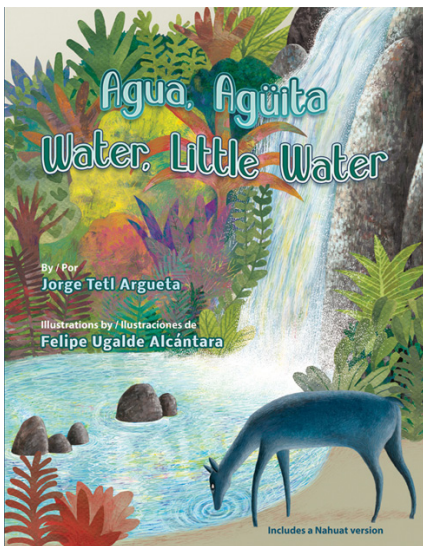


Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water

By Jorge Tetl Argueta
Illustrated by Ugalde Alcántara

SUMMARY



ABOUT THE BOOK

GENRE: Fiction 32 pages, 8 ½ x 11
Hardcover LEXILE: 690L
978-1-55885-854-1 LEXILE (SP): 640L

Award-winning children’s author Jorge Argueta describes the life cycle of water from the perspective of one drop in his new picture book, *Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water*. A Junior Library Guild Selection, this trilingual picture book is a poetic ode to the life-giving force of water.

From its birth deep in Mother Earth, Little Water climbs to the surface, passing through roots and rocks, light and darkness. Finally, the tiny bead of water makes it to the top and rests, “a sigh of morning dew,” hanging on “the tips of leaves / on spider webs / or on the petals / of flowers.” The droplet becomes a river, a lake, an ocean, ultimately climbing to the sky and turning into a cloud. Then, “drop by drop / I return singing / to our Mother Earth. I am Little Water. / I am life.”

With stunningly beautiful illustrations by Felipe Ugalde Alcántara that depict the mountains, rocks, vegetation and animals of the natural world, this poem about the importance of water reflects Argueta’s indigenous roots and his appreciation for nature. Containing the English and Spanish text on each page, the entire poem appears at the end in Nahuatl, the language of Argueta’s Pipil-Nahua ancestors. This book is an excellent choice to encourage children to write their own poems about the natural world and to begin conversations about the interconnected web of life.

THEMES

LATINO/HISPANIC INTEREST, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, POETRY, CYCLE OF LIFE, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, WATER, MOTHER EARTH, SCIENCE, NATURE, SONGS, IMAGINATION, PLAY, JOURNEY, TRANSFORMATION, RESPECT FOR NATURE, METAMORPHOSIS, FICTION

VOCABULARY

Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water 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

Mother Earth, pores, roots, dew, cloud, water bird, life

Academic

entangled, darkness, tender, shapeless

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. Do you like to be outside? What is your favorite part of being outside?
2. Have you ever seen a waterfall? A river? A lake? An ocean?
3. Do you like music? Singing? Poetry?



Exploring the Book

1. Read and talk about the title of the book. Ask the students what they think the title, *Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water*, means. Ask who and what they think this book might be about. Ask students to make a prediction on 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, backmatter, dedications, author's and illustrator's notes.



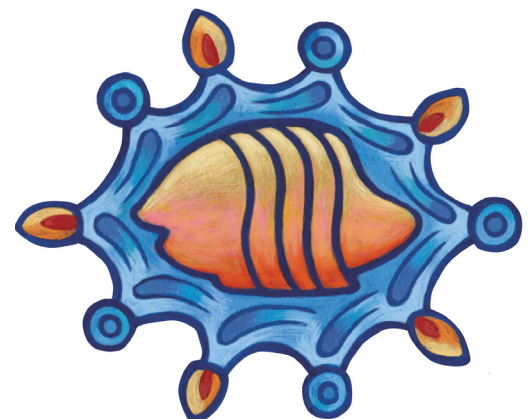
Establishing a Purpose for Reading

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

Ask students to read to find out:

- What the cycle of water is
- Why water is important to everyone and for everything

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



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

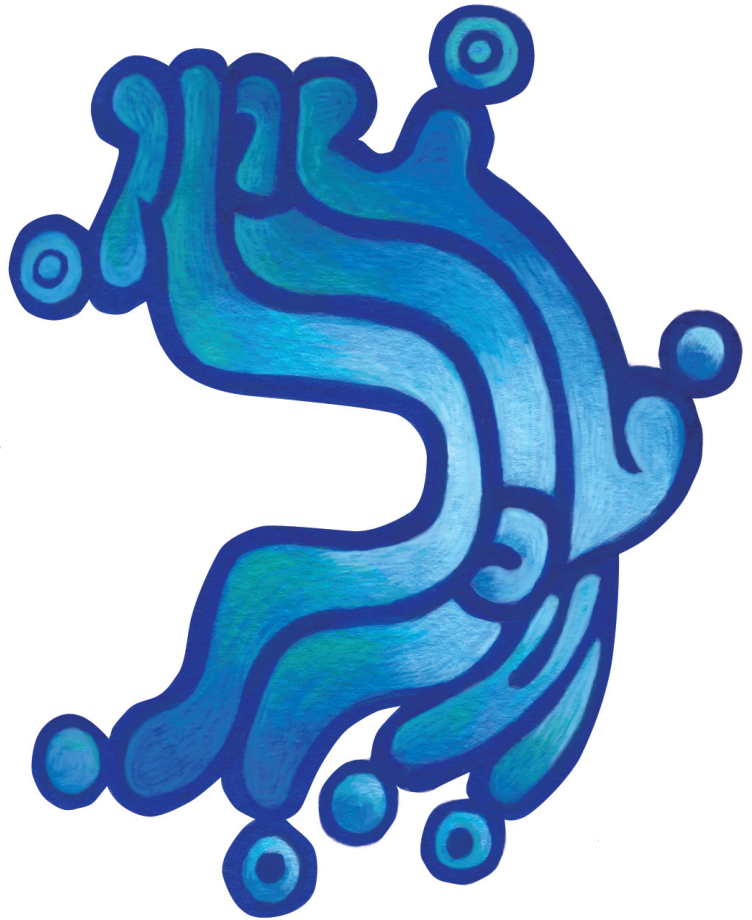
(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1 and 3)

1. Where does Little Water come from?
2. How does Little Water get to Earth's surface?
3. Where can you find Little Water hanging around?
4. What does Little Water become?
5. What color is Little Water?
6. What flavor is Little Water?
7. What shape is Little Water?
8. What does Little Water turn into?
9. How does the story end?

Extension / Higher Level Thinking

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

1. Why do you think Water likes to be called Little Water?
2. Why does Little Water sing, "I am a tiny drop"?
3. Why does Little Water have to rest on the tips of leaves, spider webs and flower petals?
4. Why does Little Water call itself "a sweet, tender and strong song"?
5. How can Little Water be all colors and no colors?
6. How can Little Water be all flavors and no flavors?
7. Describe some of the shapes that Little Water turns into throughout the story. What are other shapes that Little Water can turn into?
8. Why does Little Water say, "I am life"? What does Little Water mean?

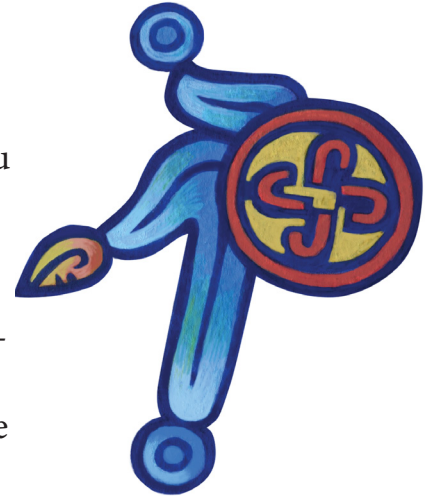


Reader's Response

(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. Little Water tells us that it was born singing. When do you sing? Why do you sing? How does singing make you feel?
2. Little Water describes itself as “a sweet, tender and strong song.” What three adjectives would you use to describe yourself?
3. If you were a song what type of song would you be? What would you be about?
4. Little Water shares its journey to get to the earth's surface. Write about a time that you were on a journey. Where did you go? What did you see? How did you feel? Who did you meet? How did you feel afterwards?
5. Little Water becomes a river, then a lake and then an ocean. How are you part of something that becomes bigger and bigger and bigger?
6. Why is water important? Who needs water?
7. What do you do to help the environment? Why is this important?



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. Ask students to 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 describing the cycle of water. Provide illustrations from the book or other visuals that students can refer to as they give their talks.

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. Write a poem about the cycle of life. Find examples of poems here:

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/geography/physical-geography/raining-rhymes/>

2. Listen to songs about rain or water. Then ask students to work in teams or pairs to write their own song celebrating rain or water.

3. Write a story or poem about the cycle of water and try to have it published in National Geographic's Kids Magazine. Find a link for more information here:

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/kids-club/cool-kids/from-you/junior-reporters-club/#!/register>

Science

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

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

1. Ask students to research how clouds are formed. Have them present their information in posters with text and images. Encourage them to use imagery from the book.

2. Share with the students that rainmaking is also known as artificial precipitation, artificial rainfall and pluvioculture. Ask students to work in teams or pairs to find information on different aspects of rainmaking in the United States. Their research can include, but does not need to be limited to, the following topics: cloud seeding, cloud busters and meteorology.

Social Studies

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

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

1. Jorge Argueta has Pipil-Nahua ancestors and the entire poem appears at the end of the book in Nahuatl. Working in small teams or pairs have the students research the Pipil-Nahua, answering the following questions: Who are the Pipil-Nahua? How important is nature to the Pipil-Nahua? What is the importance of water to the Pipil-Nahua? How is water represented or celebrated in Pipil-Nahua art, music, folklore and/or mythology?

2. Rainmaking is when people conduct a weather modification ritual to attempt to invoke rain. Share with the students general information about rain dances that are performed by many indigenous tribes in the southwestern United States and around the world. Ask students to work in teams or pairs to find information on rain dance practices around the world. As a class, prepare a list of questions similar to the following to guide their research: What is their rain dance like? How do they perform a rain dance? When do they perform rain dances? Who can participate in the rain dance? Why? Why do they conduct a rain dance? What do they hope to achieve with their rain dance? How well does their rain dance function?

Art, Media and Music

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

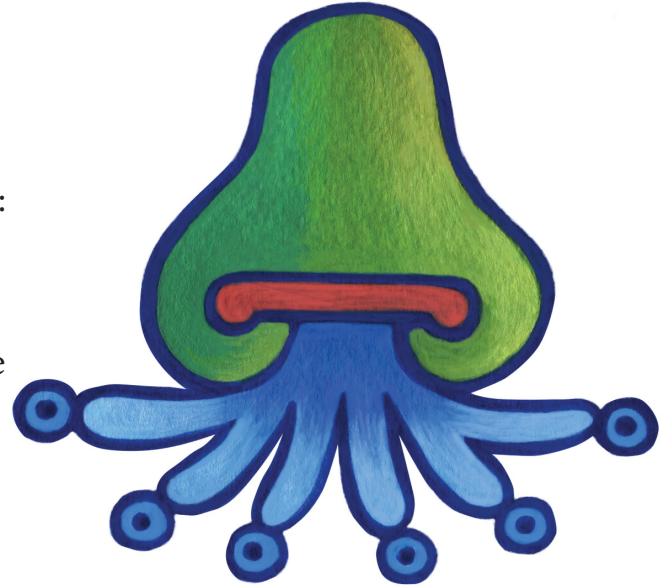
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3)

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

1. Study the illustrations created by Felipe Ugalde Alcántara for *Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water*. Have the students write and illustrate their own stories about the cycle of water. Make their book in the shape of a raindrop or a cloud. Find a lesson plan to make shaped storybooks here: <https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/shaped-story-book/>

2. As a class, create a flip book or an A·B·C book about the cycle of water.

3. Stage a theatrical performance of *Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water*. Assign students the roles of narrators, sound makers, dancers and different forms of Little Water.



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. Ask students to search their homes for an item that represents the cycle of life. Invite each student to share his or her item and explain why this represents the cycle of life.

2. Invite students to visit a science museum and see exhibits that explore the cycle of life. In class, encourage students to identify their favorite exhibits in the museum and explain why they liked them.

3. Encourage students to join in a campaign to help clean up Mother Earth. One example would be Lily's Plastic Clean-Up Mission. Find a link for more information here: <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/kids-club/cool-kids/general-kids-club/lilys-plastic-pickup/>

4. Invite students to interview a family member or caregiver and ask them about their relationship with nature and conservation. As a class, generate a list of questions to ask about nature and conservation.



CONNECT WITH THE INTERNET

Blick Art

Glue Paint Symmetry Prints

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/glue-paint-symmetry-prints/>

Shaped Storybook

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/shaped-storybook/>

Kids National Geographic

The Water Cycle

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/science/nature/water-cycle/>

Awesome Poems About the Water Cycle

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/geography/physical-geography/raining-rhymes/>

Smart Globes

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/kids-club/entertainment/general-entertainment/smart-globes/>

Write to Us

<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/kids-club/cool-kids/from-you/junior-reporters-club/#!/register>

Read Write Think, International Reading Association

Write Around the Room

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/activities-projects/video/take-closer-look-write-30828.html>

Smithsonian

Eco Explorers Series: Mi Tierra, Mi Mundo / My Land, My World

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

MEET THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR



JORGE ARGUETA

is a prize-winning poet and author of more than twenty children's picture books, including *A Movie in My Pillow / Una película en mi almohada*

(Children's Book Press, 2001), *Guacamole: Un poema para cocinar / A Cooking Poem* (Groundwood Books, 2016) and *Somos como las nubes / We Are Like the Clouds* (Groundwood Books, 2016), which won the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award and was named to USBBY's Outstanding International Book List, the ALA Notable Children's Books and the Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices. He lives and works in San Francisco, California.



FELIPE UGALDE

ALCÁNTARA was born in Mexico City and studied Graphic Communication at the National University of Mexico's School of Art. He illustrated *Mother Fox and Mr. Coyote / Mamá Zorra y Don Coyote* (Piñata Books, 2004) and *Little Crow*

to the Rescue / El Cuervito al rescate (Piñata Books, 2005).

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/>.

Agua, Agüita

Water, Little Water

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ORDERING INFORMATION

bkorders@uh.edu • 1-800-633-ARTE • Fax: 713-743-2847
• Arte Público Press, University of Houston, 4902 Gulf Fwy,
Bldg 19, Rm 100, Houston, TX 77204-2004

Learn more about this book at:

<https://artepublicopress.com/product/agua-aguita-water-little-water/>



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