

Mimí's Parranda / La parranda de Mimí

By Lydia M. Gil
Illustrated by Hernán Sosa

SUMMARY

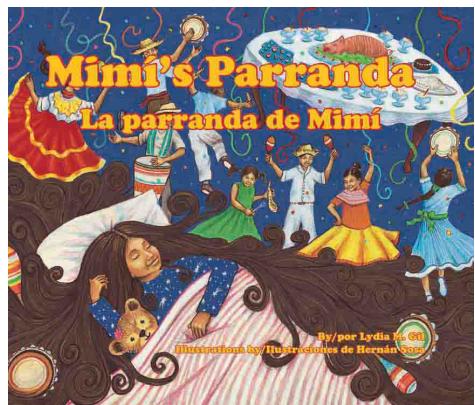
Mimí's Parranda / La parranda de Mimí (Piñata Books), written by Lydia Gil, celebrates a popular Puerto Rican holiday tradition.

Like most young children, Mimí loves Christmastime, so much so that she doesn't even mind the bitter cold. But while her friends plan to ask for skates, sleds, coats and boots for Christmas gifts, Mimí wants a straw hat, new sandals, a polka-dot bathing suit, and maybe even a beach ball. She'll need toys and clothing for warm weather because she goes to Puerto Rico every Christmas!

Mimí especially looks forward to her annual *parranda*, the Puerto Rican version of Christmas caroling. She loves it when everyone arrives late at night and wakes her up by playing their instruments—*güiros*, *palitos*, *maracas*, *guitarras*, *tambourines*. And the food ... she dreams about a table brimming with all her favorites: roasted pork, *pasteles* and *arroz con leche*.

But when she learns that her family won't be able to go to Puerto Rico after all, Mimí is crushed. She is so sad that she loses interest in her class' holiday party, and on the day of the party, she decides to stay home in bed. Just as Mimí is falling asleep, though, she hears the unmistakable sounds of musical instruments.

Could it be that she'll get her *parranda* after all?



ABOUT THE BOOK

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| GENRE: Fiction | AR QUIZ: 114814 |
| Hardcover | ATOS ENGLISH: 4.0 |
| 978-1-55885-477-2 | ATOS SPANISH: 3.6 |
| 32 pages, 8 ½ x 11 | INTREST LEVEL: LG |

THEMES

LATINO/HISPANIC INTEREST, FAMILY, TRADITIONS, INGENUITY, CREATIVITY, FRIENDSHIP, KINDNESS, EMPATHY, JOY, CELEBRATIONS, SPECIAL EVENTS, SCHOOL, HOLIDAYS, MUSIC, FOOD, DISAPPOINTMENT, DREAMS, SURPRISE, FICTION

VOCABULARY

Mimí's Parranda / La parranda de Mimí 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

pasteles, chicharrones, parranda, maraca, güiro, palitos, panderetas, arroz con leche

Academic

frustration, wooden rattles, lightning bolt, cinnamon stick

ELL / ESL Teaching Strategies

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

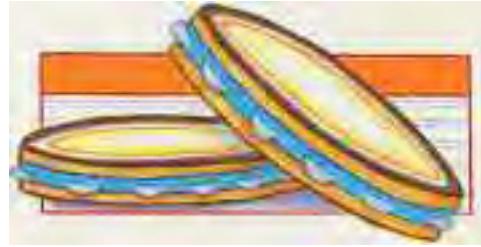
As a class, establish sounds for the following words that refer to the instruments found in the text: *maraca*, *güiro*, *palitos*, and *panderetas*. Encourage your students to make the sounds created for these words when they hear them during the reading.

Before Reading

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

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Have you ever visited the Caribbean? What do you know about the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico?
2. How do you celebrate Christmas? What special music do you listen to? What special food do you eat? What special activities do you do?
3. What things do you dream about? What was your last dream about? Would you like that dream to come true?



Exploring the Book

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

1. 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.
2. Talk about the front cover. Ask the students if they are familiar with the instruments shown (*maraca*, *güiro*, *palitos*, *panderetas*). If so, have them explain how to play these instruments and what sounds they make. If not, ask them to guess how these instruments are played and what sounds they make.
3. Make the observation that the girl on the cover, Mimí, is sleeping and that the images surrounding her may be a part of her dream. Ask the students if they remember their dreams. If so, how do they feel after a good or happy dream like Mimí seems to be having? Ask if they ever dream about celebrations and, if so, what celebrations they dream of.

Establishing a Purpose for Reading

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

Ask students to read to find out:

- What Mimí is dreaming about and why
- What a *parranda* is

Encourage students to consider why the author, Lydia M. Gil, 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. Where does Mimí always go for Christmas?
2. Why do Suzie and Monica laugh when Mimí says she wants a bathing suit for Christmas?
3. What class activity will Mimí miss because of her trip to Puerto Rico?
4. What does Mimí identify as the best part of her Christmas celebration in Puerto Rico?
5. How does Mimí describe a *parranda*?
6. Why do Suzie and Monica laugh at Mimí's explanation of what a *parranda* is?
7. Why don't any of Mimí's classmates notice that she's sad?
8. What type of noises wake Mimí up?
9. Who does Mimí find in her living room? What are they doing?
10. Where do Mimí's classmates get the *maracas*, *güiros*, *palitos* and *panderetas*?

Extension / Higher Level Thinking

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

1. Why do you think going to Puerto Rico for Christmas is important for Mimí?
2. What causes a tiny seed of frustration to begin growing deep inside of Mimí? Why?
3. Why does Mimí say, "You girls don't know anything about anything"?
4. Why do you think Mamá doesn't let Mimí know that their Christmas trip is cancelled?
5. Mimí spent all night dreaming about delicious food and her family dancing and celebrating. How do you think this dream made Mimí feel?
6. Why does Mimí feel like the last week of classes seems to last forever? When do you feel like time is moving very slowly?
7. What may be some reasons why Mimí didn't go to school on the day of the class party?
8. How do you think Mimí feels about her friends making *maracas*, *güiros*, *palitos*, and *panderetas* and bringing a *parranda* to her house? 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 is celebrating Christmas important for Mimi and her classmates? Is celebrating Christmas important for you? Why or why not?
2. Write about a time when you were disappointed by your family or friends but the situation turned out okay. What happened? What did you do? How was it resolved?
3. Mimi was upset that her trip to Puerto Rico was cancelled. Do you think this is the only thing bothering Mimi? When you are upset about something how do you act or react? Why?
4. Mimi was frustrated that her friends didn't understand her when she was trying to describe what a *parranda* was. What do you do when you get frustrated? Does this make things better or worse? Explain.
5. Describe a time when you felt left out of an activity. Why did you feel this way? What did you end up doing to not feel so left out?
6. What role do Mimi's friends play in this story? How might the story have ended differently if they had not been interested in learning about *parrandas*? What does it feel like to have good, supportive friends? Give an example from your own life.
7. Why do people have music at celebrations and for special events?
8. Listen to your favorite song. Then write about how this song makes you feel, why it's important to you and describe any special memories you have tied to this song.

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 a holiday and how they celebrated it in their home country. Allow them to use photos or other visuals to help them with their presentation.

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 write Mimí a letter about their favorite holiday. Ask them to include the following in their letter: A description of the holiday that includes the special activities, music and food for that holiday. They should include, who they celebrate this holiday with, where they celebrate this holiday and any special memories they have related to this holiday.
2. Ask students to write a story about a dream that they have had. Ask them to create an illustration for their story, incorporating different images to symbolize their dream.
3. Mimí wanted to go to Puerto Rico to celebrate Christmas with her family. Ask students to research and draw out their family tree, tracing themselves back three or four generations. “Plant” all of the family trees on the bulletin board and celebrate families and all of the different places the students come from. Find a link on how to make a family tree here: <https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/family-tree/>

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 the geography of the Caribbean, then locate Puerto Rico on a globe or map. Invite students to research Puerto Rico. As a class, prepare a list of questions similar to the following to guide their research: What is the temperature like in Puerto Rico in the winter? Why? What language do people speak in Puerto Rico? Why? What other languages are spoken in the Caribbean? Why? How is Christmas celebrated in Puerto Rico? How is it similar to celebrations in the United States? How is it different?
2. Share general information about Christmas. Working in small teams or pairs, have the students research how Christmas is celebrated all around the world, assigning each team / pair a specific country. Ask students to prepare a list of questions like the following to guide their research: How does their specific country celebrate Christmas? Does this country celebrate Christmas differently than you? Do the people in the country put up decorations? Do they make a special food?



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 Hernán Sosa's illustration that shows Mimí dreaming of a *parranda*. Ask students to describe, design and draw themselves dreaming about a holiday celebration.
2. Ask students to listen to and sing traditional Christmas music from Puerto Rico called aguinaldos. Introduce the instruments used: *maraca*, *güiro*, *palitos* and *panderetas*. Here is a link that gives an example of what the *güiro* sounds like: <https://folkways.si.edu/ella-jenkins/rhythm-instruments-guiro/childrens/music/track smithsonian>
3. Ask students to research traditional Christmas music from Puerto Rico. Invite students to work in small groups to compose an *aguinaldo* inspired by *Mimí's Parranda*. Then have each group sing their song for their classmates.



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 their parent or caregiver about their favorite celebration from childhood. Encourage students to share the information they learned with the class by drawing a picture, creating a collage or writing based on the interview.
2. Encourage students to research a holiday celebration that they don't know about but would like to learn more about. As a class, prepare a list of questions similar the following to guide their research: Where does this celebration take place? What is being celebrated and how?
3. Ask students to search her or his home for potential "instruments" and bring in a found or recycled item to create a *maraca*, *güiro*, *palitos* or *pandereta* at school. Once all instruments are created compare the sounds produced. Which make loud sounds, soft sounds, high sounds, deep sounds and metallic sounds? Then together play along to an aguinaldo or a favorite Christmas song.
4. Invite students to interview a family member or caregiver who plays an instrument. Ask students to prepare a list of questions akin to the following to guide their research: How did the person become interested in the instrument? How does the instrument work? What type of music does the person like to play? Why? Then as a class, plan a "Family and Friends Concert" inviting all who would like to share their talents to play for the class. Students will serve as masters of the ceremony and introduce the musicians, sharing a bit about them for the class.

CONNECT WITH THE INTERNET

Blick Art

Family Tree

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

Float People

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/float-people/>

Paper Memory Quilt

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/paper-memory-quilt/>

Picasso-Inspired Soft Sculpture

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/picasso-inspired-soft-sculpture/>

Recycled Book Boxes

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

Smithsonian

Lesson Plan: Plena, the People's Newspaper: Puerto Rican Music for the Classroom:

<https://folkways.si.edu/plena-peoples-newspaper-puerto-rican-classroom/music/tools-for-teaching/smithsonian>

Artist Spotlight: Tito Matos Puerto Rican plena drummer:

<https://folkways.si.edu/tito-matos-puerto-rican-plena-drummer/latin-world/music/article/smithsonian>

Artist Spotlight: Los Pleneros de la 21: Afro-Puerto Rican traditions:

<https://folkways.si.edu/los-pleneros-de-la-21-afro-puerto-rican-traditions/latin/music/article/smithsonian>

Create-It: Making Musical Instruments

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



MEET THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR



LYDIA M. GIL, a native of Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, is a teacher and writer. She obtained her Ph.D. in Spanish from the University of Texas and her master's degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She lives and works in Denver, Colorado.



HERNÁN SOSA is an illustrator whose work has been published in Queen of the Bean (Shortland Publications, 1999). A native of Argentina, he moved to Paraguay as a young boy. Currently, he lives and works in Denver, Colorado.

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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