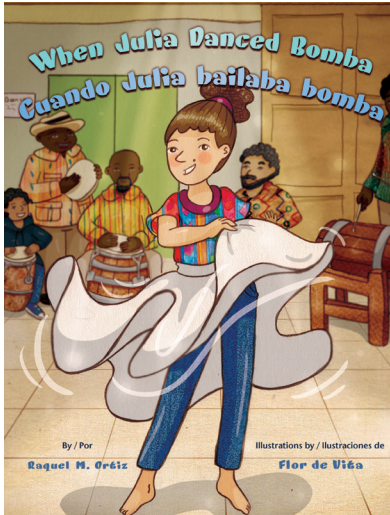


When Julia Danced Bomba / Cuando Julia bailaba

By Raquel M. Ortiz
Illustrated by Flor de Vita



ABOUT THE BOOK

GENRE: Fiction
Hardcover
978-1-55885-886-2
32 pages, 8 ½ x 11

SUMMARY

Introducing children—and adults!—to the Afro-Latino tradition of *bomba* music and dancing, author and educator Raquel M. Ortiz shares another story for children about her rich Puerto Rican heritage. Julia does not want to go to dance class. Her turns are still too slow, her steps too big. She just can't do anything right! When Julia finds out she'll be participating in the *bombazo* and performing a solo she is terrified. But Julia takes a deep breath, closes her eyes and focuses on the beat of the drum. As she dances Julia notices that the drums are actually talking to her. She stops worrying and instead loses herself in the rhythm of the *bomba* drums! With lively illustrations by Flor de Vita this book will help children understand that practicing—whether dance steps, dribbling a ball or playing a musical instrument—yields results!

THEMES

AFRO-LATINO, CARIBBEAN MUSIC, CULTURAL TRADITIONS, CULTURE, DANCE, DRUMMING, FAMILY, FEAR, FICTION, IMAGINATION, INSTRUMENTS, MUSIC, PERCUSSION, JEALOUSY, LATINO/HISPANIC INTEREST, TALENT

VOCABULARY

When Julia Danced Bomba 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

cultural center, *barriles*, *bombazo*, solo, *barril primo*, main drum, *bomba*, *cuá*

Academic

natural, preferred, make believe, daydream, concentrating, paused

ELL / ESL Teaching Strategies

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

Invite students to act out the following words found in text: ran, sat, pounding, banged, right turn, side step, jump, sing, dance, dance a solo, terrific turn, twirling, special spin, little hops, bouncing like a donkey, fancy footwork, strolling, stumbling, head held high, strolled, stopping, paused, smiled, nodded, closed her eyes, step, winked, hugged and whispered.

Background Information

Bomba is an Afro-Puerto Rican musical celebration that's created by dancers, percussionists and singers. On the island of Puerto Rico *bombazos* are traditionally celebrated in the municipalities of Loíza Aldea, Mayagüez, Ponce, San Juan and Santurce. *Bombazos* are also held in US cities, such as New York, Cleveland, Chicago, Philadelphia and Orlando. Other Caribbean cultures have dances similar to *bomba*, such as *gagá* in the Dominican Republic and *rumba* in Cuba. Also, some aspects of *bomba* resemble the *flamenco* from Southern Spain.

Three instruments are needed for a *bombazo*: the drums called *barriles* or *bombas*, the *cuá* and the *maraca*. The *barril primo* is very important for a *bombazo* because it's the high pitched drum that marks every movement the dancer makes as the dancer and drum 'talk' with each other while the *buleador* or *segundo* are the low pitch drums that keep a steady beat. Also, *bomba* music is always accompanied by singing. After each verse is sung by the lead singer, the choir repeats the verse in a call-and-repeat style.

While there are many styles of *bomba*, the five basic *bomba* rhythms are: *cuembe*, *holandés*, *sicá*, *seis corrido* and *Yubá*. In this story Julia dances to a *Yubá*.



Before Reading

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

Pre-Reading Questions

1. Do you like to dance? Why? What kind of music do you like to dance to? How does dancing make you feel? Why?
2. What is a dancer and what does a dancer do? What type of an education may a dancer have?
3. Why do you learn dances and songs in school?
4. As a hook for students, consider showing them the book trailer created by the author posted on YouTube:
<https://youtu.be/UB2ATZaCEVA>

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, *When Julia Danced Bomba / Cuando Julia bailaba Bomba* means. Ask who and what they think this book might be about. Then ask the 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, back matter, dedications and author's and illustrator's notes.
3. Study the back cover. Say the word *bombazo* together. Take turns guessing what a *bombazo* may be.

Establishing a Purpose for Reading

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

Ask students to read to find out:

- What happens when we try too hard or worry too much?
- How we become good at doing something?

Encourage students to consider why the author, Raquel M. Ortiz, 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 Cheito a natural? What does he do all week long?
2. Why doesn't Julia like *bomba* class?
3. Why wasn't it easy for Julia to imitate Yamarís?
4. What is a *bombazo*?
5. Why couldn't Julia concentrate on her little cousin Carla's terrific twirl?
6. What did Julia do instead of noticing Natalia's special spin?
7. What was Julia thinking about when Yamarís was showing off her fancy footwork?
8. What did the drummer of the *barril primo*, the main drum, do?
9. What did Julia think once she heard the sound of the drum?
10. What happened once Julia stopped worrying and took a break from trying so hard?
11. What did Cheito sing?

Extension / Higher Level Thinking

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

1. Based on the text and illustrations, describe how to dance and play the music *bomba*. Describe the music. Why is *bomba* important to students?
2. Why do you think Julia prefer playing make believe instead of practicing *bomba*?
3. What are some reasons Julia is lost in dance class?
4. What was the reason that Julia couldn't concentrate on Carla's terrific twirl, Natalia's special spin or Yamarís' fancy footwork?
5. Why do you think Julia inhaled and closed her eyes before she took her first dance steps? What might this have made Julia do or feel?
6. Why did Julia think the drum was talking to her?
7. What does it mean that Julia "heard and felt the rhythm of the *bomba* drums?"
8. Why do you think Julia danced well at the end of the story? What changed for her? How did she feel about *bomba* music? The *bomba* drum?
9. Why did big brother Cheito wink at Julia?
10. The story ends with this sentence: "She was a natural, too!" What do you think this means?
11. Why do you think dancing or playing an instrument is important? Why should schools teach

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. Which parts of the book do you connect to the most? Why? Describe a time when you felt you weren't good at something and you wanted to give up.
2. Julia daydreamed about being an astronaut. Write or draw a picture about what you dream of becoming when you are an adult.
3. Write a song or a poem about how it feels to be really bad at something. Here are some questions to get you started: What do you want to do? Where do you want to go? What makes you feel better?
4. The story takes place in a cultural center. Imagine the different things you can learn about or do in a cultural center. Write a list of different dance classes, art activities and cultural programs you would like to see at a cultural center.
5. Onomatopoeia is using words that sound like what you are trying to describe. Use onomatopoeia to describe Julia's dancing or Cheito's drumming.

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. Have students make predictions about word meaning then 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. Ask each student to 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, have students 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. Create a presentation on a type of music or dance from your home country. Remember to describe the instruments or dance moves for your classmates. Plan to have an interactive component to your presentation and invite everyone to learn to play a beat or learn a new dance step. Bring photos, instruments and/or recorded music for your 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 listen to the sound of the following instruments: *maraca*, *barril* and *cuá*. List words that describe them and the sounds they make. Ask students to write a description of their favorite instrument and a poem about that instrument or one or all of the instruments mentioned in the story.

2. Invite students to act out some or all of the following words found in the story: Ran, sat, pounding, banged, right turn, side step, jump, sing, dance, dance a solo, terrific turn, twirling, special spin, little hops, bouncing like a donkey, fancy footwork, strolling, stumbling, head held high, strolled, stopping, paused, smiled, nodded, closed her eyes, step, winked, hugged and whispered. Then have them create a new scene for *When Julia Danced Bomba* using five to eight of the action words found in the story.

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 Afro-Latino music.

Working in small teams or pairs, ask the students to research and answer some or all of the following questions about one country or region in Latin American:

What African instruments and beats came to Latin American? When did they come to Latin American? How did they influence music in that region? Ask the students to share their findings with the class, using maps and pictures or photos.

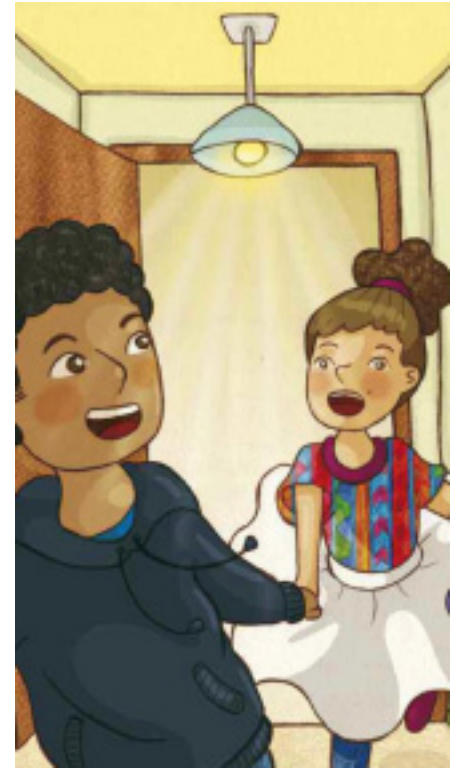
2. Ask students to research the different places *bomba* originated in or is celebrated on the island of Puerto Rico and identify them on a map. Then have groups of students learn about the African culture found in these different municipalities. Invite the groups to present on the municipality that they studied.



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 the students to study the illustrations and create a drawing of themselves in a *bomba* class or participating in a *bombazo*.
2. Listen to *bomba* music. See if the students can identify some of the instruments that were shown in the artwork and mentioned in the story. Then, ask students to use their desk as a barril. Have students play the *Yubá* beat and try to keep time to some of the songs.
3. Invite students to compose a *bomba* song. Share with them that Cheito sang with the drum about *bomba* instruments. Ask the students to write their own songs about who they are or that they want to be.



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 look at photos or works of art inspired by *bomba* musicians and/or dancers and ask them to share their favorite images with their classmates.
2. Encourage students to research a bombero/a, either a singer, musician or composer. Ask students to answer the following questions: Where do they come from? What did they study? When did they begin to sing or play an instrument? What they are known for in the world of *bomba*? What is their most famous *bomba* song?
3. Ask students to search their home for a musical instrument or something that could be used as a musical instrument and bring it to school. Invite each student to share his or her 'instrument,' how to play it and what they like the best about this instrument.
4. Invite students to interview a family member or caregiver and ask them about their favorite type of music and their favorite song. Then ask the students to compare and contrast this to their own favorite type of music and song. As a class, have a battle of the songs, 'Oldies but Goodies' versus contemporary music. Play, listen to and dance to the family members, caregivers and students favorite songs and vote on a class favorite.
5. As a class, plan a *bombazo*. Learn *bomba* songs and dance moves. Learn the *bomba* rhythm *Yubá*. You can find information on how to sing, play and dance *bomba* here: <https://www.carnegiehall.org/Education/Educators/Musical-Explorers/New-York-City/Juan-and-Julia>

CONNECT WITH THE INTERNET

Blick Art

Jive Foil Puppets

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/jive-foil-puppets/>

Wayang Kulit Shadow Puppetry

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/wayang-kulit-shadow-puppetry/>

Wireform Figure Sculpture

<https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/wireform-figure-sculpture/>

Carnegie Hall: *Bomba* and *Plena* with Juan and Julia

<https://www.carnegiehall.org/Education/Educators/Musical-Explorers/New-York-City/Juan-and-Julia>

Smithsonian

Bomba Lesson

<http://www.folkways.si.edu/bomba/music/tools-for-teaching/smithsonian>

Smithsonian Activities and Materials related to *Bomba*

<http://www.folkways.si.edu/puerto-rican-bomba-plena-shared-traditions-distinct-rhythms/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>

Lesson Plans

<https://folkways.si.edu/lesson-plans/smithsonian>



MEET THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR



RAQUEL M. ORTIZ was born and raised in Lorain, Ohio. Her parents are from the island of Puerto Rico. Raquel and her daughter, Sofia, learned to sing and dance *bomba* at La Casita de Don Pedro in Humboldt Park, Chicago. She and her son, César, studied *bomba* dancing and drumming in New York City with Los Pleneros de la 21 and she currently collaborates with BombaYo. When Raquel isn't dancing or drumming

she creates educational material for the Puerto Rican Heritage Cultural Ambassadors Program for the Center for Puerto Rican Studies (Hunter College). She is the author of *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural / Sofi y el mágico mural musical* and *Sofi Paints her Dreams / Sofi pinta sus sueños*. Please visit her web page at <https://colorespublishing.wordpress.com/about/>



FLOR DE VITA, a native of Veracruz, Mexico, is the *illustrator of Just One Itsy Bitsy Little Bite / Sólo una mordidita chiquitita* (Piñata Books, 2018). A graduate of the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey with a B.A. in Animation and Digital Art, she currently resides in Jalisco, Mexico.

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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