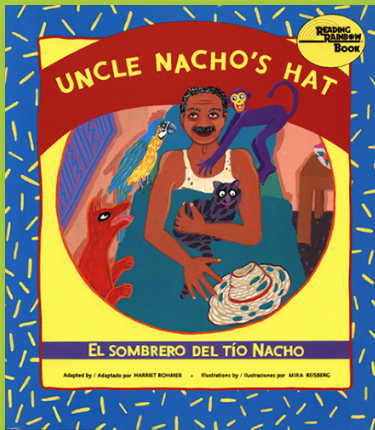


TEACHER'S GUIDE



LEE & LOW BOOKS

Uncle Nacho's Hat / El Sombrero Del Tio Nacho

Adapted by Harriet Rohmer

illustrated by Mira Reisberg

Reading Level

Reading Level: Grade 3

Interest Level: Grades PreK–3

Guided Reading Level/Spanish

Guided Reading Level: O/N

Accelerated Reader® Level/

Points: 2.4/0.5

Lexile™ Measure: 500L

Genre: Folktale/Traditional
Literature

Themes: Sharing & Giving,
Overcoming Obstacles, Self-
Improvement, Neighbors,
Families, Conflict Resolution,
Nicaragua, Folktales &
Traditional Literature, Latino/
Hispanic/Mexican Interest

Synopsis

When Ambrosia gives her Uncle Nacho a new hat, he tries to get rid of his old one, but to no avail. No matter what he does, the pesky hat keeps coming back to him. This classic folktale from the Puppet Workshop of Nicaraguan National Television, vividly illustrated by Mira Reisberg and presented in a bilingual edition, is a parable about the difficulties of making changes and shaking off old habits. The book includes an account of the origins of the story. Story is a “recommended reading” Reading Rainbow selection.



BACKGROUND

About the story

(Excerpted from the author's note)

Uncle Nacho (Nacho is a familiar name for Ignacio) is lovable, kind, but unable to change. His hat becomes a metaphor for all the bad habits that he cannot discard. Uncle Nacho's old hat keeps coming back because he still thinks in the same old ways. When Ambrosia tells him to think about the new hat, she is the voice of change which is youthful, intelligent, yet still respectful and loving.

Uncle Nacho's Hat is adapted from a Nicaraguan folktale performed by the Puppet Workshop of Nicaraguan National Television. The young workshop performers, some only 14 or 15 years old, use the medium of folktales to inspire people to think critically about important issues in their lives.

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:

- Do you or someone in your family have a favorite hat? What does it look like? When is it worn?
- When was there a time you needed to replace something you used a lot (such as a piece of furniture, some clothing, a stuffed animal)? How did it make you feel? How did you decide it was time to replace the object?
- What do you like about doing something new or different? What's hard about making changes?

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. Then 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, illustrations, bilingual text, and author's note.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- What happens when Uncle Nacho gets a new hat
- What this story can teach us
- How Uncle Nacho learns to move on/embrace change

Encourage students to consider why author Harriet

Rohmer 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.



VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

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

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

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below. 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

parrot, fan, trunk, gentleman

Academic

useless, handsome, intelligent, appreciate, decent, truth, deserving, serve, completely

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)

1. What does Uncle Nacho do in the morning? Why is he frustrated when Ambrosia stops by to visit?
2. What does Ambrosia bring and why?
3. What is Uncle Nacho's first reaction to the new hat? Then what does he start to think about?
4. Where does Uncle Nacho think about putting his old hat? Where does he finally decide to put it and why?
5. Who finds the old hat? What does she do and say?
6. Where does Uncle Nacho take his old hat next? Who does he meet?
7. What do Pedro and Paco do when they see the old gentleman wearing Uncle Nacho's old hat? How does Uncle Nacho react to them taking it back? What happens to the hat?
8. What does Uncle Nacho say to Ambrosia after school? What is her advice to him?
9. What does Uncle Nacho decide to do? How does showing his new hat to his friends make him feel?

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. Why do you think many people have routines they follow every morning?
2. As readers, we only see one morning with Uncle Nacho. What else do we learn about him from Ambrosia's comments and actions?
3. Why do you think Uncle Nacho thinks so much about what to do with his old hat? Why do you think he decides against so many options?
4. Why do you think Uncle Nacho feels better when he gives his old hat to the old gentleman?
5. Do you think Pedro and Paco did the right thing? Why or why not?
6. What do Uncle Nacho's actions show about him as a character? How do you think Uncle Nacho's friends and family feel about him? What makes you think that?
7. How would you describe Ambrosia as a character? Give examples from the story to support your thinking.



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. Why can it be hard to say goodbye to something you've had for a long time? Give examples from the story and your own life.
2. Make a list of pros and cons Ambrosia may have considered when she decided to give Uncle Nacho a new hat, or draw her and what her thoughts could have been in two separate thought bubbles. If you were Ambrosia, would you have given Uncle Nacho a new hat? Why or why not?
3. How can others be helpful when a person is trying to make a change? Give examples from the story and your own life.
4. The author's note says, "Uncle Nacho's hat keeps coming back because he still thinks in the same old ways." What does this mean? Write about a change you'd like to make in your own life, and the new thinking that might help.
5. Ambrosia is a young person who gives advice to an older person. What are the benefits of younger people sharing their ways of thinking with older people? What are the benefits of older people sharing their knowledge with younger people? Give examples from your own life or background knowledge.
6. How can this story and the lesson Uncle Nacho learns be helpful for growing up? For example, what does Uncle Nacho learn that we could share with someone moving to a new school or up a grade or replacing/retiring an old stuffed animal or favorite blanket?

ELL 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 a favorite possession, or a meaningful gift they received or gave.
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.
6. Use the Spanish text in this book if it would be helpful to your students.

Social and Emotional Learning

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

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

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships. Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of *Uncle Nacho's Hat*:

1. Have students chart Uncle Nacho's emotions over the course of the story. How does he feel when he's interacting with the hat? How does he feel when he meets other people in his family and neighborhood? Use the illustrations as a visual reference and way to tap into students' visual literacy skills.
2. What Social and Emotional Learning skills does Uncle Nacho exhibit over the course of the book? (some examples include problem-solving, grit and perseverance, and perspective taking) How do they



influence his character? Why was it important for him to demonstrate those skills?

3. Have students in an essay argue whether Uncle Nacho is a role model for young people or not. What evidence can students find in the text that demonstrates Uncle Nacho's character and whether the author encourages young people to emulate him or draw caution from him.

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

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1-3 and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strand 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types and Purposes, Strand 3)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

1. Have students act out this story with simple props or stick puppets. Encourage them to use expression to convey the characters' emotions.
2. Read other multicultural folktales, such as *Baby Rattlesnake* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/baby-rattlesnake-viborita-de-cascabel>) or others from this collection (<https://www.leeandlow.com/collections/multicultural-folk-tales>). Compare the characters and settings to those in *Uncle Nacho's Hat*. Discuss the moral of each tale.
3. Discuss how traditional tales often reflect the culture and landscape of a particular location. Have students write different versions of this story set in other places with details relevant to that place.
4. Explore the practice of oral storytelling with students. Create a chart listing key differences between oral stories and stories in books. List behaviors that make an oral storyteller successful, such as expression, gestures, sounds, etc. Have students practice telling *Uncle Nacho's Hat* or another tale as an oral story. This unit on oral storytelling (<http://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/2008/2/08.02.01.x.html>) from the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute has a wealth of ideas.

5. Examine the ways this story shares Uncle Nacho's thinking. Have students create comic strips about another book character or someone from their own lives trying to make a big decision. In each box, include a thought bubble with the characters' thoughts ("What if...?" "I should..." etc.)
6. Read additional stories on characters with worn-out clothing and materials: *Maya's Blanket* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/maya-s-blanket-la-manta-de-maya>) and *Rainbow Weaver* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/rainbow-weaver-tejedora-del-arcoiris>). Discuss how they reuse and repurpose the clothing.

Art

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

1. Study how the page borders enhance each illustration. Encourage students to experiment with adding page borders to illustrations of their own writing.
2. Have students design and construct their own ideal hats. Display photos or the actual hats alongside student writing explaining their choices.

Social Studies

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

(Writing Standards, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, Strand 7)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Communication, Strand 1)

1. Have students research organizations that recycle or repurpose clothing and other personal items in your community. Plan a way to contribute to these efforts. Or, have students or school staff bring in discarded items from home and brainstorm ways to reuse or repurpose them.

Home/School Connection

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strand 2)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strand 1)

1. Have students ask adult family members about stories they were told when they were children. Were any of the stories told in order to teach a lesson? How did the stories reflect the location, community or culture in which they grew up? Have family members visit school to share stories if possible.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Harriet Rohmer was the founder of Children's Book Press. She is the author and editor of many award-winning children's books, including *Just Like Me*, *Uncle Nacho's Hat*, and *Honoring Our Ancestors*. She currently lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. To find out more about Harriet, visit her online at <http://www.heroesoftheenvironment.com/>.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Mira Reisberg was born in Australia. She is a painter, graphic designer, and the illustrator of several books for children, including *Uncle Nacho's Hat* and *Where Fireflies Dance*. Mira has also taught art to both children and adults. She holds a Master's in Fine Art and a PhD in Education with an emphasis on Cultural Studies and Art Education. She currently teaches in the Art Education program of Northern Illinois University, outside of Chicago. Her website is <http://www.mirareisberg.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)

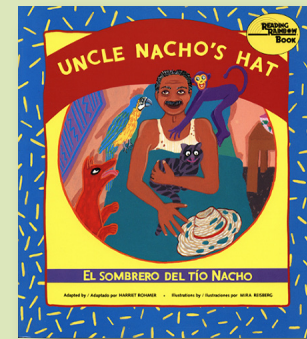
<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/uncle-nacho-s-hat-el-sombrero-del-tio-nacho> (secure online ordering)

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

*Uncle Nacho's Hat /
El Sombrero Del Tio Nacho*



\$10.95, PAPERBACK
9780892391127
32 pages
*Reading Level: Grade 3
Interest Level: Grades PreK–3
Guided Reading Level/Spanish
Guided Reading Level: O/N
Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
2.4/0.5

Lexile™ Measure: 500L

THEMES: Sharing & Giving, Overcoming Obstacles, Self-Improvement, Neighbors, Families, Conflict Resolution, Nicaragua, Folktales & Traditional Literature, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest

RESOURCES ON THE

WEB:

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/uncle-nacho-s-hat-el-sombrero-del-tio-nacho>

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