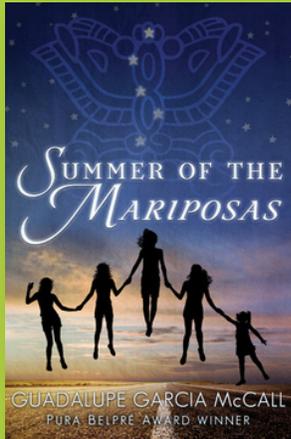


TEACHER'S GUIDE



LEE & LOW BOOKS

Summer of the Mariposas

written by *Guadalupe García McCall*

About the Book

Genre: Fiction (Magical Realism)

***Reading Level:** Grades 5–6

Interest Level: Grades 6 and up

Guided Reading Level: Z

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points: 5.4/13.0

Lexile™ Measure: 840L

*Reading level based on the Spache Readability Formula

Themes: Siblings (Sisterhood), Self-esteem and Confidence, Responsibility, Overcoming Obstacles, Immigrant Experience, Imagination, Friendship, Forgiveness, Coping with Death, Conflict Resolution, Empathy and Compassion, Leadership, Persistence and Grit, Magical Realism, Journey (Epic), Retellings of Mythology/Folklore, Courage, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest

SYNOPSIS

When Odilia and her four sisters find a dead body in the swimming hole, they embark on a hero's journey to return the dead man to his family in Mexico. But returning home to Texas turns into an odyssey that would rival Homer's original tale.

With the supernatural aid of ghostly La Llorona via a magical earring, Odilia and her little sisters travel a road of tribulation to their long-lost grandmother's house. Along the way, they must outsmart a witch and her Evil Trinity: a wily warlock, a coven of vicious half-human barn owls, and a bloodthirsty livestock-hunting *chupacabras*. Can these fantastic trials prepare Odilia and her sisters for what happens when they face their final test, returning home to the real world, where goddesses and ghosts can no longer help them?

Summer of the Mariposas is not just a magical Mexican American retelling of *The Odyssey*, it is a celebration of sisterhood and maternal love.

Awards and honors include:

- **Best Books of the Year**, School Library Journal
- **Starred Review**, School Library Journal
- **Amelia Bloomer Project - Feminist Task Force**, American Library Association (ALA)
- **Best Children's Books of the Year**, Bank Street College of Education
- **Andre Norton Award for Young Adult Science Fiction and Fantasy Finalist**, Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America
- **Lone Star Reading List**, Texas Library Association (TLA)



BACKGROUND

Summer of the Mariposas is a young adult novel, steeped in magical realism. The story mixes elements of *The Odyssey* along with Mexican folklore and myths. Messages of female empowerment and bravery lie at the core of this tale. When asked about the inspiration to write this novel, the author stated: (paraphrased from Lee & Low Books author interview: <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/2811/interviews>)

“For a very long time, years actually, I’d been toying with the idea of retelling *The Odyssey* with an all-female cast. The idea of flipping the ultimate male adventure and turning it into a feminine quest with all the strengths of womanhood fascinated me. But nothing had ever really materialized in my mind, until the day my eighth grade students had a long classroom debate over the gender issues in *The Odyssey*. As she left my class, one of the girls said, “But why do boys get to have all the adventures? It’s not fair. We need our own *Odyssey*.” That’s when it clicked for me. She was right. Girls her age need to see themselves depicted in that light. They need to have books where they are wise and clever and brave.

But why stop there? my brain asked. Why not really turn this thing on its ear and make it about Hispanic girls? Better yet, why not make it about our culture? We have myths and legends and monsters and heroes and ancient deities who are just as interesting as the ones in the original text. Suddenly it all came together for me, and I went home, took out the sticky notes, and outlined the entire adventure on my wall. It was like playing Loteria. Fun. Fun. Fun.”

–Guadalupe García McCall

Based on this interview, it is clear that the author’s students previously read *The Odyssey*. As such, it is suggested that teachers preparing to introduce *Summer of the Mariposas*, follow suit by first reviewing *The Odyssey*, either in long or short form, dependent upon grade level. The following leveled resources are available online and can be shared during pre-reading focus discussion and frontloading reading strategies:

The Odyssey Resources: High School-College:

<http://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-odyssey>

<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/odyssey/summary.html>
<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/o/the-odyssey/the-odyssey-at-a-glance>

Upper Elementary- Middle School level:

<http://www.shmoop.com/odyssey/summary.html>
<http://www.gradesaver.com/the-odyssey/study-guide/summary>

Additional backmatter:

Prior to introducing *Summer of the Mariposas*, it is important for teachers to examine genre and how this impacts both the plot and the student reading experience.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (<https://www.britannica.com/art/magic-realism>):

Magic realism, is a chiefly Latin-American narrative strategy that is characterized by the matter-of-fact inclusion of fantastic or mythical elements into seemingly realistic fiction.

It is recommended for teachers to explain that within this genre, new realities are typically created. Inclusion of magical elements are organically weaved into the plot line, thus creating what appears to be realistic. Students must be able to draw the line between reality and what is unquestionably fantastic.

To enrich understanding of this particular genre, feel free to view the following **video**, made publicly available at: <http://study.com/academy/lesson/magical-realism-definition-authors-examples.html>

It may be also helpful to share this video with your students. Should you choose to do so, consider **comparing and contrasting** this genre with a different genre previously studied in class. Using a Venn Diagram is a helpful tool to deepen comprehension.

Lastly, it is important to note the themes of “Immigrant Experience” and “Living Between Two Cultures” that are woven throughout the novel.

In chapter 1, the author writes, “Those customs agents are ruthless! To them, illegals are no better than stray dogs. They’d shoot them before they’d help them.”



VOCABULARY

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Content Specific

mariposa (butterfly), hermanitas (sisters) paliza (beating), tarada (idiot), migra (border patrol), lemon (to describe a car that doesn't work well), canícula (dog days, summer heat), lechuza (owl), chinampas (floating gardens), limosnera (beggar), pobrecita (poor thing!), nagual (sorcerer/wizard), bulto (bag, piece of luggage), cerro (hill, mountain), curandera (healer), chupacabras (goat-eating legendary creature), mordida (bite), arrepíentanse (repent, beg for forgiveness), malcriada (spoiled rotten), egoísta (selfish), warlock, piojos (lice), farmacia (pharmacy), quinceañera (fifteenth birthday celebration), aduana (customs/border office), sospechoso (suspicious)

Academic

amulet, quixotic, exasperated, crusade, Amazonian, Rigor Mortis, bedazzling, hallucination, relinquish, adoration, pendant, gurney, sinister, innocuous, disheveled, humiliated, malevolent, Parliament, coven, brood, desiccated, semblance, shrubbery, cauldron, excruciating, momentum, astray, vociferous, scrutinize, vehemence, provisions, dilapidated, unscathed, cataracts, ingest, ominous, sieve, expel, sedate, resplendent, interrogation, indisputable, unfathomable, elaborate, apparition, indiscriminate

Consider the demographics of your classroom (and school district at-large) and how such themes might impact the readers. These themes must be addressed and handled with **deep sensitivity** and **open-mindedness**. Set the example of what **culturally responsive teaching**

looks like:

- **Collaborate** with students to establish guidelines early on. This will serve as a reminder for discussion etiquette as thought-provoking topics are developed.
- **Anticipate** how your students will respond to controversial topics presented in the novel. (such as the aforementioned quote) While teachers should **encourage** students to share their views without fear of judgment, teachers should consider how to respond to emotion, and use this to guide instruction and for future instructional planning.
- Aim to **include** and discuss outside materials that align with the text and essentially address underrepresented groups' experiences in ways that do not marginalize their experiences.

As educators, you have the awesome responsibility of developing your students into independent thinkers who are able to draw their own conclusions about the issues that impact society. Use this novel as your vehicle to take them on that journey!

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

1. How is magical realism similar yet different from the genres with which you are already familiar?
2. Comparative genre analysis: Revisit *The Odyssey*. Additionally, show students the SparkNote's video summary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCXRxD85Xco> (Part 1) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjoK8OpuKol> (Part 2). Students may create a Venn Diagram listing key plot points of the video (and the text), to be used in alignment with *SUMMER OF THE MARIPOSAS*. The graphic organizer will serve as an ongoing activity, to be done as they advance through the novel study.
3. To further analyze genre, show the following YouTube video to students: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJF7gv5GiQI>. Pause at each image and hold a class discussion. What are the fantastical



elements of the varying images? How will this impact the plot of the novel?

- Quote Analysis: Use quotes from the novel to analyze character traits and predict the plot. Type select quotes from the novel (enough for each student in the class) and cut the quotes into individual paper strips. Using the graphic organizer (sample below), students will analyze their quote and then walk around the classroom and switch with a classmate until they have analyzed a minimum of five quotes. (Chart can be extended or shortened to meet classroom needs.) At the end of the activity, lead a whole class discussion on the quotes and how they can help students get to know the characters and the plot before diving in to the text. (see the last page for quote analysis chart)

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1, Craft & Structure, Strand 5, and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Talk about the title of the book. Ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?

Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, author's dedications, afterword, various types of text.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- about the United States immigrant experience, specifically on both sides of the Texas-Mexico border
- about the complexities of sibling hierarchy and the responsibilities that belie the oldest sibling
- about the intricacies of dealing with the loss of a parent, either through death or divorce
- how legends, oral tradition, and mythology manifest themselves in real-world experiences and lessons
- about the blurred lines that exist between loyalty to family and the desire to be independent.

Have students also read to determine story structure and genre. Encourage students to consider why the author, Guadalupe García McCall, would want to share this story with young people.

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

- How do the Garza girls spend their summers?
- Mama works at a local restaurant, but used to be a housewife. What major event occurs for the family that requires Mama to seek employment?
- How do the four younger sisters convince Odilia to go to Mexico?
- Who do they know in Mexico? Why is it important for them to see this person?
- What is Mama's philosophy for using the internet? What attributes to this belief?
- Describe the physical characteristics of each sister. How do these characteristics reflect in their self-image? What specific examples demonstrate this?
- Each sister has their own personal views about whether the authorities should be called or not. Describe each one's view and why she feels that way.



★“Written in the style of magic realism, this is an enchanting look at Mexican mysticism, coupled with the realistic celebration of the true meaning of family.”

–*School Library Journal*, starred review

“What follows is a series of adventures that hover somewhere on the border between fantasy and magical realism. . . . Originality and vibrancy shine through to make [this story] a worthwhile read.”

–*Kirkus Reviews*

“Readers will be drawn by the contemporary family drama and the magic, and they’ll appreciate the author’s note that discusses the story’s roots in Mexican folklore and *The Odyssey*.”

–*Booklist*

8. What do the bilingual translations at the start of each chapter represent? How does this relate to the plot events of each chapter?
9. What is Lotería and how is it played? What American game does this remind you of? How are they similar? How are they different?
10. What is Odilia’s plan to divert her sisters from going to Mexico? How might this plan affect Mama?
11. Outline the pros and cons of going to Mexico, as stated amongst the sisters.
12. What are the rules of the code of the *cinco hermanitas*? What rules do you feel should be amended or omitted? Why?
13. In chapter two, Odilia realizes that perhaps she needed to become more responsible, listen to Mama for a change. What happens immediately after this realization?
14. In your opinion, what do the five shooting stars symbolize?
15. Who is La Llorona? How does her legend impact the plot?
16. What message does La Llorona give to Odilia? How does Odilia react?
17. What responsibility do the other sisters have to ensure the journey is successfully completed?
18. What does La Llorona give Odilia to help her in her quest? What are the rules for using this gift?
19. What could happen to Mama if the girls are caught by the authorities with a corpse in the back seat of the car? How could this impact their family life?
20. How are the sisters able to cross the border?
21. How do the girls feel about bringing the dead man back to his family?
22. Upon arrival to Gabriel Pérdido’s home, what do the girls witness? Why is this event so surprising to the girls? Does this align with their predictions for how they would’ve been received by his family? How so? How not?
23. In chapter six, what is the meaning of the following idiom: “Too much cream spoils the tacos?” Why does Odilia remind her sisters of this saying before they go in to meet Gabriel’s family? What other idioms can you find in the novel? What do they mean?
24. Gabriel’s wife insists that Odilia call her mom. How does Odilia convince her otherwise? Does her “story” work?
25. Who have the authorities identified as possible suspects in the girls’ disappearance?
26. The Garza girls are able to leave Gabriel’s home without being suspected by his wife. Retell the events that occur which result in permanently altering their journey for the rest of the novel.
27. Who comes to their rescue after their car breaks down? How does this person lure the girls?



Compare her method of luring to the events in *The Odyssey*.

28. What backstory does Cecilia offer the girls about her life? How does this impact the girls' comfort level with her?
29. What is Gabriel Pérdido's backstory? How does this impact the authorities' assumptions on the disappearance of the Garza sisters?
30. What methods does Cecilia use to make the sisters stay with her? What makes Odilia realize that Cecilia has been plotting against them all along?
31. Who informs Odilia of Cecilia's plans? How is Odilia able to escape with her sisters, unscathed?
32. Cecilia casts a spell on the girls as they leave. How does this omen come to life later in the plot?
33. What prediction does Teresita make for the sisters? What is the Evil Trinity? What must the sisters do in order to ensure their protection?
34. Retell Teresita's husband's encounter with the *chupacabras*. How does this impact later events in the story?
35. What is the *nagual's* connection to Cecilia? How will harming the Garza sisters benefit him?
36. How are the sisters able to overpower the *nagual*?
37. Why do the *lechuzas* attack the sisters? How are they able to overcome the attack?
38. What is a *curandera*? How does the grandmother use these skills to help Pita?
39. What is the setting of chapter 17? How do you know?
40. Who are the roses for and what purpose do they serve? What impact will this offering have on Mama?
41. Who guides the sisters home? Retell their journey, the key people involved, and the lessons learned.
42. Why does Papa return in the final chapter? What does he discover?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Which character from *The Odyssey* does La Llorona most resemble? Justify your reasons for this claim.
2. Which character from *The Odyssey* does Cecilia most resemble? Justify your reasons for this claim.
3. Which character from *The Odyssey* does Sarai most resemble? Justify your reasons for this claim.
4. How does Odilia's responsibilities as the oldest sibling impact her character? Cite specific examples from the text.
5. Forgiveness is a recurring theme in the novel. Identify two examples where forgiveness is asked for and granted. How do the sisters' opinion on forgiveness change over the course of the novel?
6. Crossing the checkpoint at Piedras Negras proves to be an easy task. Which sister is responsible for getting them through? How does she accomplish this? What impression, as a reader, does this give you about international travel?
7. Chapter 19 begins with the Lotería card that states: "The musician is not a bullfighter, but he does know how to play and deceive." How does this statement manifest in chapter 19? What games and deceptions has Papa played? What impact has this had on the Garza sisters?
8. *Summer of the Mariposas* is written in a style called magical realism. Outline three of your favorite scenes in the novel where magical and fantastical elements are used. How do these scenes impact the reading experience?
9. Explain how Pita matures throughout the novel. In which chapter do we see her pivotal moment? Justify your response with text evidence.
10. How does the author use language to foreshadow what's to come? Find three examples in the novel.
11. Compare and contrast how the sisters handle the *chupacabras* (Chencho) in relation to the other



creatures they've come in contact with. Who aids in their decision to show him mercy? Why?

12. What altered version of facts do the girls tell the authorities upon arrival in Texas? What are their reasons for not telling the complete truth?
13. How has the experience of briefly losing her daughters impacted Mama? What clues does the author provide to inform the reader that Mama will forever be a changed woman?
14. In chapters 18 and 19, when the girls arrive home, Mama explains that things have changed and nothing will ever be the same. What do the girls discover when they enter the house? How is this related to their father's disappearance for the past year? How does each sister react to this revelation? What is the outcome of this chance meeting?
15. Explain how the family dynamic in chapter 20 greatly differs from the one presented in early chapters. Cite text evidence.
16. How is the element of disguise used in both *Summer of the Mariposas* and Homer's *The Odyssey*? Justify with text evidence.
17. By chapter 15, how has the relationship between the Garza sisters changed? How does this change impact their home life with Mama, once they return later in the novel?
18. What does Abuelita tell them about their father? What advice do the sisters receive from her in chapter 16? What is their interpretation of this advice? Evaluate why they might interpret it in this manner.
19. What shocking news does Odilia learn when she goes to buy the newspaper? What does Odilia do to prevent the news from spreading? Evaluate why such an event might complicate their journey to Hacienda Dorada.
20. Summarize the events that happen when Odilia realizes La Llorona's gift works. Predict how La Llorona's offering will impact the plot.
21. At the end of the novel, Odilia says that Papa has brought a present that the girls cannot

see. Synthesize plot events that justify Odilia's understanding of Papa's gift.

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. **Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion.** You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. How would you have reacted if you discovered a dead body floating in the river?
2. Do you think the Garza girls were justified in their actions after this discovery? How so? How not?
3. Who does the dead man remind the Garza girls of? Do you think that this impacts their decision to not report him to the authorities? How so? How not?
4. How does the portrayal of La Llorona differ in this novel from popular legend?
5. How do the sisters react when they see Cecilia watching the story of their disappearance on the news? Does their reaction shock you? How so? How not?
6. How does La Llorona's warning that the sisters must remain polite contradict with their encounters with the various creatures in the novel?
7. *Chupacabras* are known to mostly eat goats. What was your reaction when Chencho sank his razor-sharp fangs into Pita's leg?
8. What is Chencho's backstory? How does this affect his behavior?

ELL/ESL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.



1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.
 - Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about immigrant experience and/or life as an American born to immigrant parents.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

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 some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension

activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection

English Language Arts/Writing

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Conventions of Standard English, Strand 1)

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 9)

1. Have students write a comparative literary analysis comparing and contrasting *Summer of the Mariposas* and *The Odyssey*. How are these texts similar? How are they different? Identify common and differing themes, characters, settings, plot points, and literary devices.
2. In chapter one, the author writes, “Those customs agents are ruthless. To them, illegals are no better than stray dogs.” How did this quote make you feel? Do you think this quote aligns with current societal views on immigrants in America? How so? How not? Use valid reasoning and sufficient evidence in the form of a critical essay.
3. Creative writing activity: Research the recipes of the dishes mentioned in the novel. Can you identify the origin of the ingredients and the recipes? What are the legends and stories attached to these dishes? What is their cultural significance? Students will work in small groups to conduct the research, write the history, and find or create illustrations to contribute to the *Summer of the Mariposas* classroom cookbook. Students may culminate this activity with a potluck lunch, complete with the foods from the novel, in addition to traditional Mexican clothing and music.
4. In *Summer of the Mariposas*, we learn that Abuelita is a *curandera*. a.) Conduct research to learn about traditional folk healing practices in the Mexican community. What do these practices entail? How do they align with or deviate from traditional American medicine? Present your findings in a short research paper, complete with a works cited page to justify your findings.
b.) Extending on the topics presented in number 3, write a persuasive essay defending your views on the methods that you feel people should use to heal themselves from injury and illness. Do you



subscribe to traditional folk healing practices? Or is modern medicine your healing of choice? Consider the factors that impact your stance. Cultural? Religious? In addition, be prepared to summarize your views in a short oral defense to be shared with the class.

5. Prepare an argumentative essay that explains your views on which character has the most significant character arc throughout the course of the novel. Defend your views by citing specific examples. What changing developments in the plot contributed to the character's transformation?

Geography/Social Studies

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. Create a road map of the towns on both sides of the border that the Garza girls traveled in the novel.
2. Locate Eagle Pass, Texas and El Sacrificio, Mexico on a map. Use a map scale to measure the distance the girls traveled from Eagle Pass, Texas to El Sacrificio, Mexico. How long would the journey have taken? Using this information, create a travel diary written in the voice of Pita, Juanita, Velia or Delia. (Because the novel is told from Odilia's point of view, she has been purposely omitted from this activity.)
3. Who is Huitzilopochtli? Why is he important in Aztec culture? How has his legacy manifested itself into present-day Mexican culture? Present your findings in a PowerPoint presentation.
4. Who is Pancho Villa? What role does he play in *la Revolucion*? Present your findings in a movie making program such as iMovie or Animoto.
5. *Summer of the Mariposas* touches upon the issue of immigration, specifically between the United States and Mexico. Have students research US-Mexico immigration and create a timeline that outlines dates and facts about US-Mexico relations dating back to the era of the Mexican Revolution to current times.

6. The transition from child to young adult is a sacred tradition in many cultures and countries throughout the world. In *Summer of the Mariposas*, there is a quinceañera held for Gabriel's daughter. Identify the characteristics of a quinceañera and compare and contrast it with a similar tradition held in a different country. Present your findings in a poster-size Venn Diagram.

Science

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strand 2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. a.) *Summer of the Mariposas* contains numerous descriptions of the lush vegetation, such as the huisache trees. Research the origins, climate adaptations, and other key facts you'd like to share with the class. Create an informational brochure or poster to display images and research findings.
b.) Extending upon the concepts presented in question number one, what other examples of vegetation can you find in the novel? What are some facts about these examples? In your opinion, how do they impact the plot? Present your findings to the class in a short, two-minute oral presentation.

Art/Media

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

1. Pretend you are Mama and you've just received news of your daughters' disappearance. Write, recite, and dramatize a "live" breaking news report regarding your missing children. This project may be done solo or with a cooperative learning group. If completed as a group, students may have roles such as reporter, camera man, Mama, and any other pertinent people (i.e. neighbors, boss, extended family members) who may speak to the overall character of the Garza family.
2. The genre of this novel is magical realism. Identify each mythological creature mentioned in this book. Draw or find an online picture of the creature and provide historical and/or mythological details. What is the mythological origin? What cultural



significance is associated with the mythology? How has the mythology been adapted or evolved over time?

School–Home Connection

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

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 2 and 3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strand 7)

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

1. Interview a family member(s), preferably the head of your household. Start the session by providing a brief, verbal summary of the novel. Explain the concept (and hilarity) of the term “welfare burgers,” as used in the novel. Ask your family member(s) to state the things they view as silly to waste money on. From where do these views derive? From childhood? From cultural practices? Ask students to share their response(s) with the class.
2. Playing “Loteria” is family tradition in the Garza family. What games or traditions do you do with your family in the vein of “Loteria?” Use a poster board to detail the specifics of the tradition or game. Be prepared to share (and perhaps play) with the class.

Additional fantasy and science fiction to read with teens:

Cat Girl’s Day Off by Kimberly Pauley

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/cat-girl-s-day-off>

Hammer of Witches by Shana Mlawski

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/hammer-of-witches>

Drift by M.K. Hutchins <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/drift>

Killer of Enemies by Joseph Bruchac

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/killer-of-enemies>

Trail of the Dead by Joseph Bruchac

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/trail-of-the-dead>

Tankborn by Karen Sandler

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/tankborn>

Awakening by Karen Sandler

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Rebellion by Karen Sandler

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Wolf Mark by Joseph Bruchac

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Diverse Energies by eleven speculative fiction authors

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/diverse-energies>

Vodník by Bryce Moore

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/vodnik>

Galaxy Games by Greg Fishbone

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/galaxy-games>

Rose Eangle by Joseph Bruchac

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/rose-eagle>



Quote	What does this tell you about the character?	Make a plot prediction
<p><i>Example:</i></p> <p>Odilia: “I could hear the <i>lechuzas</i> whispering menacingly above me, up on the roof, but I couldn’t understand what they were saying. I unzipped the tiny front pocket of my shorts as slowly as possible, trying not to draw attention to myself.”</p>		

From Prereading Focus Questions no. 4, Quote Analysis

(Option: Add a fourth column for students to determine if their plot prediction was correct, to be filled out during the reading of the novel.)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Guadalupe García McCall is the author of *Under the Mesquite* from Lee & Low Books, a novel in verse. *Under the Mesquite* received the prestigious Pura Belpré Author Award, was a William C. Morris Finalist, received the Lee Bennett Hopkins/International Literacy Promising Poet Award, the Tomas Rivera Children's Book Award, and was included in *Kirkus Reviews'* Best Teen Books of 2011, among many other accolades. Her second novel, *Summer of the Mariposas* from Tu Books, an imprint of Lee & Low Books, won a Westchester Young Adult Fiction award, was a finalist for the Andre Norton Award for Young Adult Science Fiction and Fantasy, was included in the 2013 Amelia Bloomer Project List, the Texas Lone Star Reading List, and the 2012 School Library Journal's Best Books of the Year. Her poems for children have appeared in *The Poetry Friday Anthology*, *The Poetry Friday Anthology for Middle School*, and *The Poetry Friday Anthology for Science*. García McCall was born in Piedras Negras, Coahuila, Mexico. She immigrated with her family to the United States when she was six years old and grew up in Eagle Pass, Texas (the setting of both her novels and most of her poems). Trained in theater arts, she is currently a high school English teacher in San Antonio. You can visit her online at <http://guadalupegarciamccall.com/>.

ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

LEE & LOW BOOKS is the largest children's book publisher specializing in diversity and multiculturalism. Our motto, "about everyone, for everyone," is as urgent today as it was when we started in 1991. It is the company's goal to meet the need for stories that children of color can identify with and that all children can enjoy. The right book can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, prompt discussion about race and ethnicity, and inspire children to imagine not only a world that includes them, but also a world where they are the heroes of their own stories. Discover more at leeandlow.com.

ORDERING INFORMATION

On the Web:

www.leeandlow.com/contact/ordering (general order information)

www.leeandlow.com/books/summer-of-the-mariposas (secure online ordering)

By Phone: 212-779-4400 ext. 25

By Fax: 212-683-1894

By Mail: Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Book Information for Summer of the Mariposas



\$12.95, PAPERBACK

978-1-62014-010-9

352 pages, 5-1/2 X 8-1/4

*Reading Level: Grades 5–6

*Reading level based on the Spache Readability Formula

Interest Level: Grades 6 and up

Guided Reading Level: Z

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points: 5.4/13.0

Lexile™ Measure: 840L

THEMES: Siblings (Sisterhood), Self-esteem and Confidence, Responsibility, Overcoming Obstacles, Immigrant Experience, Imagination, Friendship, Forgiveness, Coping with Death, Conflict Resolution, Empathy and Compassion, Leadership, Persistence and Grit, Magical Realism, Journey (Epic), Retellings of Mythology/Folklore, Courage, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest

RESOURCES ON THE WEB:

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/summer-of-the-mariposas>

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.