



Study Guide for ***Among the Volcanoes*** **by Omar S. Castañeda**

Goals 2000 - Partnerships for
Educating Colorado Students

In Partnership with the **Denver Public Schools**
and the **Metropolitan State College of Denver**

El Alma de la Raza Project



Study Guide for *Among the Volcanoes* by Omar S. Castañeda

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Grades 6-8

Implementation Time
for Unit of Study: 6-8 weeks

Goals 2000 - Partnerships for
Educating Colorado Students
El Alma de la Raza Curriculum
and Teacher Training Project

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El Alma de la Raza Series

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Unit Concepts

- Learning about the Mayan culture
- Relevance of the story and issues in *Among the Volcanoes*, by Omar Castañeda, to students' lives
- Gender roles

Standards Addressed by This Unit

Reading and Writing

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

Students read to locate, select, evaluate, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources. (RW5)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.

History

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history. (H6)

Introduction

The Mayan civilization lasted for approximately 3,000 years. It was a sophisticated civilization that produced many achievements in math, architecture, arts and science. It produced a very structured political system and maintained strong religious beliefs. The Mayan people are known to have lived in Chiapas, Guatemala, Honduras, and parts of the Yucatán Peninsula.

The culture of the Mayans was interesting and rich. Many of the traditions and practices of the Mayan culture can be seen, even today, in the cultures of the Mexican people and many of their Mexican-American descendants.

In his book, *Among the Volcanoes*, Omar Castañeda describes many of the traditions and practices of the Mayan people. His depiction of the lifestyle of a small village of Mayan people living in Guatemala is realistic and moving. He brings to life the dreams and hardships of Isabel Pacay, a teenage girl living in Chuuí Chopaló with her family.

One of the major themes in Castañeda's book is that of gender roles, especially for females. He describes Isabel's difficult choices and decisions concerning her life and responsibilities.

Implementation Guidelines

This unit is written specifically for sixth grade language arts classes, but it could also be taught as an interdisciplinary language arts-social studies unit. It is also possible to use the unit at the eighth grade level. The last lesson is intended to be used as an extension unit.

Lesson Summary

Chapter 1	Internet Introduction to Mayan Indians, vocabulary, comprehension activity
Chapter 2	Predicting Activity
Chapters 3 and 4	Reading for understanding, dictionary activity, comparison strategies
Chapter 5	Inferencing, summarizing activities
Chapter 6	Evaluating activity, vocabulary activity
Chapter 7	Interviewing and oral presentations
Chapter 8	Discussion activity, vocabulary activity
Chapter 9	Guided readings, comparison activity
Chapter 10	Diorama activity, peer assessment activity
Chapter 11	Drawing conclusions
Chapter 12	Analysis activity
Chapter 13	Compare/Contrast activity
Chapter 14	Predicting activity
Chapter 15	Character analysis

Chapter 1

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

Students use appropriate technologies to extend comprehension and communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW7)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes.

Students write and speak to peers, teachers and the community.

Students use correct sentence structure in writing.

Students demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Students use appropriate technologies to access, process, and communicate information for a variety of purposes.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will make an oral presentation to their peers.

Students will be able to answer questions about their reading using complete sentences.

Students will understand how to use the Internet.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Shared readings (whole class)

Teacher-guided discussion

Oral presentations

Internet access

ACTIVITIES

Before starting the book, students will access the Internet to get general information about the Mayan Indians, by typing in one of the URL addresses from the bibliography or using a search engine (searching for “Maya Culture”). Students are to take notes about what they have read and be able to present the information to the class. After each student has obtained information from the Internet, students will present the information to the class in five-minute presentations.

In class, have students take turns reading Chapter 1 of *Among the Volcanoes* out loud, while other students in the class read along. When finished with the chapter discuss what has happened and why it is important. Complete the vocabulary worksheet and the comprehension worksheet.

Chapter 1 (cont.)

VOCABULARY

maestro

Teacher

Quiché

Mayan language

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Internet access

worksheet with questions about the chapter

ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment of oral presentations. Demonstrated understanding of vocabulary words.

Accurate answers to comprehension questions, written in complete sentences and using correct grammar and punctuation.

Vocabulary: Chapter 1

Find the following words in the book. Try to figure out their meaning by the way they are used in the sentences. Write what you think the word means. Look up each word in the dictionary and compare your definition with the dictionary definitions.

wadding (p. 1)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

looming (p. 1)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

reverence (p. 1)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

intoned (p. 2)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

marimba (p. 3)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

Vocabulary: Chapter 1 (cont.)

reminisce (p. 3)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

glyphs (p. 3)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

iridescent (p. 4)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

collaborate (p. 5)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

guerrilla (p. 5)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

elegant (p. 8)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

Vocabulary: Chapter 1 (cont.)

dread (p. 9)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

alcove (p. 10)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

estuary (p. 10)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

germinate (p. 11)

My definition: _____

Dictionary definition: _____

Comprehension Questions: Chapter 1

Directions: Answer the following questions using complete sentences.

1. What is a huipil?

Answer: A huipil is a white blouse with colorful brocade at the collar.

2. What is the name of the village where this story takes place?

Answer: The name of the village is Chuuí Chopaló.

3. What was Isabel's teacher's name?

Answer: Her teacher's name was Andres Xiloj.

4. What tribe did Isabel's family belong to?

Answer: They were part of the Mayan tribe.

5. What kind of crops were grown in the area?

Answer: Corn and coffee were grown in the area.

6. What two strange things had happened to make Isabel follow her father?

Answer: Isabel's father was leaving the house without eating breakfast and her mother was still in bed.

7. What did Isabel desire to do with her life?

Answer: Isabel wanted to be a teacher.

8. What was Isabel doing for her family? Why?

Answer: Isabel was taking over the job of caring for her family because her mother was ill.

9. What did Isabel's father do with the hen? Why?

Answer: Isabel's father cut the throat of the hen to make an offering to the gods.

Possible Writing Assignment: Have you ever had to take responsibility for the jobs of other people in your family when they were sick? How did you feel about having to do extra work?

Chapter 2

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students will use correct sentence structure in writing.

Students will demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Students will make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in reading writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will predict what will happen in the story and will defend their point of view.

Students will use the knowledge they have gained from their reading to answer the questions.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Direct interaction

Class discussion

Shared reading (whole class)

Teacher-directed questions

ACTIVITIES

After reading Chapter 2, students will discuss their predictions for the story. They must defend their point of view using information from the book.

Following the discussion, students will answer the questions on the comprehension worksheet.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

comprehension worksheet

ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment of oral discussion. Worksheet completed using complete sentences and correct grammar and punctuation.

Predicting: Chapter 2

In the last chapter we read that Isabel was taking over some of her mother's responsibilities for the family. How do you think Isabel feels about having to do this and what do you think she will do in the future?

Reading Questions

1. Where did Isabel put the urn of water to carry it?
Answer: She put the urn on top of her head.
2. How many people are in Isabel's family? Who are they?
Answer: There are six people in the family: the mother, the father, the younger sister, two brothers and Isabel.
3. Why did Isabel want to be a teacher?
Possible answer: Isabel wanted to be a teacher because she felt that as a teacher she could connect with something important in the world, something larger than herself.
4. What did Isabel's mother eat to try to cure her illness?
Answer: Isabel's mother ate grilled crickets to try to cure her illness.

Chapters 3 and 4

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students read to locate, select, evaluate, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources. (RW5)

Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history. (H6)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students understand the structure, organization, and use of various media, reference materials, and technological sources, and use them appropriately to locate information for their reading, writing, and speaking purposes.

Students know how various forms of expression reflect religious beliefs and philosophical ideas.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will understand the meaning of important vocabulary words.

Students will use comparison strategies to understand differences in human behavior.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Using dictionary

Defining

Independent reading

Drawing conclusions

ACTIVITIES

After reading independently, students will use a dictionary, if necessary, to complete the vocabulary worksheet. In small groups, students will discuss the questions on the comprehension worksheet. They should then write the answers in complete sentences.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

dictionary

vocabulary worksheet

comprehension worksheet

ASSESSMENT

Correct answers for the vocabulary and comprehension worksheets.

Vocabulary: Chapters 3 and 4

Choosing the best definition

Directions: Read each sentence. Write the letter and the best definition for the word in dark type. If you don't recognize the word, look it up in a dictionary. The page where each sentence occurs is in parentheses.

1. There was such a **commotion** in the clearing that the entire village seemed to be a tightly coiled rope wrapped around a center full of discord. (p. 24)
 - a. noisy rushing about
 - b. very loud noise
 - c. great roar

2. Even more startling than his **pleading** manner... (p. 25)
 - a. hopeful
 - b. angry
 - c. begging

3. Several men spoke in Tzutujil about the American's **arrogance**. (p. 28)
 - a. way of speaking, poor accent
 - b. important papers
 - c. too much pride, self-importance

4. He had been standing still, noting the barely **perceptible** exchange between Isabel and the tall foreigner... (p. 29)
 - a. noticeable
 - b. thinkable
 - c. likable

5. They had to behave well in public, but this was an uncommon stiffness and **formality**. (p. 30)
 - a. being too embarrassed
 - b. being too correct
 - c. being out of control

6. In spite of herself, she felt **resentment** towards her mother's illness simply because it prevented her from returning to Lucas Choy. (p. 32)
 - a. uncertainty
 - b. lack of awareness
 - c. bitterness

Vocabulary: Chapters 3 and 4 (cont.)

7. Though these were the most ordinary of things in Chuuí Chopaló, ascending as she was to the house of the mystical Eziqel, Isabel felt a ripple **traverse** her body because of nature's activity. (p. 33)
 - a. travel through
 - b. shake
 - c. tickle

8. **Muffled** voices carried through the vine-lashed walls and across the short distance between the simple hut and Isabel... (p. 33)
 - a. very loud
 - b. anxious
 - c. hard to hear

9. ...although Isabel was sure that he had meant it more as a warning not to disturb anything than as **reassurance** that she would be heard by divine forces. (p. 36)
 - a. making sure of again
 - b. giving help to
 - c. holding up

10. The sanjorín raised his eyebrows at the young and **presumptuous** girl. (p. 37)
 - a. beautiful
 - b. overconfident
 - c. cautious

11. The **sanjorín** sprinkled yellow tree-sap incense over the coals and waved the smoking pot in each of the four directions. (p. 39)
 - a. town clerk
 - b. town healer
 - c. town priest

12. Both mother and daughter waited for the terrible **diagnosis**. (p. 41)
 - a. information about her healing
 - b. noise following her treatment
 - c. analysis regarding her illness

13. "If," Eziqel sliced in, "you make **atonements**." (p. 42)
 - a. new medicines
 - b. amends for a wrong
 - c. sacrifices

Vocabulary: Chapters 3 and 4 (cont.)

14. Manuela **swayed** dangerously backward. (p. 43)
 - a. moved very fast
 - b. hurried one way
 - c. moved slowly back and forth or to one side

15. The blood and dirt **coagulated** into a muddy patch. (p. 44)
 - a. clotted
 - b. flowed
 - c. changed

Comprehension: Chapters 3 and 4

Directions: Answer each question in a complete sentence. Remember to start each sentence with a capital letter and to end it with a period.

1. What is Tzutujil?

Answer: Tzutujil is a Mayan language.

2. Compare the way the foreigner stood to the way Don Nicolás stood. What do you think this meant?

Possible answer: The foreigner stood with his legs spread apart and he talked with his hands moving a lot. Don Nicolás stood with his hands close to his body and his legs close together. This might mean that the foreigner was trying to get something and Don Nicolás was not wanting to hear.

3. Where was the foreigner from and why was he there?

Answer: The foreigner was from the United States. He was there as a medical student trying to do research.

4. What was done to disgrace the soul and the family of a person?

Answer: The person was killed and his hands or feet were cut off and taken.

5. In what country is Chuuí Chopaló?

Answer: Chuuí Chopaló is in Guatemala.

6. What had Lucas Choy asked Isabel?

Answer: Lucas Choy asked Isabel how her mother was.

Chapter 5

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students read to locate, select, evaluate, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources. (RW5)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students use comprehension strategies.

Students paraphrase, summarize, organize, evaluate, and synthesize information.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will understand by “reading between the lines.”

Students will summarize what has been read.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Making inferences

Summarizing

Cooperative reading (small groups)

ACTIVITIES

Read Chapter 5 in small groups. Look at the Inferences worksheet. Read each passage and answer questions.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Inferences worksheet.

ASSESSMENT

Correct answers given on the worksheet. Well-written summary, using correct punctuation and form.

Inferences: Chapter 5

Drawing Inferences

To draw an inference means to make a decision or an opinion about something by using information, details, or reasoning.

Directions: In this section you are to read the passages below. After reading each passage, choose the sentence that best shows understanding of the passage. Write each letter and sentence.

PASSAGE 1

“All foreigners are ugly. They’re fat.”

“He wasn’t fat.”

José laughed at their argument. “And noisy.” He perched his hands atop the stick. “And arrogant.”

“All right!” Isabel said.

“And too big,” Marcelina continued.

“And too white,” José added.

“They look sick.”

“Stop it!”

Suddenly the blanket swooshed out.

Alfredo glared at them. “What’s the matter?” His eyes dared a response. “Don’t make so much noise. Your mother needs to rest.”

José and Marcelina’s teasing died away in soft chuckles.

“Never mind about the American!” Alfredo said. “They’re only trouble.” (p. 46)

1. a. The Pacay family thinks that foreigners are trustworthy and helpful.
- b. The Pacay family doesn’t like or trust foreigners.
- c. The Pacay family doesn’t want to talk to foreigners.

PASSAGE 2

Isabel again stood by the door. The males of the family leaned against the walls and used tortillas to spoon the beans. Alfredo ate a pepper with nearly every tortilla. José could only eat two of the chiles, and Diego didn’t dare eat even one. Females would never be expected to eat peppers.

Alfredo and his sons were nearly finished by the time Marcelina appeared. The two girls quickly joined the others and began to eat. Just as Isabel had her first mouthful, Alfredo told her to pick a lime from one of the trees and to bring him salt. José asked for water, followed by Diego. Marcelina asked, too. (p. 49)

2. a. Males and females are not equal in the Pacay family.
- b. Males are not as important in the Pacay family.
- c. Females are not as important in the Pacay family.

Inferences: Chapter 5 (cont.)

PASSAGE 3

“It is like smoking. Before it was only for ceremonies. Now there are those who smoke all day long. And in the east, tobacco companies offer so much to the farmers that they turn away from growing food and grow only poison. It’s like I always say: So much is gone.” (p. 51)

3. a. Tobacco companies are helping the farmers.
- b. Smoking is good for the farmers.
- c. Smoking is not a good thing to do.

PASSAGE 4

“I’m kept in and I’m never going to learn another thing. I’m never going to know anything.”

Teresa shrugged. “What do girls need to know, anyway?”

Isabel drooped onto the fence with a deep sigh. “You know what I mean.”

“Come on, you’ll be married soon.” (p. 55)

4. a. Married girls don’t need to know very much.
- b. Girls who go to school don’t learn much.
- c. If a girl gets married she doesn’t learn anymore.

PASSAGE 5

“If this is the way you feel now, what will happen later?”

“What do you mean?”

“When you get married.”

“What do—” And then she saw his brooding look, his concern, and it all became perfectly clear to her. “This is what you’ve been angry about, isn’t it? This is why you’ve been distant. Isn’t it?”

“What am I supposed to think?”

“I’m taking care of my mother. And the family.”

“And you don’t want to go back to school?”

She could not lie.

“You don’t complain about having to take care of the family?”

“This isn’t fair, Lucas.”

His voice got loud enough to make the others turn. “What am I supposed to think? What kind of woman acts like that?” (p. 62)

5. a. Lucas is jealous because Isabel is taking care of her family.
- b. Isabel doesn’t want to take care of her family.
- c. When married, Isabel should want only to take care of her family.

Summarizing: Chapter 5

Summarizing is telling only the most important parts about what has happened.

Directions: Write a short summary about what has happened in Chapter 5. Make sure you indent to start your paragraph. Write complete sentences, with a capital letter to start each sentence and some kind of punctuation to end each sentence.

Chapter 6

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students use word recognition skills, strategies, and resources.

Students make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will understand that each social environment has its own way of life.

Students will practice using vocabulary from their reading.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Evaluating

Independent practice

PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

Students should have read through Chapter 6.

ACTIVITIES

With a partner, complete the worksheet on comprehension and the vocabulary worksheet.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

comprehension and vocabulary worksheets

drawing paper (optional)

ASSESSMENT

Correct responses on comprehension worksheet. Completed vocabulary worksheet with drawings.

Comprehension: Chapter 6

Directions: Write the response which correctly answers the question or finishes the sentence.

1. Girls in this environment
 - a. get married at a very young age.
 - b. don't have many children after they get married.
 - c. think marriage is silly.

2. Isabel dried the freshly washed clothes
 - a. in the clothes dryer.
 - b. by shaking them in the air.
 - c. by hanging them on the fence.

3. About how much is a dollar worth in quetzales?
 - a. 25 quetzales
 - b. 65 quetzales
 - c. 2.6 quetzales

4. The American was in Chuuí Chopaló to
 - a. draw pictures about symptoms people had when they were ill.
 - b. learn to speak Spanish and Tzutujil.
 - c. find a young wife.

5. Isabel's mother
 - a. wanted Isabel to get to know the American so he could help her.
 - b. was angry that Isabel was talking to the American.
 - c. didn't care about the American.

6. Who had asked the American to go to Guatemala?
 - a. The people of Chuuí Chopaló had asked him.
 - b. No one had asked him.
 - c. The government of Guatemala had asked him.

7. Isabel talked to the American because
 - a. She liked him.
 - b. She was curious about him.
 - c. She wanted to help him.

8. Who are the "poor, unfortunate" people? (p. 72)
 - a. The Americans
 - b. Isabel's family
 - c. The villagers in Chuuí Chopaló

Vocabulary: Chapters 5 and 6

Directions: On a separate piece of paper, write a complete sentence using each of the words in the list. Remember to start each sentence with a capital letter and to end it with a period. After each sentence draw a picture that helps you think of the meaning of the word.

- argument
- arrogant
- intermittent
- scar
- irritation
- opportunity
- pathetic
- tease
- taunting
- conspire
- constant
- vain
- yelp
- opt
- partition

Chapter 7

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes.

Students write and speak to peers, teachers, and the community.

Students use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing to gather data, define the problem, and apply problem-solving skills.

Students know how various societies have been affected by contacts and exchanges among diverse peoples.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will gather information to help them understand the differences and similarities between their society and that of the descendants of the Mayans discussed in the book.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Interviewing

Retelling

ACTIVITIES

In small groups students will reread pages 78 and 79. They will write down the different healing recipes described on these pages. Students will then discuss any “home remedies” used by their parents and relatives. They will also write these down in recipe form. As homework, students are to interview a parent, relative, or acquaintance and write down a recipe for a cure. The following day, students are to present their recipe to the class orally.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

recipe sample

ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment of presentations. Recipes are easy to understand and directions make sense.

Recipe Sample

Curing Baby's Upset Stomach

$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup baking soda

4 tablespoons warm water (approximate) (enough to make a paste)

Directions: Mix warm water and baking soda gradually until they form a smooth paste. Use only as much water as needed. Lay baby on back. Carefully rub the paste over the baby's stomach, until the entire stomach area is covered. Cover baby with a light blanket or T-shirt.

Chapter 8

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.

BENCHMARK(S)

Students read literature to understand places, people, events, and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar.

Students read classic and contemporary literature, representing various cultural and ethnic traditions from throughout the world.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will understand that individuals in an environment have occurrences that are unique to their lives.

Students will recognize events as being familiar/unfamiliar to their lives.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Shared readings

Think-alouds

ACTIVITIES

The class will read Chapter 7 together. When finished with the chapter, they will discuss the questions for this chapter. They will give their opinions and support those opinions.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

shared questions

ASSESSMENT

Class participation in reading and responding to questions.

Discussion Questions: Chapter 8

1. On page 84, it says that Alfredo Pacay “wore his cloak of privacy so tightly.” What was his cloak of privacy? Why do you think he is “wearing” it so tightly?
Possible answer: His “cloak of privacy” means that Alfredo Pacay was being very withdrawn from others and would not speak much or share his feelings. It’s possible that he’s “wearing it so tightly” because he is very worried about his wife and his family.
2. When Isabel’s dad said, “We need to do something,” Isabel was very proud and yet afraid. Why? Describe a similar situation that you or someone you know has experienced.
Possible answer: Isabel was proud because she felt her father trusted her and was treating her as an adult. She was afraid because she wasn’t sure that she could really handle the responsibilities of an adult. She might have also been afraid of losing her dream of being a teacher. [A situation might be the caring of a younger brother or sister, etc.]
3. Isabel went for a walk which took her through corn fields and cacti to avoid Lucas and the other men who were laying the pipeline. Why was she trying to avoid Lucas? Tell of a time that you’ve had to walk a different way or stay in a different room to avoid someone.
Possible answer: She was trying to avoid Lucas because they weren’t getting along very well. When friends aren’t getting along sometimes they don’t want to even see the other person.
4. In this chapter, the butchering of a steer is described. Why do you think the men who butchered the steer did it there on the mountain? Was the description of the butchering realistic? Have you ever seen a real animal butchered? How did you feel reading this part of the book?
Possible answer: The men probably butchered the steer on the mountain because it wasn’t theirs and they didn’t want to be seen. [Any articulate expression of reaction is acceptable.]
5. The men were wearing military uniforms, but they weren’t the same uniforms that Isabel had seen before. Who do you think these men are? Why do you think they are there?
Possible answer: The men might be from another country or from another group who don’t like the way things are going there. They might be there to try to take over.
6. The man saw Isabel hiding in the rocks. Why didn’t he make her get out or tell his friends?
Possible answer: The man didn’t want to hurt Isabel. He knew she was helpless against him and his friends.

Vocabulary: Chapter 7 and 8

Directions: Find the correct synonym for group A in group B. Write the correct letter on the corresponding line.

	Group A	Group B
_____	1. rapid	A. town
_____	2. serious	B. hit
_____	3. village	C. purchase
_____	4. tantalize	D. fast
_____	5. prepare	E. little
_____	6. struggle	F. solemn
_____	7. small	G. consistent movement
_____	8. buy	H. hurt
_____	9. strap	I. continue
_____	10. rhythm	J. roam
_____	11. damage	K. tease
_____	12. smack	L. get ready
_____	13. shift	M. fasten
_____	14. resume	N. change
_____	15. wander	O. fight

Chapter 9

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history. (H6)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others. Students read literature to understand places, people, events, and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar.

Students know how various forms of expression reflect religious beliefs and philosophical ideas.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will reflect on their own religious practices and beliefs as they are a part of history.

Students will recognize various expressions of religious beliefs.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Guided readings

Comparisons

Discussion

ACTIVITIES

Students will read Chapter 9 together in small groups. After reading the chapter, students will list particular religious practices referred to in the story. Next to the list students will note those practices that their family also follows, with a brief comparison explaining how the practice is similar, different, or the same. When finished with the comparison, students will discuss in their small groups which practices they have in common.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

sample list

ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment of discussions. Use key created by teacher to check comparison lists.

Comparison of Religious Practices

Religious Practices in Book

“They set up a box and two silver chalices, one with a host, the other with a pair of tongs.”

My Religious Practices

In my religion they also have a chalice with the host.

Chapter 10

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students write and speak to peers, teachers and the community.

Students read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others.

Students read classical and contemporary literature, representing various cultural and ethnic traditions from throughout the world.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will read to recognize traditions as being common to various groups in diverse populations, including their own.

Students will practice speaking in front of others.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Independent reading

Visualization

Oral presentations

ACTIVITIES

Chapter 10 will be read independently. Each student will design and construct a diorama depicting the scene taking place in this chapter. Students are to include that which is familiar to them in their daily lives as well as some things that may be unfamiliar.

When finished with the diorama, each student will give a short oral presentation of their diorama. Students will assess the other students' presentations.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

shoe box or other small box to make diorama

various arts and crafts items such as: glue, construction paper, markers, colored pencils, different colors of cloth, scissors

sample score sheet

ASSESSMENT

Peer assessment.

Peer Assessment

Diorama

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neat • Colorful • Easy to recognize what's happening • Lots of detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neat • Colorful • Some detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly neat • Some color • Some detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messy • Little color • Few or no details
Construction	_____	_____	_____	_____
Scenery	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tells the story	_____	_____	_____	_____

Oral Presentation

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Understandable	_____	_____	_____	_____
Speaking voice easy to hear	_____	_____	_____	_____
Interesting story	_____	_____	_____	_____
Speaks to the audience	_____	_____	_____	_____

Chapter 11

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)
Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Students use reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing to gather data, define the problem, and apply problem-solving skills.

Students read literature to understand places, people, events and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar.

Students read classic and contemporary literature, representing various cultural and ethnic traditions from throughout the world.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will draw conclusions from what they have read and will predict what will happen later.

Students will understand the problem presented and anticipate problem-solving techniques.

Students will become familiar with different cultural and ethnic traditions.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read-alouds

Predicting

Problem/solution

Discussion

Expository writing

ACTIVITIES

Read Chapter 11 aloud, taking turns reading to the class. Discuss the three signs which were left at the Pacay house. What could these signs mean and why were they left there? After the discussion, write a one- to two-page essay explaining why these signs may be a problem. What could be done to solve the problem? How do you think the Pacay family is going to handle this situation? Your essay should be written using correct grammar and in correct paragraph form.

ASSESSMENT

Expository writing using problem-solving and predicting what will happen. Essays should be grammatically correct.

Chapter 12

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students prepare written and oral presentations using strategies.

Students recognize, express, and defend points of view orally and in writing.

Students read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others.

Students read literature to understand places, people, events, and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar.

Students understand the history of social organization in various societies.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will recognize the different roles of girls and boys in society.

Students will be able to recognize their role in their family and community.

Students will understand that which happens to people in certain places.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Cooperative reading

Listing

Inferencing

Note taking

Drawing conclusions

ACTIVITIES

Students are to read Chapter 12 in small groups or in pairs. With your group, make a list of activities that Isabel is required to do that are different from what her brothers and sister are required to do. Emphasis should be on Chapter 12, but you may list other activities from the rest of the book. After each activity make a note of the reason you think she is required to do activities which are different from her brothers and sister. These reasons may include, but are not limited to: age, being a girl, favorite child, etc.

When finished with this list, as a group, make a list of the activities you are required to do in your home or community which are different from those your brothers and sisters are required to do. Again, next to each activity, make a note of the reason you think there are differences.

When all groups have finished the written activities, present your list to the entire class, defending your reasons for the differences in required activities.

Chapter 12 (cont.)

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

sample form for list

ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment of oral presentations. Lists from the book should be accurate; reasons should be well thought out.

List of Isabel's Activities

Required Activity	Reason
Isabel's father decides that she must go to the hospital with her parents.	She is older; she is a girl.
Isabel stays in the waiting room with her mother.	She is older; she is a girl.

Chapter 13

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes.

Students write and speak to peers, teachers, and the community.

Students prepare written and oral presentations using strategies.

Students recognize, understand, and use formal grammar in speaking and writing.

Students use correct sentence structure in writing.

Students demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Students read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others.

Students understand the history of social organization in various societies.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will understand how different people are affected by prejudice in their lives.

Students will understand the workings in personal relationships including their own personal relationships and beliefs about these relationships.

Students will understand how an individual's society affects relationships.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Independent reading

Discussions

Compare/contrast

Expository writing

ACTIVITIES

Discuss with your classmates what has happened in this chapter. Include in your discussion: prejudice and its effects on people; boyfriends, girlfriends, and expectations in relationships; and differences and similarities in the way you and your parents or other adults think about these issues.

There are two major concepts being discussed in this chapter. One involves understanding cultural background. The other concerns relationships between two people. On a separate piece of paper, write a one-page essay about both concepts. In your essay include at least one relevant incident in your life. Make sure you use correct form, grammar and punctuation in your writing.

Chapter 13 (cont.)

ASSESSMENT

Essays should be well written, using correct grammar, sentence structure, and punctuation.

Chapter 14

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students make connections between prior knowledge and what they need to know about a topic before reading about it.

Students make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will understand that their own experiences often relate to what they are reading, making it easier to understand what is being read.

Students will be able to draw conclusions about what they have read and predict what will happen next.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Shared reading

Predicting

Paraphrasing

Comprehension strategies

Questioning

ACTIVITIES

As a group, students will read Chapter 14 and answer worksheet questions in complete sentences.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

worksheet

ASSESSMENT

Questions are to be answered in complete sentences.

Questions: Chapter 14

Directions: Answer the following questions in full sentences.

1. Isabel is feeling that everything in her life is going wrong and that it is all her fault. Do you agree with Isabel's idea that everything is her fault? Explain your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing. Has there ever been a time in your life that everything seemed to be going wrong? What did you do about it? Who did you talk to?

Possible answer: It is unlikely that everything that is going wrong in her life is her fault. She wasn't the one who made her mother sick. She hadn't really done anything wrong to make Lucas angry with her. I think that she has a guilty conscience about wanting to do more with her life and because of that she blames herself for everything.
2. Isabel's teacher, Maestro Xiloj, talks about the teacher strike. Why were the teachers going on strike? Do you think this was the right way to solve the problem? Why or why not? There have been many different strikes in recent years. Describe one that you know about and tell how you felt about it.

Possible answer: The teachers were going out on strike because the government took away the lunch that had been provided for the students and the teachers wanted to be paid more. [Any strike that the student knows about is acceptable.]
3. On page 164, Castañeda compares what is happening in Isabel's life to a volcano. Explain what he means by this comparison.

Possible answer: Everything in Isabel's life is going wrong and it seems to be shooting up in her face. The problems that she is facing are also very important and frightening, just as an erupting volcano is. Also, like a volcano, sometimes the problematic issues are very calm and sometimes they become hot and erupt.
4. On page 166, Maestro Xiloj talks to Isabel about the danger of being different. Why is it dangerous if you are different? Give an example of "different" being dangerous.

Possible answer: Sometimes people are afraid of what is different and so they try to stop anything that is different. Allan Waters wasn't from Guatemala and some of the people of Chuuí Chopaló were harassing the Pacay family because they had talked with him.
5. Why is it important for individuals to accept themselves for what they are? Maestro Xiloj tells Isabel that she doesn't have to do what everyone else says. Do you agree with Maestro Xiloj? Why or why not?

Possible answer: It is important for individuals to accept themselves as they are because it is very difficult to live your life always having to fight with yourself. A person can become physically ill trying to be what they are not.

Chapter 15

What will students be learning?

STANDARD(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

BENCHMARK(S)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes.

Students plan, draft, revise, proofread, edit and publish written communications.

Students use the most appropriate method—handwriting or word processing—to produce a product that is legible.

Students read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others.

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will understand and be able to analyze a character through their reading.

Students will be able to edit others' work.

Students will make the connection between their own lives and the lives of people in another culture.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Character analysis

Idea diagram

Analyzing

PRELIMINARY LESSON

Students must read Chapter 15 independently, either in class or for homework.

ACTIVITIES

After reading the chapter, students are to write a character analysis of Isabel and Lucas Choy. A physical description and a character description of each person should be included. A final analysis relating to the story's ending should also be a part of this description. Some questions students might ask themselves about these characters are: Why did Isabel want Lucas' approval? Why was Lucas so angry with Isabel? Did either of the characters know what the other was thinking? Why or why not? What was it about each character that drew them together?

After the first draft of the character analysis has been written, each student is to team up with another student to discuss their analyses and to discuss an event in their own lives that may be similar to an experience of Isabel or Lucas. After the discussion, each student is to edit the other student's work. Editing should include proper use of grammar and punctuation, proper word and tense usage, and a general evaluation of the ideas presented concerning each character and their consistency with the story.

After the editing has taken place, each student is to rewrite their analysis very neatly or using a word processor. They may include pictures if desired.

Chapter 15 (cont.)

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

word processor, if available

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed on their editing of another student's paper and on their final draft.

Unit Assessment

How will students demonstrate proficiency?

PERFORMANCE TASK

Divide into groups of three to five students. Each group is to pick their favorite third of the book. After reviewing what goes on in that section of the book, the group is to write a play or puppet show demonstrating the significant points of the story. Dialogue should be written for each character portrayed in the chosen section. A narrator should also be included to set the time and place of the story. The narrator will also be responsible for keeping the audience informed of the sequence of events.

After the play has been written, students will choose appropriate costumes for themselves or their puppets. (Puppets can be made out of materials as simple as lunch sacks or can be more elaborate.) Props should also be included for the set or the puppet stage. Students will choose their parts and rehearse together. All student must take part in their group's performance; this may include activities such as creating sets or directing.

When the final draft of the play has been written and practiced, students will perform the play or puppet show for the class.

SCORING RUBRIC

4. The play or puppet show is well-written, using proper grammar, punctuation, and form. The writing shows an understanding of what was presented in the book, including the historical implications. The performance is well-presented. The actors portray their characters convincingly and speak clearly and audibly.
3. The play or puppet show is well-written, but contains some errors in grammar, punctuation, and/or form. The writing shows an understanding of what was presented in the book, but may lack certain important points such as historical implications. The performance is well-presented, but an occasional spoken line is not audible.
2. The play or puppet show is lacking in proper grammar, punctuation, and/or form. The writing shows some understanding of what was presented in the book, but some important points are left out. The performance is lacking in acting and speaking skills necessary to convey the story.
1. The play or puppet show contains many errors in grammar, punctuation, and form. The writing shows little understanding of what was presented in the book. Many important details are left out. Acting skills demonstrated are minimal and the performance is hard to hear or understand.

Bibliography

Books

Beck, Barbara L. *The First Book of the Ancient Maya*. Franklin Watts Inc., 1965.

Good, easy reading for student reference.

Burgos-Debray, Elisabeth, ed., *I Rogoberto Menchu*. London: Verso, 1986.

Carmack, Robert M.. *The Quiche Mayas of Utatlan*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981.

Very good teacher reference. Good information on social structure and modern-day Mayans.

Castañeda, Omar S. *Among the Volcanoes*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1991.

Good children's literature. Good description of the descendants of the Mayans. Recommended for ages 11 and above, or very good younger readers.

Coe, Michael D. *Breaking the Maya Code*. New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1992.

Reference for deciphering of Mayan script. Good examples of Mayan writing.

Odijk, Pamela. *The Ancient World: The Mayas*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Silver Burdett Press, 1990.

Good, easy reading for students.

Stuart, George E. and Gene S. *The Mysterious Maya*. Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 1977.

Excellent pictures of various ruins, archeological sites, and Mayan descendants. Written as a narrative with important facts and information intertwined. Very interesting to read.

Time Life Books. *The Magnificent Maya*. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Inc., 1993.

Very good pictures of the ruins. Information concerning life of the Mayans.

Tutor, Pilar. *The World Heritage: Mayan Civilization*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1993.

Excellent color pictures of Mayan ruins. Very good short explanations of Mayan history and way of life. Good reading for students.

Web Sites

<http://www.alternativemedia.org/im/objectives.html>

International Mayan League United. Site for modern-day Mayans to express themselves.

<http://udgftp.cencar.udg.mx/ingles/Precolombina/Maya/temp19.html>

Good background history of the Mayans, pictures of historical sites.

<http://yucatan.com.mx/mayas/mapaengl.htm>

Short responses on a variety of subjects including history and contemporary life, as well as addresses to write to in different countries for more information.

<http://www.okcommerce.com/terra/cultures/mayan/mayan1.html>

History of the Mayan culture.

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/huntmayancivi.html>

Ancient Mayan civilization; archaeology.

About the Author

Stella L. Garcia-Baca was born in Denver, Colorado, where she attended Denver Public Schools, graduating from Abraham Lincoln High School. As a high school junior, Stella was awarded a scholarship through American Field Service to go to Argentina as an exchange student. While in Argentina she was immersed in another culture and in the Spanish language. After graduation, she went to Orchid Beauty Academy, where she earned her Colorado State license as a beautician. She continued in her education and was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Services with an emphasis in drug and alcohol counseling from Metropolitan State University, where she graduated Magna Cum Laude.

After starting a family and working in the drug-alcohol counseling field, Stella returned to the University Without Walls to get her certification in education. While attending the University Without Walls, Stella was awarded the Colorado Teacher Encouragement Award. Stella became very active in the Denver Public Schools as a parent, chairing the School Improvement and Accountability Committee at West High School for two years and serving on the Hispanic Education Advisory Committee for two years as a parent and later as a teacher.

After completing the certification program, Stella began teaching Spanish at Lake Middle School. She has been at Lake Middle School for thirteen years, teaching Spanish and foreign language for grades 6, 7 and 8; English as a Second Language, grades 6, 7, and 8; Bilingual Language Arts, grade 6. Stella has been active in her school as a member of the School Improvement and Accountability Committee, the Personnel Subcommittee, and the School Social Committee.

One of Stella's hobbies is travel. Her travels include road trips through various parts of Mexico; singing in a choir through Spain and chaperoning students on trips through New Mexico, Colorado and Florida. Another hobby is trying to keep her family of one husband, four daughters, four grandsons, and two granddaughters in step with one another at least once in a while.