



Our Celebración!

written by Susan Middleton Elya
illustrated by Ana Aranda

About the Book

Genre: Realistic Fiction/Poetry

Format: Hardcover, \$18.95
32 pages, 8-1/2" x 10-1/2"

ISBN: 9781620142714

Reading Level: Grade 3

Interest Level: Grades K-5

Guided Reading Level: O

Spanish Guided Reading Level: O

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
NP

Lexile™ Measure: NP

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Colors, Cultural Diversity, Families, People In Motion, Holidays/ Traditions, Childhood Experiences and Memories, Dance, Diversity, Home, Multi-ethnic interest, Music, Neighbors

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/our-celebracion

SYNOPSIS

It's a sunny summer day. Come join the crowd headed for the parade! Marvel at the people riding motorcycles, bicycles, tricycles, and unicycles. Duck out of the way as firefighters spray water on hot spectators. Clap to the music as bands of musicians playing *clarinetes*, saxophones, *flautas*, trumpets, and drums march by. Feast on lemonade, watermelon, tacos, and ice cream. Wave to the corn princess as her float passes by. Then take cover when a quick rain shower comes, followed by a bright rainbow. Back in the town plaza as night falls, marvel at the sparkling fireworks that end the day's festivities.

With engaging text and imaginative, whimsical illustrations, *Our Celebración!* is the perfect way to enjoy a summer day-- and learn some Spanish too.

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

BACKGROUND

The Spanish Language

In the twentieth century, Spanish, the official language of most Caribbean and South American nations, became a widely spoken language in the United States as many new immigrants from Latin America came to live in the U.S. Bilingual books like *Our Celebración!!* offer the perfect pressure-free format for introducing students to basic Spanish words. With more and more Spanish-speaking people living in the United States, bilingual English-Spanish books offer an inventive way to introduce non-Spanish-speaking children to reading and speaking beginning Spanish.

Hispanic Heritage Month

Bilingual English-Spanish books also offer an excellent opportunity to enhance your class celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 to October 15). Established by the United States Congress in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week to recognize the contributions of Latinos in the United States, this annual observance became Hispanic Heritage Month in 1989. Many communities in the United States celebrate with parades, festivals, and concerts. School celebrations include exhibitions of art, folk dance, and crafts. Authors, illustrators, and other speakers of Hispanic heritage often address students. (<https://www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov/>)

Using Context Clues and Cognates in Vocabulary Instruction

Our Celebración! can introduce cognates and using words surrounding an unknown word to gather meaning. Reading Rockets' "Using Cognates to Develop Comprehension" shares tips and strategies on how to use cognates, words in two languages that share a similar meaning, spelling and pronunciation. Colorín Colorado's "The Components of Effective Vocabulary Instruction" provides more detail on how to incorporate rich vocabulary in any setting (<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/components-effective-vocabulary-instruction>).

How to Use a Glossary

Print out or show students the glossary in the back of *Our Celebración!*, highlighting that each word in English and Spanish corresponds to the other. Have students turn to the Glossary and Pronunciation Guide at the back of the book, or write the words and names, plus their pronunciations, on the board or a chart. Ask students to practice pronouncing each entry and then discuss what it means. For entries other than names, encourage students to use them in their own sentences. Refer back to the glossary throughout the reading.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and 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:

- How do you feel about learning new things? What do you think it would be like to learn a new language?
- For non-Spanish speakers: Why might it be useful to know some words in Spanish?
- For non-Spanish speakers: Who do you know that speaks Spanish? How and where did they learn Spanish? Highlight to students that many people learn and speak Spanish in the United States, as well as helping them locate Spanish-speaking countries on a globe or world map. If any students are Spanish speaking, invite them to share (within their comfort) about the language and/or their heritage.
- What is your neighborhood like? What makes it special?
- Have you ever been to a parade or festival in your neighborhood? What was it like?
- What are your favorite foods and activities at a party?
- What are your favorite traditions in your community?

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)

- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book, *Our Celebración!* Discuss the meaning in Spanish if necessary. Then ask students what they think this book will 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?
- **Picture Walk:** Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, and illustrations.
- **Read Author & Illustrator's Biographies:** Read about Susan Middleton Elya and Ana Aranda. What other children's books have they done?
- Encourage students to stop and jot in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.
- Have students quickly write a feeling in their notebook during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote that feeling down and have them write a journal entry about it.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- what the family sees at the neighborhood celebration
- what activities are at the celebration
- how to figure out the meaning of the word based on other words in the sentence as well as the illustrations
- what reading a book that uses both English and Spanish words in the same sentence is like
- how the illustrations complement the text

Encourage students to consider why the author Susan Middleton Elya would want to share this story of a community celebration.

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

rodeos, agua, amarillo, anaranjado, azul, el balcón, las banderas, las bicicletas, blanco, las brisas, los caballeros, los caballitos, la calle, la celebración, los clarinetes, claro, completa, las coronas, el desfile, el día, los dulces, las escaleras, la explosión, las fiestas, las flautas, la fresa, las hamburguesas, el helado, índigo, las meriendas, los monociclos, las motocicletas, los perros, la princesa, la razón, rojo, la sandía, sí, el sol, las sonrisas, las sorpresas, las tiendas, los triciclos, las trompetas, los vecinos, verde, violeta

Academic

jubilation, glockenspiel, drooling, dazzle

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 textual 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 is happening at the celebration? What clues can we find in the illustrations?
2. What are people eating at the celebration?
3. What different types of vehicles are riding down the street?
4. What kinds of instruments are people playing at the celebration?
5. What happens when the weather changes?
6. What other attractions are part of the celebration?
7. What appears when the rain ends?
8. What does the family eat when the show is over?
9. What happens at the end of the celebration?

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. What is one big thought you have after reading this book? Think about the family featured in the story and what they do at the celebration. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think is Susan Middleton Elya's message to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Susan Middleton Elya's intentions for writing the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kinds of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do the family's experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Our Celebración!*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make between this book and what you have seen in the world, such as online, on television, or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?

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. What is one big thought you have after reading this book? Think about the family featured in the story and what they do at the celebration. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think is Susan Middleton Elya's message to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Susan Middleton Elya's intentions for writing the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kinds of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do the family's experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Our Celebración!*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make between this book and what you have seen in the world, such as online, on television, or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?

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)

As a bilingual book, *Our Celebración!!* is a perfect way for Spanish-speaking ELL students and non-ELL students to work together and learn from one another. 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. This is an opportunity for Spanish-speaking students to help English readers with unfamiliar Spanish vocabulary, and vice versa.
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 tell what they learned about one of the poems. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about identity and belonging, and the meaning of family.
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. Any additional ELL support strategies or activities here if needed, including labeling for vocabulary, diagramming, or map skills. Have students continue to refer to the glossary, or post a photograph of the glossary for the entire class to see and refer to.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

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

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

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 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 this book.

1. How would you feel before a celebration like this? What do you like about celebrations?
2. Why does the crowd not want it to rain during the celebration? How would you feel?
3. Which illustration in *Our Celebración!* best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it shows. How does the image portray that emotion?
4. Choose an emotion that interests you: happiness, sadness, fear, anxiety, frustration, hope, perseverance, and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *Our Celebración!*

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, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **Have students write a description of their dream celebration/celebración, including what and who would be there.** Where would it take place? What kind of activities would they like to do? Encourage students to use their imagination and get creative. Students can accompany their writing piece with an illustration of their ideal celebration.
- **Encourage students to select a passage from the story, and then highlight the English words in one color and Spanish words in another color.** Have students pretend that they are teaching another student who doesn't know English how they could figure out the meaning of the words from the Spanish words as well as the illustrations. Repeat the same hypothetical process for teaching a student who doesn't know Spanish. For more information about the use of context clues in reading, refer to Reading Rocket's resources (<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/use-context-cues-reading>).
- **Conduct a Susan Middleton Elya author study with her other Lee & Low titles including the Say Hola series** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/say-hola-to-spanish>) **which includes *Say Hola to Spanish!*, *Say Hola to Spanish Otra Vez (Again!)*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/say-hola-to-spanish-otra-vez-again>) **and *Say Hola to Spanish at the Circus*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/say-hola-to-spanish-at-the-circus>). Make connections among the texts. What themes do Susan Middleton Elya's books have in common? How are the topics similar? How are they different? What do you think Susan Middleton Elya's message is to her readers across all her books?
- **Come up with questions to interview the author, Susan Middleton Elya.** What was her process behind creating *Our Celebración!*? What was her inspiration for writing *Our Celebración!*? When and where did she learn to speak Spanish? Consider reaching out to Susan Middleton Elya for a virtual author visit (www.susanelya.com).

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **Conduct a research study on where Spanish is the primary language spoken in countries all over the world.** Use a map and use pinpoints on the countries. Divide students into group to learn more about the Spanish that's spoken in those countries. Rosetta Stone has an introductory page that contains information about where Spanish is spoken all over the world (<https://www.rosettastone.com/languages/spanish-speaking-countries>). National Geographic also has a lesson plan about the major languages of the Americas (<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/major-languages-of-americas/>).
- **Have students learn about the similarities and differences between English and Spanish words.** Colorín Colorado has resources dedicated to capitalizing on the similarities and differences between English and Spanish and how to teach students who speak either language or both languages on how to recognize the nuances between the languages (<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/capitalizing-similarities-and-differences-between-spanish-and-english>).
- **Encourage students to learn about the origins of block parties and neighborhood celebrations.** *Our Celebración!!* features a neighborhood celebration. What do block parties look like in the rest of the United States? What are some qualities of a block party and neighborhood celebration? The New York Times has a compilation of photographs from New York City block parties (<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/09/15/nyregion/block-parties-nyc.html>).

Art, Media & Music

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **Have students draw, paint, or collage their own celebración!** Have them label their art using both Spanish and English words they learned from the book.
- **Consider having students come up with questions to interview the illustrator Ana Aranda.** What is her process behind creating the illustrations for a children's book? What medium did she use to create the illustrations? Why? What was it like to work on *Our Celebración!*? Consider contacting Ana Aranda for an author visit (anaaranda.com).
- **Encourage students to select the illustration from *Our Celebración!!* that resonated with them the most.** Have students write a reflection about the illustrations chosen. What stood out to them? How did their illustrations make them feel? What did the illustrations make them think about?

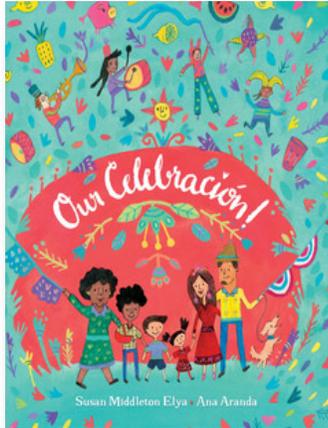
School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

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

- **Have students plan a mini-celebration with their families.** What are some things that they can do at home? What kind of food could they make? Do their families like to dance? What kind of dances could they do? What kinds of decorations could they put up? Encourage families to use what they already have at home for a celebration.
- **Ask students to interview family members about neighborhood celebrations.** Have they participated in a neighborhood celebration before? What was it like? What did they do? What kinds of foods did they eat? Did they do any dancing? Students can share their findings with the class.



Ordering Information

General Order Information:
leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:
leeandlow.com/books/our-celebracion

By Phone: 212-779-4400 ext. 25

By Fax: 212-683-1894

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

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Middleton Elya is the author of more than twenty popular picture books for children, including Lee & Low's *Say Hola to Spanish* series and *Home at Last*. She has degrees in Spanish and elementary education, and she taught Spanish for many years. Elya is known for blending English and Spanish to create clever, lively, rhyming stories. A native of Iowa, she now lives in Danville, California. You can visit her online at susanelya.com.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Ana Aranda's artwork has been featured in galleries and museums in the United States, France, Italy, and her native Mexico. Her biggest inspirations come from her childhood memories, the vibrant colors of Mexico, and music. Aranda's illustrations often transform the everyday into fantastical situations and whimsical creatures. Aranda now lives in San Francisco, California. Her website is anaranda.com.

REVIEWS

"A splendor for the senses even as it promotes togetherness and teaches a second language. A great addition to any library!" –*Kirkus Reviews*, **starred review**

"A perfection addition to children's picture book collections." –*Booklist*, **starred review**

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.