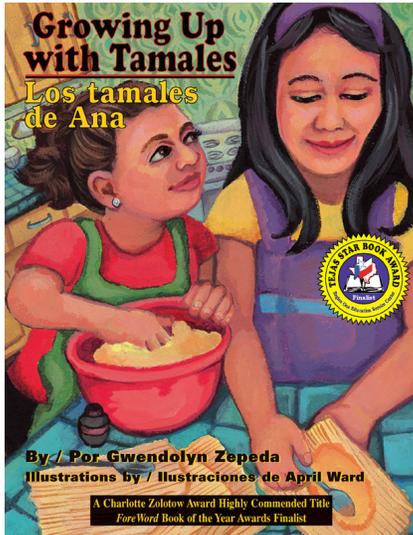


Growing Up with Tamales / Los tamales de Ana

By Gwendolyn Zepeda
Illustrated by April Ward



SUMMARY

Gwendolyn Zepeda introduces young readers to precocious Ana. Well, actually, Ana is a big girl who can introduce herself: “My name is Ana. Every year, my family makes tamales for Christmas. This year, I am six, so I get to mix the dough, which is made of cornmeal. My sister Lidia is eight, so she gets to spread the dough on the corn husk leaves. I wish I was eight, so that my hands would be big enough to spread the dough just right—not too thick and not too thin.”

And so the years pass, and Ana turns eight, ten, twelve, fourteen, and sixteen. But every year, big sister Lidia is always two years older. Ana envies her elder sibling and wishes she could do what Lidia does: put just the right amount of meat inside the tamales and roll them up; steam the tamales without scalding herself with the hot, hot steam; chop and cook the meat for the tamales without cutting or burning her hands.

When she turns eighteen, though, Ana knows she will keep making tamales and she will be able to do all of the steps herself in her very own factory. When Christmas comes around, Ana will deliver tamales to all of her customers around the world, in delivery trucks that say “Ana’s Tamales.” And, Ana thinks, if her sister Lidia wants to, she can work for her!

Gwendolyn Zepeda’s rhythmic prose is combined with April Ward’s bright illustrations to create an affectionate and amusing story about sibling relationships that introduces an important Hispanic holiday tradition—making tamales!

ABOUT THE BOOK

GENRE: Fiction AR QUIZ: 122548
Hardcover ATOS ENGLISH: 3.3
978-1-55885-493-2 ATOS SPANISH: 3.6
32 pages, 8 ½ x 11 INTREST LEVEL: LG

THEMES

LATINO/HISPANIC INTEREST, CULTURAL DIVERSITY, TRADITIONS, FAMILY, FAMILY CELEBRATIONS, CHRISTMAS, FRIENDSHIP, PROBLEM SOLVING, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SIBLING RIVALRY, GROWING UP, SKILLS AND TALENTS, OPTIMISM, ENTHUSIASM, COOKING, SPECIAL MOMENTS, SPECIAL FOOD, FICTION

VOCABULARY

Growing Up with Tamales / Los tamales de Ana 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

mix, spread, fill, roll, tamales, cornmeal, corn husk leaves, dough, steam, chop

Academic

states, customers, trust, factory, credit card, deliver, delivery trucks

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: mix, spread, fill, roll and chop. 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. Are you grown up? When will you be grown up? What's good about being a grown-up? Is there anything that isn't good about being an adult? Why or why not? Describe what you think it will be like when you are grown.
2. Do you have brothers or sisters? Are they older or younger than you? What kind of relationship do you have with your brothers or sisters?
3. What is a tamale? Have you ever eaten one? If so, what do they taste like? What are they made of? How do you think they are made?



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 book's title. Ask the students what they think the title, *Growing Up with Tamales*, means. Ask who and what they think this book might be about. Invite 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:

- the tamale making process
- things we cannot do when we are younger and the reasons why
- what new responsibilities and freedom we gain as we grow up

Encourage students to consider why the author, Gwendolyn Zepeda, 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. Why is Ana jealous of her big sister Lidia?
2. For what special occasion does Ana's family make tamales?
3. What will Ana be big enough to do when she is eight years old?
4. What will Ana know when she is ten years old?
5. What won't Ana be scared of when she is twelve years old?
6. When Ana is fourteen years old what will people trust her to do?
7. Where will Ana drive when she is sixteen years old?
8. How will Ana make tamales when she is eighteen years old?
9. What will Ana let twenty-year-old Lidia do?

Extension / Higher Level Thinking

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

1. What kind of person is Ana? How does Ana feel towards Lidia? Why?
2. Why does Ana's family make tamales for Christmas?
3. What does Ana wish for? What kinds of things does Ana imagine she can do when she is older?
4. Why is Ana eager for Christmas to come around? Why is Christmas special for her?
5. What kinds of things is Ana scared of? Why?
6. What do we learn about making tamales as we read the story? What are the steps to make tamales?
7. What is special about growing up? What clues in the text help you to come to this conclusion?
8. Look at April Ward's illustrations closely. What do we know about Ana and her family because of the illustrations? How do the colors she uses make you feel about the story? Why?



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. Why does the author, Gwendolyn Zepeda, choose to call the story *Growing Up with Tamales*? Do you think this is a good title? Why?
2. Which parts of the book do you connect with the most? Why? Describe a time when you helped make a special type of food for a special occasion.
3. What is special about Christmas? What are some things that you and your family do to celebrate Christmas? Why?
4. Why are special types of food important? Would special occasions still be special without your favorite food? Why or why not?
5. Why do you think Ana wished that she was the same age as Lidia? Who would you like to be as old as? If you were that person's age, what could you do?
6. What is your relationship with your brothers and sisters? How do you feel about your brothers and sisters?
7. What kind of company would you like to be in charge of when you are grown up? Why? How would you run this company? Who would work for you? Why?

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.
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 Ana, explaining why they admire her.

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. Ask students to research their favorite recipes and write out the steps to prepare a favorite dish. Then, have them conduct a mock cooking demo, sharing the recipe with their classmates. Encourage students to look at cookbooks to find different variations of their recipe and to help them organize their presentation.

2. Three Kings Day is another holiday tradition that takes place on January 6th. Ask students to research/compare and contrast Three Kings Day with Christmas. Some questions to consider are: What countries typically celebrate Three Kings Day? How does it compare to Christmas Day in the United States? How is it celebrated? What sort of foods are made and eaten?

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 general information regarding Christmas as a holiday that is celebrated all over the world. Working in small teams or pairs, have the students research different Christmas traditions, including decorations and meals, in different countries. For example, are there places where people do not decorate trees?

2. Ask students to research tamales. Where do tamales originate? In what countries do people prepare and eat tamales? How are tamales made differently in different countries or different regions? What are some other names for foods very similar to tamales? What other foods are similar to tamales?



Art, Media and Music

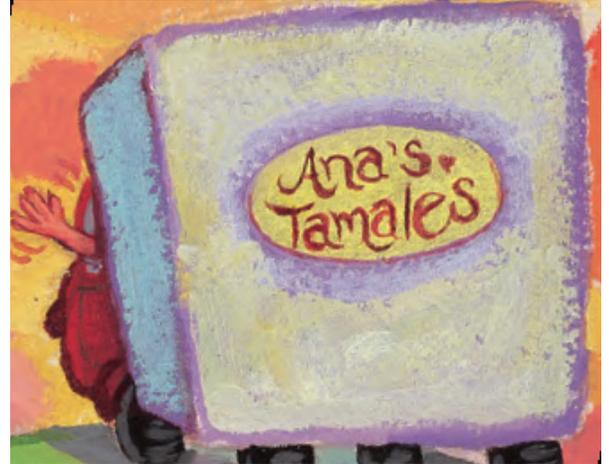
(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

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

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

1. Illustrator April Ward included a number of illustration to show us how to make tamales. Ask students to pick their favorite recipes and illustrate the main four to six steps. Encourage students to look at cookbooks to inspire and help organize their illustrations.

2. Ask students to brainstorm ideas for a company of their own. Ask students to create a name for their company and design a logo to use for the delivery trucks, boxes and invoices. Find a lesson plan on images, symbols, and colored here: <https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/on-the-wall-motifs/>



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 interview their parent or caregiver and ask the following questions: What special food do you make for the holidays? Why? How do you make it? Who taught you how to make it? Why do you only eat this food during the holidays?

2. Invite students and their families to join you to visit a small business. Arrange for students to interview an entrepreneur to find out how she or he founded their company. Ask students to prepare a list of questions similar to the following in advance: What motivated you to create your company? How long did it take? What were the challenges? What is the best part of owning your own company? What is difficult about being the boss? What is your advice for someone who would like to start her or his own company?

3. Invite students to interview their parent, caregiver or a family member about a special holiday celebration that they remember from their childhood. Encourage students to share the information they learned from their interview with the class by drawing a picture, creating a collage or writing about the holiday. Share all of their work on a bulletin board and have a celebration sharing stories of holiday celebration. Invite parents, caregivers and family members to be a part of the special event.



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Blick Art

Changing Faces

[https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/changing-faces/Painted Story](https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/changing-faces/Painted%20Story)

Family Tree

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/family-tree/>

On the Wall Motif

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/on-the-wall-motifs/>

Paste Paper Mosaic

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/pastepaper-mosaic/>

Food Network

Cooking with Kids

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

Smithsonian

La Tamalada: A Christmas Tamale Tradition

<https://folklife.si.edu/magazine/tamalada-christmas-tamale-tradition>

MEET THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR



GWENDOLYN ZEPEDA is the author of four bilingual picture books for children: *Level Up / Paso de nivel* (Piñata Books, 2012); *I Kick the Ball / Pateo el balón* (Piñata Books, 2011); *Growing Up with Tamales / Los tamales de Ana* (Piñata Books, 2008), a 2009

Charlotte Zolotow Award Highly Commended Title; and *Sunflowers / Girasoles* (Piñata Books, 2009), winner of the Texas Institute of Letters' Austin Public Library Friends Foundation Award for Best Children's Book. She lives and works in Houston, Texas.



APRIL WARD is the illustrator of *Butterflies on Carmen Street / Mariposas en la calle Carmen* (Piñata Books, 2007) and *Juan and the Chupacabras / Juan y el Chupacabras* (Piñata Books, 2006). Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Pratt

Institute in Brooklyn, New York, and has been working in children's book publishing ever since. She currently lives in San Diego, California.

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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Los tamales de Ana

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