



Alma Flor Ada: An Author Study

THE ALMA PROJECT
A Cultural Curriculum Infusion Model



Denver Public Schools

In partnership with Metropolitan State College of Denver



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A Cultural Curriculum Infusion Model

Alma Flor Ada: An Author Study

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Grades: ECE-Kindergarten

Implementation Time: 2-3 weeks

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The Alma Curriculum and Teacher Training Project

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Alma Flor Ada: An Author Study

Unit Concepts

- Authorship
- Getting to Know Alma Flor Ada
- Alma Flor Ada's Philosophy of Literature
- Becoming Familiar with a Variety of Quality Literature
- Hispanic Traditions and People
- Migrant Lifestyles

Standards Addressed By This Unit

Reading and Writing

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

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

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

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

Visual Arts

Students know how to apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features of visual arts. (A2)

Mathematics

Students develop number sense, understand and use appropriate math vocabulary, understand and use numbers and number relationships in problem-solving situations, and communicate the reasoning used in solving these problems. (M1)

Science

Students know and understand the characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life, and how living things interact with each other and their environment. (S3)

History

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

Introduction

Alma Flor Ada was born and raised in Camaguey, Cuba. She grew up in an environment that encouraged imagination. For many years she was the only child in an extended family. The trees in her yard became the listeners for her dreams. Her books reflect the joy and excitement she felt as a child. While in fourth grade, she decided that she wanted to write books that made learning fun and told great stories. She has lived in Cuba, Spain, Peru, and the United States. She has taught and studied in many of those countries. She lives in San Francisco, and has four children and three grandchildren.

Ms. Ada is happy that her books are published in both Spanish and English. Her daughter has done many of the translations of her books. She feels that experiencing another language lets children learn to appreciate the diversity of the world. She has a true passion for bilingual education. She was a Fulbright scholar, a recipient of the Marta Salotti Gold Medal Award and the Christopher Award (United States). Her books include poetry, picture books, autobiographies, the retelling of folktales, plays, songs, and translations.

Implementation Guidelines

It is recommended that this unit be used primarily in early childhood, kindergarten, and first- or second-grade classrooms. It is designed not only as an author study, but a way to incorporate Latino literature, traditions, and people into the literacy program. This unit also incorporates many areas of the curriculum—art, science, geography, history, and language.

Instructional Materials and Resources

The following resources (books) are needed for implementing this unit:

I Love Saturdays y Domingos by Alma Flor Ada
Saturday Sancocho by Leyla Torres
The Tamale Quilt by Jane Tenorio-Coscarelli
Dear Peter Rabbit by Alma Flor Ada
A Surprise for Mother Rabbit by Alma Flor Ada
A Piece of My Heart/Pedacito de mi Corazon by Carmen Lomas Garza
Olmo and the Blue Butterfly/Olmo y la Mariposa by Alma Flor Ada
A Rose With Wings by Alma Flor Ada
The Lizard and the Sun/La Lagartija y el Sol by Alma Flor Ada
De Colores and other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children by Jose-Luis Orozco
Making Magic Windows by Carmen Lomas Garza
In My Family/En mi Familia by Carmen Lomas Garza
Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English by Alma Flor Ada

The following are resources and materials for each lesson:

Lesson 1

I Love Saturdays y Domingos by Alma Flor Ada
Saturday Sancocho by Leyla Torres
The Tamale Quilt by Jane Tenorio-Coscarelli

Lesson 2*Dear Peter Rabbit* by Alma Flor Ada**Lesson 3***A Surprise for Mother Rabbit* by Alma Flor Ada*A Piece of My Heart/Pedacito de mi Corazon* by Carmen Lomas Garza**Lesson 4***Olmo and the Blue Butterfly/Olmo y la Mariposa* by Alma Flor Ada*A Rose With Wings* by Alma Flor Ada**Lesson 5***The Lizard and the Sun/La Lagartija y el Sol* by Alma Flor Ada*De Colores and other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children* by Jose-Luis Orozco*Making Magic Windows* by Carmen Lomas Garza*In My Family/En mi Familia* by Carmen Lomas Garza**Lesson 6***Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English* by Alma Flor Ada

Lesson Summary

Lesson 1	Introducing Alma Flor Ada: “Family” 4 This lesson introduces the author Alma Flor Ada, and discusses diversity in families. Children have the opportunity to research and learn about their families.	4
Lesson 2	<i>Dear Peter Rabbit</i> 8 Children will have the opportunity to write to their favorite storybook character as they portray another storybook character.	8
Lesson 3	Eggs, Eggs, Cascarones! 11 The story <i>A Surprise for Mother Rabbit</i> leads into a fun-filled activity where children will decorate and fill eggshells with confetti!	11
Lesson 4	The Migration of Butterflies: <i>Olmo and the Blue Butterfly</i> 13 Children will discover the lifecycle of the butterfly and the amazing migration to Mexico that these delicate creatures take each year.	13
Lesson 5	The Sun Shines On: <i>The Lizard and the Sun</i> 18 Legends of the sun, the importance of the sun, and creating sunbursts from papel picado brings this lesson to life. A great art experience.	18
Lesson 6	<i>Gathering the Sun: A Dedication to Cesar Chavez</i> 21 This lesson is a study of migrants and Cesar Chavez through illustrations, poetic verse, and the alphabet.	21
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Lesson 1: Alma Flor Ada, the Author “Family”

What will students be learning?

STANDARDS

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

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

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

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

BENCHMARKS

Learners will listen to and understand quality literature.

Learners will understand that print is an important symbolic means of communication.

Learners will incorporate new vocabulary and concepts learned into their conversations and writing.

Learners will understand families, their structure, and history.

OBJECTIVES

Students are introduced to Latina author, Alma Flor Ada, her life, and her literary works.

Students will explore the concept of family and learn about their family tree.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read Aloud

Group Discussion

Chart

Individual/Family Research

Compare and Contrast

PRELIMINARY LESSON ACTIVITY

Provide students with a brief history of Alma Flor Ada, her role as an author, and various awards she has received using the biography from the introduction and information provided on the book jacket.

Preview the text *Latino(a) Voices* for an in-depth study of Alma Flor Ada and review all of her literary works. Introduce the story *I Love Saturdays y Domingos* by Alma Flor Ada. This story chronicles a little girl's time spent with both sets of grandparents who come from different cultural backgrounds. It shows that even though they are different in heritage they share the common bond of love for their granddaughter.

ACTIVITIES

After reading the story, use a piece of chart paper with a line drawn down the center. Label one side “Grandma and Grandpa” and the other side “Abuelito y Abuelita.” Through a group discussion, list on each side the differences and similarities of the grandparents including the various things they did with the granddaughter. Include new vocabulary learned from the story. When this has been completed encourage the children to share special things about their own grandparents. Give each child a copy of the family tree worksheet (see page 7) and explain that their assignment will be completed with their parents. Each child will fill in the family tree with information, background, history, and pictures of their families. This must be completed at the end of the unit and will be used as part of their unit assessment. (Be sure to give them a completion date).

VOCABULARY

Abuelito	Grandfather
Abuelita	Grandmother
Domingos	Sundays
Huevos rancheros	Eggs with salsa
Hola	Hello
Uno.....	One
Dos	Two
Tres	Three
Quatro	Four
Cinco	Five
Seis	Six
Siete	Seven
Ocho	Eight
Nueve	Nine
Diez	Ten
Circo.....	Circus
Amarillo	Yellow
Anaranjado	Orange
Rojo.....	Red
Azul.....	Blue
Verde	Green
Rancho	Ranch
Orgullo	Pride
Piñata	A paper-mache object, often in the shape of an animal, filled with treats
Feliz cumpleaños	Happy Birthday

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Chart paper

Copies of the Family Tree Worksheet

I Love Saturdays y Domingos by Alma Flor Ada

CD to share songs of celebrations

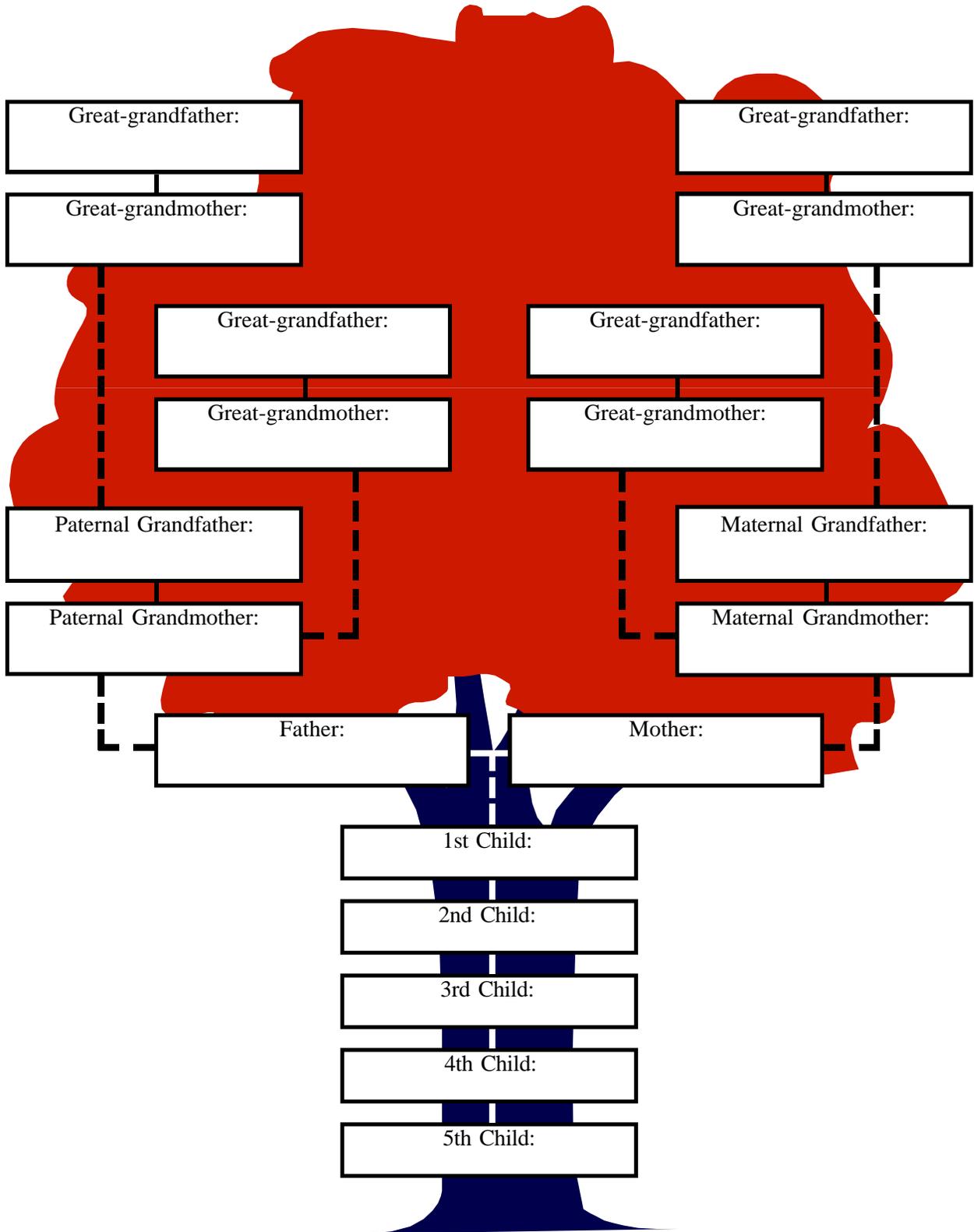
Two additional stories to share on grandparents and traditions: *The Tamale Quilt* by Jane Tenorio-Coscarelli and *Saturday Sancocho* by Leyla Torres

ASSESSMENT

Check for knowledge of the concept of differences in the two sets of grandparents by giving each child a piece of construction paper that is divided down the middle. Label one side “Saturdays,” and the other “Domingos.” Have each child illustrate something from the story that shows the cultural differences between the grandparents. Have the children share their illustrations and orally explain how the activities are culturally different.

Name _____

Family Tree Worksheet



Lesson 2: *Dear Peter Rabbit*

What will students be learning?

STANDARDS

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

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

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

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

BENCHMARKS

Learners will follow and answer questions about a story that is read aloud.

Learners will take part in conversations and group discussions by taking turns and sharing ideas.

Learners will understand that writing carries meaning.

Learners will participate in shared writing activities.

Learners will use correct sentence structures, complete ideas, and punctuation in their writing.

OBJECTIVES

Students will participate in a shared writing activity that will lead into individual writing activities.

Students will use creativity in their writing activity that will be shared with others.

Students will use their knowledge of storybook characters to write letters to friends.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read Aloud

Group Discussion

Chart

Writing Activities

Shared Writing

SPECIFIC

Share with the children the following: Alma Flor Ada decided to be an author at an early age. She found her schoolbooks boring compared to the wonderful storybooks at home. She decided to write exciting books for all children to enjoy and have fun reading. She has fun doing just that!

PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

Arrange with a teacher of an intermediate class to have the students of the class answer the letters the students of your class write as outlined in the activity on page 8.

PRELIMINARY LESSON ACTIVITY

Introduce the story *Dear Peter Rabbit* by Alma Flor Ada. This book is a collection of letters written by storybook characters to each other. As you read the letters to the class, discuss what is written, who wrote it, and who it was written to, and view the wonderful illustrations. You will want to discuss how the pictures were drawn with pens and colored ink, and who the characters are in the pictures.

ACTIVITIES

After reading the story, give a basic lesson on letter writing. As a shared writing activity have the class choose a storybook character to write to. Begin the letter with a return address, and the greeting Dear... on a piece of chart paper. Let the class decide what to write about and dictate to you. As you write, discuss the letters, words, punctuation, sounds, etc. When this is completed, hand out individual penmanship papers with the directions for the assignment. The direction is to choose a storybook character and a topic to write to them about. They must also choose a storybook character that they will be to sign the letter. Have the children do a rough draft and help them with spelling, punctuation, etc. through your writing conference. When they have completed the draft, give students a sheet of penmanship paper that has the top half free for an illustration. They will then copy their letter and illustrate a storybook scene. Place the letters in envelopes and address them to their character. These will then be sent to the intermediate class to answer as if they were the storybook character the letter was addressed to. This can become a fun letter-writing activity and one that the children will look forward to—possibly a weekly writer’s workshop.

VOCABULARY

Character A person in a story

Illustrator The person who draws the pictures in a piece of literature

Correspondence Communication by letter

Carta Spanish word for letter

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Dear Peter Rabbit by Alma Flor Ada

Chart paper

Sheets of penmanship paper

Envelopes

Books with stories such as “Little Red Riding Hood,” “Goldilocks and The Three Bears,” “The Three Little Pigs,” “Peter Rabbit,” and others

ASSESSMENT

This will be an observation assessment. During the activity, assess if the children have an understanding of letter writing and the format of a letter. This will be done during your writing conference at writer workshop time. Check if they use correct punctuation, sentence structure, and complete ideas. You may want to use the checklist provided:

	Met	Not Met
Did they use a proper greeting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did they use proper spacing of words?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was punctuation used appropriately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were words put together in a sentence format?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did sentences convey a message?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were sentences structured to form a letter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was a proper ending and signature given?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Lesson 3: “Eggs, Eggs, Eggs, Cascarones!”

What will students be learning?

STANDARDS

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

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

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

BENCHMARKS

Learners will use information from their reading to increase vocabulary and language usage.

Learners will read literature representing various cultural and ethnic traditions from throughout the world.

Learners will participate in an artistic form of expression.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be introduced to the Latino tradition of cascarones.

Students will describe the process for making cascarones, sequencing the steps appropriately.

SPECIFICS

In Latino culture, special eggs, called cascarones, are made during Easter. The cascarones are eggshells that are filled with confetti. In Mexico, they are broken over the heads of a loved one or thrown in a fun “battle.”

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read Aloud

Group Discussion

Visuals

Hands-on Activity

Sequencing

SPECIFIC

Share with the children that Alma Flor Ada wrote *A Surprise for Mother Rabbit* to celebrate the diversity of the many people in the world. Talk about the beauty of cultural differences.

PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

Prepare the eggshells by making a small hole at one end of the egg with a needle. Keep poking at the hole until it is a little smaller than a dime. Empty the raw egg (you may want to have the parents do this at home and bring to school—parent involvement!). Rinse the inside and let dry. Design a worksheet with four areas for illustrating the sequence of making cascarones. The completed worksheet will serve as a key indicator of their grasp of sequence (assessment).

ACTIVITIES

Read *A Surprise for Mother Rabbit* by Alma Flor Ada. Discuss the various eggs in the story. To further explain cascarones, show the painting “Cascarones” by Carmen Lomas Garza. Discuss and explain the concept of cascarones and how they are used.

Place students in groups of four or five. Students will:

- Fill eggshells with small, cut up pieces of construction paper, tissue paper, or confetti;
- Tape over the hole with masking tape;
- Dye the eggs after filling with confetti; and
- Display for all to enjoy.

For added fun, have the children use glue water and paint the eggs adding bits of colored tissue paper as a collage affect

VOCABULARY

Cascarones Special eggshells filled with confetti and thrown at friends or broken over the head of a loved one

Mexico Country in North America, south of the United States border

Confetti Small bits of brightly colored paper

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Prepared eggshells

Dye for eggs

Confetti or small pieces of construction paper

Chart paper

A Surprise for Mother Rabbit by Alma Flor Ada

A Piece of My Heart/Pedacito de mi Corazon: The Art of Carmen Lomas Garza by Carmen Lomas Garza.

ASSESSMENT

Students will sequence the process of making cascarones. Each child will receive a sheet of white construction paper that has been divided into four sections labeled 1,2,3, and 4. Have students illustrate the process in sequential order and, if possible, label each section with the specific step. Check to see that the entire process is in correct order.

Lesson 4:

The Migration of Butterflies to Mexico:

Olmo and the Blue Butterfly

What will students be learning?

STANDARDS

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

Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Students know and understand the characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life, and how living things interact with each other and their environment. (S3)

BENCHMARKS

Learners will understand that print is an important and symbolic means of communication.

Learners will listen and understand a variety of materials.

Learners will identify major geographical features, events, and regions.

Learners will identify characteristics and needs of living things such as butterflies.

OBJECTIVES

Students will understand the characteristics of a butterfly through the literature of Alma Flor Ada.

Students will identify the features on a map and show the migration routes of the monarch.

Students will sequence the lifecycle of a butterfly.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read Aloud

Visuals

Map Skills

Sequencing

Charts

SPECIFIC

The books in this lesson are specific to butterflies. Ms. Ada wrote these books to show not only the characteristics of butterflies, but that kindness to creatures, both large and small, is so important. This lesson teaches about butterflies and the natural wonder of their migration.

The monarch butterfly cannot survive long cold winters. Every year when the length of the day and the temperature change, they begin to migrate to warmer regions. If they are east of the Rocky Mountains, they will migrate to the mountain forests of Mexico. If they are west of the Rocky Mountains they will roost in grove trees along the California coast.

The monarch is the only butterfly that migrates so far—up to 3,000 miles. It is an amazing trip for a creature so delicate! They will migrate en masse to the same spot, often to the exact same tree. Since the

monarch's lifespan is short, they can only make this roundtrip migration once—their offspring's offspring (their "grandchildren") will make the next trip.

As the days begin to get longer and winter ends, they will become more active and will mate. Usually around the second week of March they will begin their migration back from Mexico. As they trek back they will leave their eggs on milkweed plants along the way.

PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

Make copies of the Migration Map and Butterfly Lifecycle worksheets. Collect as many pictures of butterflies, particularly monarchs, and as many books that describe butterflies and their lifecycle as you can find. You will be able to use these as visuals for your discussions.

ACTIVITIES

Share Ms. Ada's theme for the books that you will be reading—that kindness to creatures, great and small, is so important. In *Olmo and the Blue Butterfly/Olmo y la Mariposa Azul* and *A Rose With Wings*, she shows that the beauty of a butterfly is so important and that care must be given. Read and discuss *Olmo and the Blue Butterfly*. Use chart paper to sequence the events of the story—what did he do first to follow the butterfly? Continue stressing the various ways he traveled. If possible, share *A Rose With Wings* by Alma Flor Ada, or other books on butterflies. Discuss the butterfly's lifecycle and share visuals if possible.

Let this discussion lead into the migration habit of the monarch butterfly. Share information on their specific migration routes. Introduce the globe/map and discuss what they are and how they are used. Show the route the butterfly takes to get to its roosting spot. Give each child a copy of the Migration Map Worksheet (see page 16). As a group, color the map using the following relief:

- Water = blue
- Land = green
- Mountains = brown
- Migratory routes = outlined in black

As you color the map be sure to stress how far the butterflies must travel to reach their roosting spots deep in Mexico or California.

VOCABULARY

Mariposa Spanish word for butterfly

Azul Spanish word for blue

Mexico A country on the southern end of the North American continent, south of the United States

Migrate To move from one region or climate to another

Roost To settle down for a rest or sleep

Chrysalis A protective covering/the pupa of a butterfly

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Olmo and the Blue Butterfly/Olmo y la Mariposa Azul by Alma Flor Ada

A Rose With Wings by Alma Flor Ada

Chart paper

Photocopied pictures from *Olmo and the Blue Butterfly/Olmo y la Mariposa Azul*

Markers/crayons

Copies of the Migration Map Worksheet

Pictures of butterflies

Additional books on butterflies

Butterfly Lifecycle Worksheet

Strip of construction paper

Globe/map

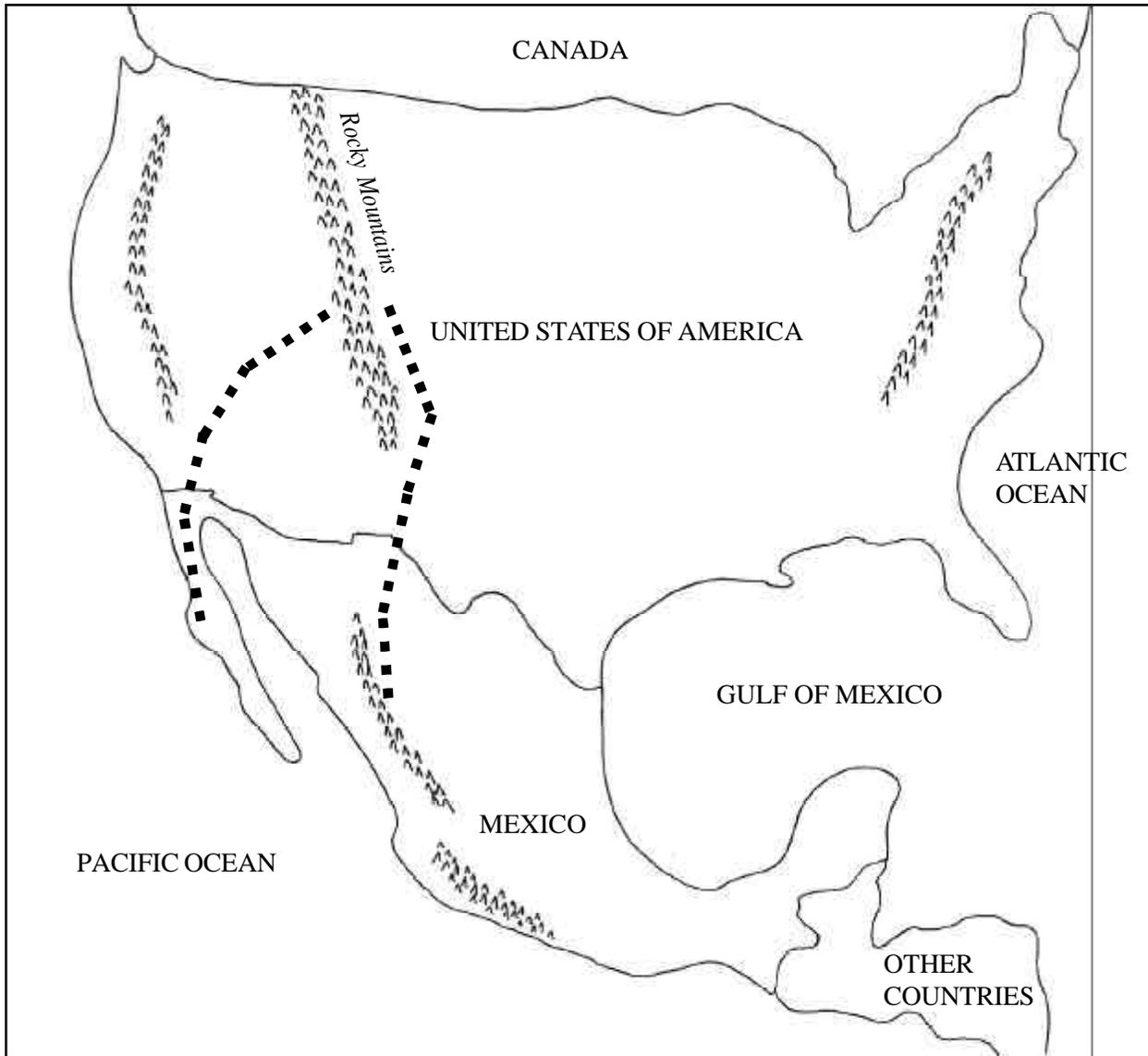
ASSESSMENT

Following the lesson, each student will sequence the lifecycle of a butterfly using the Butterfly Lifecycle Worksheet (see page 17). Have the children color and cut out the pictures and sequence them on a strip of construction paper. After completing this project they will use a sheet of writing paper to write about the migration. They should have at least three to four sentences explaining the migration. Check for:

- What butterfly migrates to Mexico (or California)?
- When do they leave?
- When do they return?
- Where do they go?
- What do they do on the return?

Name _____

Migration Map Worksheet



Butterfly Lifecycle Worksheet

Teacher: Make a copy of this page, then cut out the four sections and have students arrange them in their proper sequence.



Lesson 5: **The Sun Shines On The Lizard and the Sun**

What will students be learning?

STANDARDS

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

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

Students recognize and use visual arts as a form of communication. (A1)

Students know and understand the processes and interactions of Earth's systems and the structure and dynamics of the Earth and other objects in space. (S4)

BENCHMARKS

Learners will listen to and understand a variety of materials.

Learners understand that print is an important, symbolic means of communication.

Learner will incorporate new vocabulary and concepts into writing and conversations.

Learners will understand the importance of the sun.

Learners will learn about the process of papel picado/cut paper.

OBJECTIVES

Students will discover the importance of the sun.

Students will learn to do "papel picado," or cut paper, as illustrated by Latina artist Carmen Lomas Garza.

Students will be introduced to the literary term "legend."

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read Aloud

Music

Group Discussion

Visual Art Through Hands-on

Story Writing

Buddies

SPECIFIC

Alma Flor Ada uses elements of traditional Latin American folklore, legends, and fables to write about characters and connect them to her readers and listeners. In this story she writes about the disappearance of the sun and why lizards love to bask in the sun. Be sure to use the "Author's Note" at the end of the book to share with students how the indigenous people of America view the sun as a source of heat, light, and energy. Also share how the story is in both English and Spanish, and how Ms. Ada hopes it will awaken an interest in discovering a second language.

Carmen Lomas Garza is a Chicana artist from Texas who was raised near the Mexican border. From a very early age she wanted to be an artist. She has worked in a variety of art forms such as oil, acrylic, lithographs, papel picado, and metal cut outs. She lives in California as a curator, writer, artist, and art instructor. For the lesson you will want to share her books *In My Family/En mi Familia* (which recounts her experiences growing up in Texas) and *Making Magic Windows*.

PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

Prepare the paper for the papel picado, and arrange for an intermediate class or possibly “buddies” to assist the children in the project. Learn the song “Buenos Dias” to teach the class. Trace the sunburst design from *Making Magic Windows* onto heavy paper and cut out to be used as a stencil.

ACTIVITIES

Greet the children with the song “Buenos Dias” from the book *De Colores and Other Latin American Folk Songs for Children*. This is a fun song to the tune of “Frere Jaques” and teaches the days of the week. This will be a fun way to introduce sunshine and the sun.

Talk about the sun, sunny days, how they make us feel, the warmth the sun provides, the energy, and if we did not have the sun how it would be so dark all the time. Share information from the specific and how the sun is a part of so many legends. (Define legend to the class)

Introduce and read *The Lizard and the Sun/La Lajarija y el y Sol* by Alma Flor Ada. As a group discuss the story, how everything was dark, people were cold, and very afraid. People could not see the bright colors that surrounded them and there was no excitement in their lives. Talk about the importance of the woodpecker in waking up the sun and the lizard for finding the “rock.”

After the story, invite your helpers in to make beautiful sunbursts to shine on the classroom. To make the sunbursts, introduce Carmen Lomas Garza, a Latina artist and author (share from specific). Display one of her paintings, “Birthday Barbecue” from her book *In My Family/En mi Familia*. In the picture there are pieces of papel picado hanging on the line.

In *Making Magic Windows* by Ms. Garza, papel picado is introduced and many samples, including a sunburst, are given complete with directions. Using simple folds with white tissue paper, have students (with the help of their buddies) experiment with cutting designs. When they are ready, have students use the sunburst stencil to trace the sunburst design onto yellow prefolded paper and cut out. The buddies will be helpful for tracing the design and cutting some smaller areas. These can then be hung in a display (their stories from the assessment will be added to the display later.)

VOCABULARY

- Papel picado Mexican cut-paper art
Sol Spanish word for sun
Buenos Dias Spanish words for “Good Morning”
Legend A story handed down from the past, not verifiable
Lenes Spanish word for Monday
Martes Spanish word for Tuesday
Miercoles Spanish word for Wednesday
Jueves Spanish word for Thursday
Vienes Spanish word for Friday
Sabado Spanish word for Saturday
Domingo Spanish word for Sunday
Familia Spanish word for family

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

- The Lizard and the Sun/La Lajarija y el y Sol* by Alma Flor Ada
Making Magic Windows by Carmen Lomas Garza
In My Family/En mi Familia by Carmen Lomas Garza
De Colores and Other Latin American Folk Songs for Children by Jose-Luis Orozco
White tissue paper
Yellow tissue paper, or yellow construction paper
Scissors
Stencils of the sunburst from the book
Writing paper

ASSESSMENT

After the children have completed the project, have them work independently on writing four to five sentences on why they think the sun was hiding and so tired. They should show knowledge of the story, imagination, and creativity in their writing piece. (For young students, have the buddies help them with their creation.)

Lesson 6: **Gathering the Sun Dedicated to Cesar Chavez**

What will students be learning?

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Students understand how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape patterns of human populations, interdependence, cooperation, and conflict. (G4)

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

Students know and understand that characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life, and how living things interact with each other and their environment. (S3)

BENCHMARKS

Learners will recognize the needs, structures, and growth of plants.

Learners will listen to and understand a variety of materials.

Learners understand that print is an important and symbolic means of communication.

Learners will ask relevant questions and make thoughtful comments as they learn about topics of interest.

Learners will listen to and discuss classic and contemporary quality literature that reflects the human experience.

OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about the migrant way of life.

Students will learn about Cesar Chavez, migrant worker, leader, and political activist.

Students will learn new vocabulary and words from another culture.

Students will plant various flowers and vegetables.

What will be done to help students learn this?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read Aloud

Teacher-Directed Discussion

Writing

Hands-on Activity

Individual Presentation

PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

Check books out from the library that have pictures of Cesar Chavez. Hang the posters of Cesar Chavez in the classroom that you received in the bin.

SPECIFIC

The book used in this lesson is dedicated to Cesar Chavez, leader and activist for migrant workers and farmers. The book has beautiful illustrations and describes the migrant workers and their lives. In this lesson it is important to share with the children the life of Cesar Chavez.

Cesar Chavez was born in 1927, the oldest of six children. His father was a hard-working man and he prospered until 1937 when they lost the farm and all their belongings. Still, Chavez remembers his childhood as having more happy memories than unhappy ones. His father was good to his children, often making them special toys. However, his mother was the one who kept the family together.

When they lost everything it was at the beginning of the depression, and to make matters worse, the Southwest was having a severe drought. In 1928, the Chavez family joined over 300,000 migrant workers who worked the crops in California. The migrant workers had no real home and had to travel the state, picking whatever was in season. They would live in dirty, cramped quarters, without bathrooms or electricity. Often they would live in the trucks they traveled in. The children would end up attending many schools, and the teachers and students would often be prejudiced against the migrant children. Cesar graduated from eighth grade, which was a true accomplishment for a migrant child.

As a young worker he noticed how the landowners took advantage of the migrant workers. He tried to encourage the workers to stand up for themselves, but they were afraid they would lose their jobs. He soon began to work for an organization that would hold meetings to tell migrants of their rights. Again, too many were afraid of losing their jobs. Eventually, he organized the National Farm Workers Union, their flag being a red background with a black eagle in a white circle. “La Causa” began! He organized boycotts of lettuce and grapes to stress the farm workers plight. Labor laws began to change, and his children soon joined him. As the book states, Chavez no longer lives, but his work goes on.

A special note about Ms. Ada—she wanted children to appreciate the value of different languages. That is why many of her books are written in English and Spanish. Her daughter, Rosalma Zubizarreta, has translated many of her stories, and is the collaborator on *Gathering The Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English*.

ACTIVITIES

This lesson centers around *Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English* by Alma Flor Ada. This book has beautiful illustrations and wonderful, meaningful poetic phrases for each letter of the alphabet. The book is dedicated to Cesar Chavez, and tells of the migrants and their lives. As you read the story, stop on each page and discuss the illustrations, the letter, and the phrase. Share the importance of the migrant worker in gathering food for our tables. Discuss the hardships of their lives and of their children. When you get to the page on Cesar Chavez, share the information from the specific and any other information you know. He is an important figure in the Latino culture and in the lives of the migrants.

After you have shared and discussed the books (this may take two days), have the children do their own “mini-farm.” Using Styrofoam egg cartons or six-pack bedding plant containers, have students plant a variety of vegetable seeds. To get them started right, poke holes in the bottom of the cartons and set in trays with water. After planting the seeds, cover the cartons with plastic wrap to make a mini-hothouse, set them in the window, and watch them grow.

VOCABULARY

Migrant	One who moves from region to region in search of work
Cesar Chavez	A migrant who became an activist for farm workers
Arboles	Trees
Betabel	Beet
Duraznos	Peaches
Estrellas	Stars
Flores	Flowers
Gracias	Thanks
Isla	Island
Jardin	Garden
Kiosco de crezas	Cherry stand
Lechuga	Lettuce
Lluvia	Rain
Nopal	Prickly pear
Nina	Girl
Orgullo	Pride
Pajaro	Bird
Amor	Love
Regar	Watering
Surco	Field row
Violetas	Violets
Zanahoría	Carrot

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English by Alma Flor Ada
Egg cartons or bedding plant containers
Seeds
Potting soil
Plastic wrap
Trays
Water
Cesar Chavez Worksheet

ASSESSMENT

After the planting activity, give each student the Cesar Chavez Worksheet (see page 25). The lines provided are for students to write one important thing they learned about Cesar Chavez. The students should demonstrate knowledge gained from the material covered.

<u>Rubric Points</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	Exceeds expectations
3	Basic knowledge exhibited
2	Little knowledge exhibited
1	No understanding

Name _____

Cesar Chavez Worksheet

One important thing I learned about Cesar Chavez: _____

One important thing I learned about a migrant worker: _____

Unit Assessment: “Family Trees”

How will students demonstrate proficiency?

PERFORMANCE TASK

By the end of the unit students should have their family trees completed from the first lesson. Each child will share and explain their family heritage, and the importance of family structure. These will make a wonderful display for all to enjoy. Students will illustrate a scene from their favorite story in the unit, and orally present their illustration and one fact they learned about the author.

ASSESSMENT

Use the rubric below to assess each student’s knowledge:

<u>Rubric Points</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	Exceeds expectation of assignment
3	Acceptable information on assignment
2	Partially acceptable assignment
1	Little or no information

Bibliography

Websites:

http://www.sfsu.edu/~cecipp/cesar_chavez/cesarbio5-12.htm

<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/ada.html> <Subhead>Books:

Books:

Ada, Alma Flor. *A Rose With Wings*. Miami, FL, Santillana Publishing, Inc., 1993.

This lesson brings metamorphosis alive through a story about Gabriel and the delicate creature he chooses to care for and study.

Ada, Alma Flor. *A Surprise for Mother Rabbit*. Miami, FL, Santillana Publishing, Inc.

Mother Rabbit's children decide to surprise her by collecting the eggs. The collection they gather shows that each one is unique.

Ada, Alma Flor. *Dear Peter Rabbit*. Aladdin Paperbacks, NY, NY, 1997.

Letters are written between storybook characters like Little Red Riding Hood, the Three Pigs, Peter Rabbit, and more.

Ada, Alma Flor. *Gathering the Sun*. Rayo/Harper Collins, Publishers Inc., 1997.

A beautiful story of migrant life and Cesar Chavez through the alphabet in Spanish and English.

Ada, Alma Flor. *I Love Saturdays y domingos*. Athenum Books for Young Readers, NY, NY, 2002.

A child's perspective about her weekends with her grandparents, and the diversity of her families.

Ada, Alma Flor. *Olmo and the Blue Butterfly*. Laredo Publishing, Chicago, IL, 1992.

A young boy discovers a beautiful blue butterfly, and follows it using all methods of transportation.

Ada, Alma Flor. *The Lizard and the Sun/La Lagartija y el Sol*. Dragonfly Books, NY, NY, 1997.

The legend of the lizard and how he found the sun, which was hiding and asleep. Everyone realizes how important the sun is for energy, warmth, and light.

Day, Frances. *Latina and Latino Voices in Literature*. Heinemann Inc., Portsmouth, NH, 1997.

This book gives biographies on a various Latino authors and illustrators. It also gives brief description of each of their books or works.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. *A Piece of My Heart/Pedacito de mi Corazon*. The New Press, NY, NY, 1994.

A collection of her works of art, and stories of family and traditions depicted in these works.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. *Family Pictures*. Children's Book Press, San Francisco, CA, 1990.

Pictures and stories that depict the author's experiences growing up in Texas.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. *In My Family/En mi Familia*. Children's Book Press, San Francisco, CA, 1996.

A continuation of the author's works that describe family, traditions, and life growing up in Texas near the Mexico border.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. *Making Magic Windows*. Children's Book Press, San Francisco, CA, 1999.

A book describing the process of papel picado, or Mexican cut-paper art.

Tenorio-Coscarelli, Jane. *The Tamale Quilt*. 1/4-Inch Designs and Publishing, Murrieta, CA, 1998.

The story of a quilt that shows family and traditions through pictures.

Torres, Leyla. *Saturday Sancocho*. Farrar Straus Giroux, NY, NY, 1995.

Maria spends every Saturday making chicken sancocho, but one Saturday there are no eggs to make it with. Somehow they find a way.

CD/Audiotapes/Books:

Orozco, Jose-Luis. *De Colores and Other Latin American Folk Songs for Children*. Dutton Children's Books, NY, NY, 1994.

A beautifully illustrated book featuring songs for children in both English and Spanish. It is also available on CD or tape.

About the Author

Deborah Francis received her Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, specializing in creative arts, from Lesley University in Boston. Her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education (with an emphasis in language arts) is from the University of Northern Iowa.

Deborah has taught Early Education in the Denver Public Schools for 14 years. Previously she taught kindergarten and second grade, and was the director of a daycare center for a Department of Defense mapping agency in Glen Echo, Maryland. She has written several units for the Alma Project, including:

- La Mariposa/Butterflies
- The Desert
- Easter/Spring Celebration
- From Corn to Tortillas
- The Cowboys/Vaqueros