



2021 Recommended Latino-Themed Book List for Youth Read-Alouds and Book Clubs

Picture Books for Read-Alouds

Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
Abuela	Join Rosalba and her grandmother, her abuela, on a magical journey as they fly over the streets, sights, and people of New York City which sparkles below. Abuela points out places that they explore together. The exhilaration in Rosalba's and Abuela's story is magnified by the loving bond that only a grandmother and granddaughter can share. (40 pages)	Arthur Doros	Preschool-Grade 2	English with some Spanish words	Fiction
Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match / Marisol McDonald no combina	Marisol McDonald has flaming red hair and nut-brown skin. Polka dots and stripes are her favorite combination. She prefers peanut butter and jelly burritos in her lunch box. And don't even think of asking her to choose one or the other activity at recess -- she'll just be a soccer playing pirate princess. To Marisol McDonald, these seemingly mismatched things make perfect sense together. (32 pages)	Monica Brown	Preschool-Grade 3	Bilingual – English & Spanish	Fiction
Too Many Tamales	Maria's favorite cousins were coming over and she got to help make the tamales for Christmas dinner. It was almost too good to be true when her mother left the kitchen for a moment and Maria got to try on her beautiful diamond ring... This is the story of a treasure thought to be lost in a batch of tamales; of a desperate and funny attempt by Maria and her cousins to eat their way out of trouble; and the warm way a family pulls together to make it a	Gary Soto	Preschool-Grade 3	English with some Spanish words	Fiction



Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
	perfect Christmas after all. (32 pages)				
Martina the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale	Martina is 21 days old and ready to give her leg in marriage. With the help of her Abuela's shocking advice, she interviews a cast of unlikely suitors to find her true love. Deedy's lively and humorous retelling of this classic Latino folktale sparkles with wit as well as aspects of the Cuban culture. (32 pages)	Carmen Agra Deedy	Preschool-Grade 3	English	Fiction
Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book	In this original trickster tale, Señor Calavera arrives unexpectedly at Grandma Beetle's door. He requests that she leave with him right away. "Just a minute," Grandma Beetle tells him. She still has one house to sweep, two pots of tea to boil, three pounds of corn to make into tortillas -- and that's just the start! Grandma Beetle cleverly delays her trip and spends her birthday with a table full of grandchildren and her surprise guest. (36 pages)	Yuyi Morales	K-Grade 3	English with some Spanish words	Fiction
The Storyteller's Candle / La velita de los cuentos	The winter of 1929 feels especially cold to cousins Hildamar and Santiago -- they arrived in New York City from sunny Puerto Rico only months before. Their island home feels very far away indeed, especially with Three Kings' Day rapidly approaching. But then a magical thing happened. A visitor appears in their class, a gifted storyteller and librarian by the name of Pura Belpré. She opens the children's eyes to the public library and its potential to be the living, breathing heart of the community. The library, after all, belongs to everyone--whether you speak Spanish, English, or both. (32 pages)	Lucía Gonzáles	English with some Spanish words	Grades 1-6	Nonfiction



Upper Elementary

Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
90 Miles to Havana	When Julian's parents make the heartbreaking decision to send him and his two brothers away from Cuba to Miami via the Pedro Pan operation, the boys are thrust into a new world where bullies run rampant and it's not always clear how best to protect themselves. (304 pages)	Enrique Flores-Galbis	Upper Elementary	English	Fiction
Efrén Divided	Efrén Nava's Amá is his Superwoman—or Soperwoman, named after the delicious Mexican sopes his mother often prepares. Both Amá and Apá work hard all day to provide for the family. But Efrén worries about his parents; although he's American-born, his parents are undocumented. His worst nightmare comes true one day when Amá doesn't return from work and is deported to Tijuana, México. Efrén must channel his inner Soperboy to help take care of and try to reunite his family. (272 pages)	Ernesto Cisneros	Upper Elementary & Middle School	English	Fiction
Lupe Wong Won't Dance	Lupe Wong is going to be the first female pitcher in the Major Leagues. She's also championed causes her whole young life, like expanding the options for race on school tests beyond just a few bubbles and complaining to the BBC about the length between Doctor Who seasons. Lupe needs As in all her classes in order to meet her favorite pitcher, Fu Li Hernandez, who's Chinacan/Mexinese just like her. So when the horror that is square dancing rears its head in gym? Obviously she's not gonna let that slide. (272 pages)	Donna Barba Higuera	Upper Elementary & Middle School	English	Fiction



Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez	All Nestor Lopez wants is to live in one place for more than a few months and have dinner with his dad. When he and his mother move to a new town to live with his grandmother after his dad's latest deployment, Nestor plans to lay low. He definitely doesn't want to anyone find out his deepest secret: that he can talk to animals. But when the creatures in his new town start disappearing, Nestor investigates and learns that they are being seized by a <i>tule vieja</i> —a witch who can absorb an animal's powers by biting it during a solar eclipse. (320 pages)	Adrianna Cuevas	Upper Elementary & Middle School	English	Fiction
Me, Frida, and the Secret of the Peacock Ring	A room locked for 50 years. A valuable peacock ring. A mysterious brother-sister duo. Paloma Marquez travels to Mexico City, birthplace of her deceased father, for the very first time. She's hoping that spending time in Mexico will help her unlock memories of the too-brief time they spent together. Paloma meets Lizzie and Gael. The siblings want her to help them find a ring that once belonged to beloved Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Finding the ring means a big reward -- and the thanks of all Mexico. What better way to honor her father than returning a priceless artifact of his favorite artist? (256 pages)	Angela Cervantes	Upper Elementary & Middle School	English	Fiction



Middle School

Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
Lety Out Loud: A Wish Novel	Lety Muñoz's first language is Spanish, and she likes to take her time putting her words together. She loves volunteering at the animal shelter because the dogs and cats there don't care if she can't always find the right words. When the shelter needs a volunteer to write animal profiles, Lety jumps at the chance. But classmate Hunter also wants to write profiles, so he devises a competition to determine the official shelter scribe. Whoever gets their animals adopted the fastest wins. Lety worries that if the shelter finds out about the contest, they'll kick her out of the program. Then she'll never be able to adopt Spike, her favorite shelter dog! (208 pages)	Angela Cervantes	Middle School	English	Fiction
Cuba 15	Violet Paz has just turned 15, a pivotal birthday in the eyes of her Cuban grandmother. Fifteen is the age when a girl enters womanhood, traditionally celebrating the occasion with a quinceañero. But while Violet is half Cuban, she's also half Polish, and more importantly, she feels 100% American. Except for her family's passion for playing dominoes, smoking cigars, and dancing to Latin music, Violet knows little about Cuban culture and history. As Violet begins to ask questions about her Cuban roots, cultures and feelings collide. Violet knows she's got to form her own opinions. After all, a quince girl is supposed to embrace responsibility, and to Violet that includes understanding her Cuban heritage. (304 pages)	Nancy Osa	Middle School	English	Fiction



Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora	For Arturo, summertime in Miami means playing basketball until dark, sipping mango smoothies, and keeping cool under banyan trees. And maybe a few shifts as junior lunchtime dishwasher at Abuela’s restaurant. But this summer also includes Carmen, a poetry enthusiast who moves into Arturo’s apartment complex and turns his stomach into a deep fryer. He almost doesn’t notice the smarmy land developer who rolls into town and threatens to change it. Arturo refuses to let his family and community go down without a fight. As he schemes with Carmen, Arturo discovers the power of poetry and protest through untold family stories and the work of José Martí. (272 pages)	Pablo Cartaya	Middle School	English	Fiction
Maximilian & the Mystery of the Guardian Angel (Max’s Lucha Libre Adventures #1)	Maximilian is just another 11-year-old lucha libre fan. He goes to the matches, watches the movies and collects the masks of his favorite wrestlers, especially the Guardian Angel. But when he tumbles over the railing at a lucha libre match in San Antonio, Max makes a connection to the world of Mexican wrestling that will ultimately link him, maybe by blood, to the greatest hero of all time: The Guardian Angel. What was shaping up to be one boring summer before sixth grade now seems like a story straight out of Max’s beloved lucha libre movies. (160 pages)	Xavier Garza	Middle School	Bilingual – English & Spanish	Fiction
Esperanza Rising	Esperanza thought she’d always live a privileged life on her family’s ranch in Mexico. But a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California and settle in a Mexican farm labor camp. Esperanza isn’t ready for	Pam Muñoz Ryan	Middle School	English with some Spanish words	Fiction



Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
	the hard work, financial struggles brought on by the Great Depression, or lack of acceptance she now faces. When Mama gets sick and a strike for better working conditions threatens to uproot their new life, Esperanza must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances — because Mama's life, and her own, depend on it. (262 pages)				
The Smoking Mirror	In an action-packed, fantasy novel, that combines Aztec and Mayan mythology with life in contemporary South Texas and Mexico, 12-year-old twins descend into the Land of the Dead to find their mother. (238 pages)	David Bowles	Middle School	English	Fiction

Young Adult

Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
Enrique's Journey	This is the unforgettable quest of a Honduran boy looking for his mother, 11 years after she is forced to leave her starving family to find work in the U.S. Braving unimaginable peril, often clinging to the sides and tops of freight trains, Enrique travels through hostile worlds full of thugs, bandits, and corrupt cops. But he pushes forward, relying on his wit, courage, hope, and the kindness of strangers. (299 pages)	Sonia Nazario	Middle School & Young Adult	English	Nonfiction
The House on Mango Street	Structured as a series of vignettes, this novel it tells the story of Esperanza Cordero, a 12-year-old Chicana girl growing up in the Hispanic quarter of Chicago. The novel follows Esperanza over the span of one year in her life, as she enters	Sandra Cisneros	Young Adult	English	Fiction



Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
	<p>adolescence and begins to face the realities of life as a young woman in a poor and patriarchal community. Elements of the Mexican-American culture and themes of social class, race, sexuality, identity, and gender are interwoven throughout. (110 pages)</p>				
<p>Mexican WhiteBoy</p>	<p>Danny is tall and skinny. His arms are long enough to give his pitch a power so fierce any college scout would sign him on the spot. But every time he gets up on the mound, he loses it. At his private school, they don't expect much else from him. Danny is half-Mexican brown. Growing up in San Diego means everyone knows who he is before he even opens his mouth. Before they find out he can't speak Spanish, and before they realize his mom has blond hair and blue eyes, they've got him pegged. But it works the other way too. Danny's convinced it's his whiteness that sent his father back to Mexico. That's why he's spending the summer with his dad's family. But to find himself, he may just have to face the demons he refuses to see. And open up to a friendship he never saw coming. (272 pages)</p>	<p>Matt de la Peña</p>	<p>Young Adult</p>	<p>English</p>	<p>Fiction</p>
<p>Furia</p>	<p>In Rosario, Argentina, Camila Hassan lives a double life. At home, she is a careful daughter, living within her mother's narrow expectations, in her rising-soccer-star brother's shadow, and under the abusive rule of her short-tempered father. On the field, she is La Furia, a powerhouse of skill and talent. When her team qualifies for the South American tournament, Camila gets the chance to see just how far those</p>	<p>Yamile Saied Mendez</p>	<p>Young Adult</p>	<p>English</p>	<p>Fiction</p>



Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
	talents can take her. But the path ahead isn't easy. Her parents wouldn't allow a girl to play fútbol—and she needs their permission to go any farther. And the boy she once loved is back in town. Camila doesn't have time to be distracted by her feelings for him. She has her own passions and ambitions now. Camila is forced to face her secrets and make her way in a world with no place for the dreams of a girl like her. (368 pages)				
Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida	Dad believed people were like money. You could be a thousand-dollar person or a hundred-dollar person – even a ten-, five-, or one-dollar person. To my dad, we were pennies. Fourteen-year-old Manny Hernandez wants to be a vato firme, the kind of guy people respect. But that's not easy when your father is abusive, your brother can't hold a job, and your mother scrubs the house as if she can wash her troubles away. In Manny's neighborhood, the way to get respect is to be in a gang. But Manny's not sure that joining a gang is the solution. After all, it's his life – and he wants to decide what happens in it. (224 pages)	Victor Martinez	Young Adult	English	Fiction
The Poet X	Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking. Xiomara pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers—especially after she catches feelings for a boy named Aman. With Mami's determination to	Elizabeth Acevedo	Young Adult	English	Fiction (in verse)



Title	Summary	Author	Age Range	Language	Fiction or Nonfiction
	<p>force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school's slam poetry club, she doesn't know how she could attend without her Mami finding out. But she can't stop thinking about performing her poems. In the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent. (384 pages)</p>				