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Tamales & Roses



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DRAMATURG'S NOTE: Not the End of the World

Many stories that we hear nowadays are about protagonists who overcome great odds and achieve their goals. These stories are inspiring, but life isn't always so neat and tidy. *Tamales and Roses* is unique in that we get to see the failings of a young protagonist and, more importantly, we see that after she fails, the world doesn't end.

Helping children understand that you can learn from and move past mistakes is an important part of developing emotional intelligence. Through this show, we are reminded that, in spite of failure, we can face the consequences and keep moving forward. This production can help kids learn about handling failure.

The study guide is designed to assist you in helping your students get the most out of seeing our production of *Tamales and Roses*. It can also help teach students about Latino culture, Spanish language, and folk music. However you use the information in this study guide, extending the learning of this production into the classroom will help your students develop critical thinking skills.

-Timothy Peay

¿HABLAS ESPAÑOL?

With this lesson, remember that kids pick up languages quicker than adults, so don't underestimate their ability to keep up. If you don't feel confident speaking Spanish, you may want to invite a Spanish speaker, such as a parent, to assist with this lesson.

Ask the children if they speak a language other than English. Ask those who do if they'd like to share a simple phrase or two in the other language that they speak.

Show a map of the world. Ask students if they can point to a country on the map that uses English as their official language. Then ask them to point out countries that use one of the languages your students have indicated they speak as their official language.

You might emphasize that people living in the United States speak all kinds of different languages because people come to the US from countries all over the world.

Some of these other languages, like Spanish, have some words that sound similar to words in English. Share some examples of Spanish words that sound the same in English:

Televisión: Television
Plato: Plate

Importante: Important
Perfecto: Perfect

Delicioso: Delicious

Teach the children some words for family members that are used in the play *Tamales and Roses*. Let them know that some of these words sound similar to words in English.

La familia: Family
Los padres: Parents
La madre: Mother
La mamá: Mom/Mommy

El padre: Father
El papá: Dad/Daddy
La hermana: Sister
El hermano: Brother

Los abuelos: Grandparents
La abuela: Grandmother
El abuelo: Grandfather

Have the students draw a family tree and then draw or find pictures from magazines or from the internet that the students think resemble a mother, father, etc. Then have the students label the family members on the family tree with the appropriate Spanish words.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Latino Culture

In Mexico, families put up special decorations for holidays that are made out of paper. These are called papel picados, which means “pecked,” or perforated paper. These are traditionally cut out of colorful pieces of tissue paper using a sharp chisel.



Examples of papel picado can be seen in the set of *Tamales and Roses*. For students to make their own “papel picados” you will need tissue paper (8.5” x 11”), scissors, string, and tape.

Students could use the template (provided as an insert in this study guide) by folding the tissue and template in half together and cutting along the solid lines. They could also fold the tissue paper into quarters and cut their own design the same way one would cut out a paper snowflake.

Once the papel picados are cut out, they can all be taped onto a long string and hung up in the classroom.

FAMILY TRADITIONS

As the children are working on their papel picados, you could discuss the following questions with them:

How does your family celebrate your birthday?

What other dates does your family celebrate? (e.g. weddings, holidays etc.)

Does your family have special traditions around Christmas or other holidays?

Explain that different families have different traditions. Often times those traditions are influenced by where the family is from. In different countries they have different holidays and events.. In Spain, they have the Running of the Bulls. Sometimes in Mexico, and more often in Mexican-American communities in the United States, they celebrate Cinco de Mayo and the Day of the Dead. You may want to share a little bit about these holidays. You might also have the students find Spain and Mexico on a map.

Another thing that is used to celebrate in different cultures is food. Ask the students if they have ever had Mexican food and what type of food it was. You might mention that for Cinco de Mayo (May 5) in Puebla, Mexico, it is common to eat Mole Poblano and Chalupas.

If you have the discussion before the show, you can introduce them to what tamales are. If the students have already seen the show, you can remind them of the tamales in the production.

POST SHOW DISCUSSION

1. What was Ana Luisa supposed to do at the wedding?
2. What happened when it was time for her to walk down the aisle?
3. Have any of you ever experienced stage fright or felt scared in front of a lot of people? Do any of you want to share that experience?
4. After Ana Luisa got scared and didn't walk down the aisle, she thought about running away. Why might that create problems for her family?
5. How did Ana Luisa's family react after she didn't do what they expected her to do?
6. Why is it a good idea to tell an adult, like a parent or teacher, when you've made a mistake?

MUSIC AND RHYTHM

In the play, Ana Luisa is taught the song *A La Vibora De La Mar* by her mother and grandmother. The first section of the song is provided here with an English translation. To keep it simple, we have only included the first section, but if you'd like to teach your students the full song it can be found at the following address: <https://www.mamalisa.com/?t=es&p=1240>. The Spanish and English lyrics can be used as a first and second verse respectively or, if you think your students will have a hard time remembering the Spanish, the English lyrics can be used alone.

A La Vibora De La Mar

Mexican Folk Song

The musical notation is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 2/4. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the staff, with Spanish lyrics on the first line and English translations on the second line. The song is divided into three measures, each starting with a letter (E, B, E) indicating a specific rhythmic pattern. The first measure (E) has 4 beats, the second (B) has 4 beats, and the third (E) has 4 beats. The lyrics are: A la vi - bo - ra, vi - bo - ra de la mar, de la mar, To the sna - ake sna - ake of the sea of the sea. The second measure (B) has 4 beats, the third (E) has 4 beats, and the fourth (E) has 4 beats. The lyrics are: por a - qui pue - den pa - sar, los de ade-lan - te cor - ren mu - cho, you can pass a - long this way. Those in the front are mov - ing fast while. The third measure (B) has 4 beats, the fourth (E) has 4 beats, and the fifth (E) has 4 beats. The lyrics are: los de atras se que - da - ran, tras, tras, tras, tras those in back are left be - hind 'hind 'hind 'hind 'hind.

As you teach your students this song, you can use it as an opportunity to teach the basics of rhythm. Start out by explaining that every song has a pulse, just like every person has a pulse, or heartbeat. Begin to clap a steady beat to demonstrate that the pulse stays steady throughout the song. You can also count 1, 2, 1, 2 (this song is in 2/4 time) and have the students join in. Explain that the rhythm of a song can change. Then have the students maintain a steady clap (the pulse) while you clap the rhythm from the first few bars of the song.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Page 2: The lesson plan is based on one found in found on: <https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/la-familia#sect-activities> Also consulted: "La Familia." National Endowment for the Humanities, <https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/la-familia#sect-activities>. Accessed 6 Feb 2018.

Page 3: "How to Make Papel Picado at Home." Garcia, Telma. Cacique, 19 Oct 2017, <https://www.caciqueinc.com/blog/how-to-make-papel-picado-at-home/>. Accessed 5 Feb 2018.

Photo: US_Army_53203_3SB_brings_Hispanic_heritage_to_Stewart's_Main_Post_Chapel.jpg. Copyright: United States Army, 16 October 2009, Public Domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:US_Army_53203_3SB_brings_Hispanic_heritage_to_Stewart%27s_Main_Post_Chapel.jpg

Page 4: "A La Vibora." Yannucci, Lisa. Mama Lisa's World, 2018. "A La Vibora De La Mar" traditional Mexican folksong, notated by Timothy Peay

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CREDITS

Teaching Stage is published by the Theatre for Youth and Education (TYE) Center at Utah Valley University. This issue was guest edited by dramaturg Timothy Peay under the direction of Dr. John Newman with graphic design by Jason Warren.