each student write three to five questions about the text. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
4. After the reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and ask students to summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.
 - Working in pairs, ask students to retell either the plot of the book or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary or opinion about what they have read.
5. Ask students to give a short talk about someone in their life who is like Sabrina's grandmother. They can either share about the surprises and goodies the person gives them or the stories the person shares with them about their family's past.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use activities below to help students integrate what they have read with other curriculum areas. These activities may also be used for extension activities, advanced readers and creating a home-school connection.

English Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3)

(Writing Standards, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7 and 8)

1. Invite students to write an acrostic poem inspired by *Grandma's Chocolate / El chocolate de abuelita*. Allow students to choose from one of the following words: grandma, ancestor, chocolate, Mayan, cacao, Olmecs, Aztecs.

Find a lesson plan on acrostic poems here: <https://www.youngwriters.co.uk/types-acrostic>

2. Give students examples of stories, songs and movies about chocolate and candy. Invite the students to write a story about chocolate or their favorite candy. Encourage them to first research the candy and to incorporate factual information into their tasty tale. Ask students to celebrate their work by sharing stories and candy during a 'Sweet Story Celebration.'

Social Studies

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7 and 8)

1. Share with the students general information about museums. Let them know there is a museum in Barcelona, Spain, the Museu de la Xocolata, dedicated to chocolate. Ask students to look at the delicious activities offered at the museum, then make up other classes or activities that can be held at the museum: <http://museuxocolata.cat/mobile/museu.php>

2. Working in small teams or pairs, ask students to research different regions of Mexico. Have them compile a list of places they could visit in the region they are studying and identify different types of treasures they could find. Remind them not to limit their list to instruments, clothing and food. Have each group share their work with the class.

3. Ask students to find out more about the tradition of becoming a Mayan princess. Then create a Mayan princess celebration for your class. Find information about Mayan princesses here: <http://latino.si.edu/LVM/Chequeaesto/APMM>

4. Ask students to research either the Olmec, the Mayans or the Aztecs, and prepare a list of questions similar to the following to guide their research: Where did they live? What language did they speak? Who were their gods? What type of clothes did they wear? What type of food did they cultivate and eat? What did they use for money? As a class, share information about all three groups and discuss similarities and differences.

Art, Media and Music

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3)

(Writing Standards, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7 and 8)

1. Ask students to create a yellow suitcase out of cardboard or construction paper. Have them cover the outside of the suitcase with round and square stickers from places they would like to visit. Have them fill the suitcase with drawings of different treasures that they would collect while traveling around the world. Have a Show and Tell and let each student share three treasures that they would like to give their classmates. Find a lesson plan that can be modified to make a suitcase here:

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/recycled-book-boxes/>

2. Join Grandma and Sabrina making music. Find a lesson plan to make a wind instrument here:

http://latino.si.edu/Content/Images/Education/Create-It_Wind_Instruments_English_Final.pdf

3. Ask students to study the illustrations created by Lisa Fields that show Sabrina and Grandma in front of historic Mayan and Aztec images. Invite students to find out where their family is from and to conduct research about their ancestors. Ask students to describe, design and create a work of art about themselves, their ancestors and images that symbolize their ancestors' accomplishments. Find a short video about ancient and modern cultures here: <http://latino.si.edu/LatinoVirtualMuseum/APMM/>

4. Learn more about the people and art of Central America. Find a link to Color and Discover here: A Journey through Central America's Past: http://latino.si.edu/PDF/CACP_Coloring_Book.pdf

Home School Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4 and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7 and 8)

1. Invite students to interview a parent or caregiver about favorite games or toys that they remember from their childhood. Encourage students to share the information they learned with the class by drawing a picture, creating a collage or writing about these games and toys. Find a link about toys from long ago here: <https://www.si.edu/spotlight/toys>

2. Invite students to visit a museum and see exhibits that celebrate the Olmec, Mayan and/or Aztec culture. In class, encourage students to identify their favorite aspects of the exhibits and explain why they liked them.

3. Ask students to search their home for a treasure from when they were little. Invite each student to share it and a story that they remember about their treasure with the class.

4. Invite students to interview their parent or caregiver about food and loved ones. Have them ask the following questions. What is a special food that reminds you of someone special in your life? Why? How do you make it? Who taught you how to make it? When do you eat it? How do you feel when you eat this? Ask students to share the information they learned with the class by writing a story about their parent or caregiver and the special food discussed. Share all of their stories on a bulletin board and have a celebration of special foods and special stories. Invite parents or caregivers to be a part of the celebration.

CONNECT WITH THE INTERNET

Blick Art

Quilt

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/painted-story-quilt/>

Face Book

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/face-book/>

Food Network

Cooking with Kids

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/packages/recipes-for-kids/cooking-with-kids>

Kids National Geographic

Mexico

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/countries/mexico/#mexico-dancers.jpg>

Mexico - Pyramid, Are We There Yet?

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=udYpZn-TEg8>

Mexico, Animals, Are We There Yet?

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=F6upY77ygas>

Smithsonian

Smithsonian Latino Virtual Museum

<http://latino.si.edu/LVM/LatinoVirtualGallery?slide=1>

Ancient Modern

<http://latino.si.edu/LatinoVirtualMuseum/APMM/>

Cerámica de los Ancestros: Central America's Past Revealed

<http://latino.si.edu/exhibitions/centralamericarevealed.htm>

Mexican Treasures of the Smithsonian

http://latino.si.edu/Mexican%20Treasures/english/SmithsonianBro_PREP.pdf

Chequea Esto

<http://latino.si.edu/LVM/ChequeaEsto?slide=4>

Ancient Peoples, Modern Migrations

<http://latino.si.edu/LVM/Chequeaesto/APMM>

Eco Explorers Series: Olmencas/Cerámica de los Ancestros

<http://latino.si.edu/LVM/Chequeaesto/CeramicsOlmec>

Latino Art Now

<http://latino.si.edu/LVM/Chequeaesto/LatinoArtNow>

!Chequea esto!

<http://latino.si.edu/LVM/Chequeaesto/LatinoArtNow>

MEET THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR



MARA PRICE is a native of Mexico and now lives in Southern California. A member of the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, her work has been published in *Iguana*, a Spanish-language children's magazine.



LISA FIELDS is the illustrator of *The Triple Banana Split Boy / El niño goloso* (Piñata Books, 2009). She received her BFA in illustration from the Ringling School of Art and Design and attended the Illustration Academy. A member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, Fields lives in her hometown of Katonah, New York.

ABOUT PIÑATA  BOOKS

Piñata Books is an imprint of Arte Público Press, the oldest and largest publisher of contemporary and historical literature written by US Hispanics: Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans and others. Piñata Books is dedicated to the publication of children's and young adult literature focusing on US Hispanic culture and has made giant strides in filling the void that exists in American publishing and literature: books that accurately reflect themes, characters and customs unique to US Latino culture. Books published under the imprint are designed to serve as a bridge from school to home and to support family literacy and elementary school education. Discover more surprises at <https://artepublicopress.com/about-pinata-books-2/>.

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