

The Booklist Project

Focus: Adult English Learners of Guatemalan Descent Developed by: Shèlynn Riel FALL 2012 Culturally-astute resources for educators with a Guatemalan population—the items listed below are effective resources for English instructors or speakers of other languages.

Film:

Camissa, Rebecca. (2010). Which Way Home. A Mr. Mudd Production in association with Documentress Films.

The above documentary outlines the journey of Guatemalan and children of Central American descent from their country through Mexico in attempt to reach the United States. Many Americans remain unaware of the peril that young children of Central America face in pursuit of the long-sought-after American dream; this documentary is non-fictitious and eye-opening, thus making it a valuable resource for not only ESOL professionals, but all instructors alike.

Print:

Flaitz, Jeffra. (2006). Understanding Your Refugee and Immigrant Students: An Educational, Cultural, and Linguistic Guide. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

The aforementioned text is a compilation of histories and statistical data of re-occurring countries of origin in the non-English speaking population within the United States. It would be extremely beneficial for an instructor with said populations to have a copy of this text in his or her possession, so that he or she may be able to better foster a rapport with the immigrant student and be able to better cater to students of that specific descent.

Malone, Michael. (1996). A Guatemalan Family. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company.

Waterlow, Julia. (1998). A Family from Guatemala. Austin: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers, an imprint of Steck-Vaughn Company.

Both texts listed above follow individual Guatemalan families, outlining their habitual tasks and traditions. These texts could serve an instructor of Guatemalan students to better understand the cultural background of this particular group, thus being able to tap into and utilize the funds of knowledge of the student as depicted within the texts.

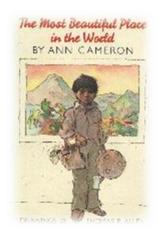
Web:

The World Bank: Working for a World Free of Poverty. (2012). *Guatemala*. The World Bank Group. Available at

< http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/guatemala_>

Cameron, Ann. (1988). The Most Beautiful Place in the World. New York: Dell Yearling, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House Inc.

[ISBN-13: 978-0-394-80424-8]



Reading Level: 4.2

Lexile Measure: 830

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: Low Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

Abandoned by his parents, seven-year-old Juan lives with his grandmother in the mountains of Guatemala. Juan must work to support his grandmother by shining shoes in front of the Tourist Office. "It's not a hard life," he admits repeatedly, but secretly he dreams of other things; more than anything, he would like to go to school.

This novel gives American children a look into the lives and circumstances of "Third world" children in a way that's wrenching and immediate, but that also offers hope and triumph. I might recommend its use for an older EL population, as it encompasses many themes with which an immigrant reader might be able to connect in a profound manner. The text is a bit larger as it was originally intended for school-aged children, however, the content is to be considered more mature. Also, the illustrations are not necessarily inviting for young children, which suggests that the reader level could vary.

Available Formats: Print, eBook

Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

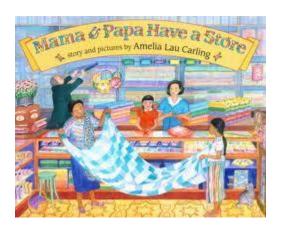
http://www.anncameronbooks.com/novels-ages-8-14/the-most-beautiful-place-in-the-world.html

http://www.anncameronbooks.com/teachers-resources.html

Each of the aforementioned websites are maintained either directly or indirectly by the author, Ann Cameron. A portion of the sites that I found particularly useful was that which outlined particular lesson plans that could be used in the conjunction of teaching this class. Although I will not detail one in specific, however, there are an abundance listed and surely can be sifted through as necessary and purposefully. In addition to this repertoire, I am partial to this site because it includes a great amount on the author in specific, allowing for a more cognitively-developed student body to conduct autobiographical research in a trusted setting.

Carling, Amelia Lau. (1998). Mama and Papa Have a Store. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group.

[ISBN-10: 0803720440]



Reading Level: 4.3

Lexile Measure: 810

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: High Beginner/ Low Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

This story recounts the story of the youngest child in a Chinese family that has emigrated to Guatemala City—describing a typical day, from early morning to night in her parents' dry goods store. This engaging account includes the sights, sounds, and smells both inside and outside of the busy shop, introducing an eclectic repertoire of cultural elements as seen from the preschooler's point of view. A Mayan Indian family is among the day's customers; they purchase strands of thread to weave colorful designs into their clothing. Minor details such as this exemplify the cultural aspect that the author chooses to incorporate to enrich not only the text, but the background knowledge of the reader.

The text itself is large, but no overly so, thus welcoming for readers of all ages. The illustrations are vivid and detailed, and have the ability to essentially tell the story on their own accord. The fact that this story is based on the memories of the author is appealing for adult readers—they might feel as though they too can reminisce on similar situations that are outlined within the piece.

An English learner of Guatemalan descent might find it intriguing that there are Chinese immigrants in Guatemala; perhaps they have noted this population in their home country but lacked rationale. They could also find comfort in reading about the cultural mélange that occurs when diversity amongst humans arises; their relocation to the United States surely presented difficulty at times, but eventually, they were able to adapt their own culture to that of this country, thus finding a balance.

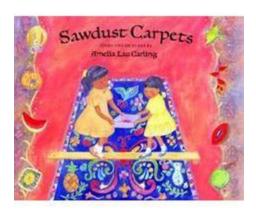
Available Formats: Print and eBook (both in English and Spanish)

Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://www.lindakreft.com/Americas/pdf/voices mamapapa.pdf

This lesson plan is wonderfully multi-faceted. Its primary objective is for students to obtain a better understanding of surrounding cultures, as well as that of their own. This lesson incorporates a multitude of mini-lessons, each of which are geared towards a specific aspect of the book, be it textile, language, history, etc. This lesson can be effective because an instructor can utilize it in entirety, or pull only certain parts that he or she feels could be best received by the population on hand.

Carling, Amelia Lau. (2005). Sawdust Carpets. Ontario: Groundwood Books/Douglas & McIntyre. [ISBN-13: 978-0888996251]



Reading Level: 4.0

Lexile Measure: 790

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: Low Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

This book focuses on the preparation and celebration of Holy Week in Antigua, Guatemala. On Good Friday, the townspeople lead daylong processions through the streets, carrying statues depicting Jesus's death and resurrection. The narrator, her siblings, and cousins create a carpet made of sawdust, fruit, and flowers to decorate the path the procession will follow. Just two days later, on Easter Sunday, the carpet makers begin planning for the next year's design.

The text size is similar to that of the aforementioned work by this same author. The spacing is appealing and the format non-evasive. Intricately detailed and softly colored childlike drawings are esthetically pleasing for readers of all ages. Spanish is incorporated here and there, encouraging code-switching between both English and Spanish. There is a glossary, but the Spanish words sprinkled throughout the text are easily understood in context.

The story itself is perfect for Guatemalan students because it allows for them to partake in the sharing of their culture's traditions; it also allows for recollection of memories. The integration of one's native language can help to lower the affective-filter of a student, simply by increasing the linguistic confidence of said student. Religion is a major part of the Guatemalan culture, automatically rendering this piece as relevant to this particular English-learning population, especially to adult readers, who place more value in this aspect of their lives than children.

Available Formats: Print, eBook (both English and Spanish versions)

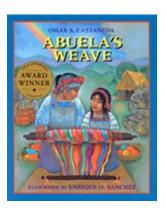
Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/easter-petal-pathways-lesson-plan/

This activity would act wonderfully as a supplement to a pre-established lesson, since the bulk of it channels a student's creativity. As presented by Crayola, the children would have the opportunity to make their own sawdust carpet, paying respect to the Mayan tradition that is outlined within the aforementioned texts. This activity could be effective because it is hands-on, and often children become distracted if the content is too dense. Naturally, this activity would function best for a child audience, as an adult would not find any relevance in creating carpets out of glitter and construction paper. This could, however, become an activity that a parent brings home to do with their children—a way in which a teacher can encourage lesson extension into the home and/or community.

Castañeda, Omar. (1993). Abuela's Weave. New York: Lee & Low Books.

[ISBN-13: 9781880000007]



Reading Level: 5.2

Lexile Measure: 960

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: High Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

A 1993 Parent's Choice Award honoree, this story about the importance of family pride and personal endurance. The works introduces the rich culture of Guatemala through the eyes of protagonist Esperanza, who works with her *abuela*--her grandmother--on weavings to sell at the public market. This text not only outlines the traditions of this country, but also the close-knit relationships embedded within these traditions.

The text is a bit more complicated than any of the aforementioned, so a proficiency at or at least approaching high intermediate caliber would be ideal. The illustrations are vibrant and culturally- responsive. This text also includes some vocabulary words in Spanish, allowing for and encouraging code-switching between English and that of the student's native tongue.

This book is especially intended for adult English learners of Guatemalan descent because of the Spanish vocabulary that is included, much of it is colloquial and Guatemala specific. The word *huipiles*, for example, is a word that may not be understood by a person from Spain, or the Dominican Republic. This term is extremely Central American, as well as indigenous in nature, thus catering specifically to this cultural group. Not only does the vocabulary target Guatemalans, but the themes incorporated within the text encompass one of the single most crucial aspects of Guatemalan culture, (and most Hispanic groups, in entirety) that being family ties.

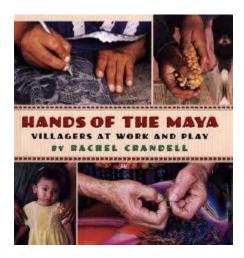
Available Formats: Print

Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://www.leeandlow.com/p/abuela tg.mhtml

The above link will take one to the website of the publisher, where there is an outline of a potential lesson plan incorporating this text. Although the lesson plan is seemingly simple in format, I believe that this factor could work in favor of the instructor—he or she would be able to manipulate it as necessary for that particular student body. This lesson plan might prove beneficial for a new teacher to have in possession, as it provides frontloading questions, possible vocabulary lessons, and background information for the country of origin; it would also prove an essential tool for a well-versed teacher that is perhaps experiencing a mind-block. I especially appreciate that the plan outlines ways in which other disciplines can be connected with the lesson, as interdisciplinary correlation is essential and adds relevance to the lesson in entirety. Students are encouraged to channel some abstract thought processes, an approach that would prove more easily facilitated with older learners.

Crandell, Rachel. (2002). Hands of the Maya; Villagers at Work and Play. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC. [ISBN-13: 978-0805066876]



Reading Level: 4.8

Lexile Measure: 890

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: Low/ High Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

The author is an elementary school teacher who lived in several Mayan communities, and this text is certainly reminiscent of her personal experiences. Both text and images give the reader an intriguing and extremely detailed account of Mayan art, food, shelter, family life, and language, as Maya words are woven into the text and defined in an appended glossary. Although the text is not traditional in any sense (as it does not contain typical chapters, rather blurbs) the reader might feel as though he or she is receiving a literary tour of this particular culture. The photos are real and of admirable quality—the fact that there are real-life photos inserted makes the book less child-like and caters to a more cognitively developed adult.

This work is wonderful for adult English learners, especially those of Guatemalan and possibly even Mayan descent, as it allows for instantaneous connection and relevance to their cultural background. This book not only works for a classroom setting, but is a piece that can extend beyond the walls of an institution. A Guatemalan EL can obtain a sense of pride from sharing his or her culture with family and friends. The value that this book brings to the table is undeniable.

Available Formats: Print

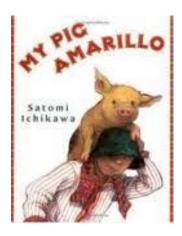
Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://www.timewarptrio.com/teachers-parents/lessons/pdf/twt-lesson-maya.pdf

Although this lesson plan was created with a different book as the focus. (*Me oh Maya* by Jon Scieszka, 2005) it would be wonderful for extending the lesson into the home and the

community. The lesson encompasses many different aspects of Maya culture, many of which are outlined in the text. There is an abundance of activities that involve the students comparing and contrasting Mayan traditions to that of the contemporary American culture—this dually functions as a way for the immigrant population to better comprehend their social reality in living in this country. Aside from providing a multitude of lessons for cultural knowledge extension, the lesson plan also includes an extensive booklist, aimed teachers and students alike. I am glad to see that a few books that I have included within this list can be found on said list.

Ichikawa, Satomi. (2002). My Pig Amarillo. New York: Philomel Books, a division of Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers. [ISBN-13: 9780399237683]



Reading Level: 2.2

Lexile Measure: 520

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: High Beginner/ Low Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

Amarillo is Pablito's best friend; coincidentally, he is a little, yellow pig. The two of them are inseparable and do nearly everything together. Trouble arises when Pablito comes home from school one day and Amarillo isn't there—Pablito is devastated, and he can't eat or sleep. Grandfather comes up with an idea to assist Pablito in saying goodbye to his best friend.

This text is perfect for English learners whose native language is Spanish. It is evident that the story takes place in a Spanish-speaking environment, making it entirely relatable for said native speakers. The text is not overly complicated and certainly caters to an audience of high beginner/ low intermediate English proficiency. Since the themes are family support, as well as friendship, a student of any age would be able to find it relevant to his or her own life experiences. Naturally, students hailing from Central and South America and the Caribbean are likely to relate to the setting in which the story occurs: *el campo*. Perhaps the English learner even had a pig or two growing up...

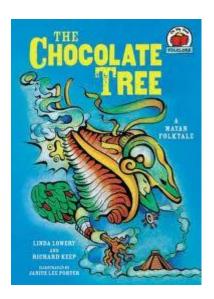
Available Formats: Print

Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

I did not discover any interesting lesson plans to accompany this book. I might, however, recommend utilizing some sort of farm literature to expand the background knowledge of the student body; this might be most effective if completed during frontloading activities.

Lowery, Linda. (2009). The Chocolate Tree: a Mayan Folktale. Minneapolis: Millbrook Press, a division of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc.

[ISBN-13: 9780761346692]



Reading Level: 3.7

Lexile Measure: 490

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: High Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

This work recounts a Mayan Folktale about the origin of chocolate, or *chocolatl* as it is referred to in the indigenous tongue. Kukulkán is regarded as both a king and a God to Maya people. One day, he decides to bring his people an amazing gift—the gift of a chocolate tree. Kukulkán's brother, Night Jaguar, finds difficulty in this notion as he does not believe that regular folk should be able to have chocolate; he is convinced that only gods are privileged enough to enjoy this exotic delicacy. Will Night Jaguar prevail? Or will the Mayans get to keep their chocolate tree?

This text is accessible for English learners of high intermediate proficiency. There are many words within the book that are not sight words and most likely would not be easily recognized by a student of lesser proficiency. The size of the text is insinuative that the book is intended for children, however, the content is surely suitable for all ages. The illustrations are vibrant and reminiscent of Mayan culture.

This book is ideal for an adult hailing from essentially anywhere in Central America. Since the Mayan empire was dispersed throughout this area, the sharing of this book need not be limited only to Guatemalans. An adult English learner from Guatemala might form an immediate connection with the work if he or she is a descendent of the Maya, or perhaps even if the individual had an interest in the history of his or her native country.

Available Formats: Print, eBook

Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

I actually used this work to act as a focal point for a lesson plan. Although I cannot provide a link here, I can provide a synopsis of the extended activities:

Students can take a tour online at the Field Museum, simply by following this link: http://fieldmuseum.org/explore/department/anthropology/middle-america which will take them directly to the portion of museum that pertains to this lesson plan. Through this "guided" informational tour, students will be able to better grasp the rich culture of the Maya and its capital of Chichen Itza, which is mentioned on numerous occasions throughout the text.

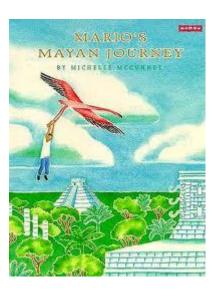
After their "fieldtrip" to the Field Museum, students will be asked to perform a bit of academic research in a topic that particularly piqued their interest. In addition to the topic of their choosing from the text, students will be asked to conduct research on the protagonist deity of the work, Kukulkán. They will be asked to present briefly in regards to his history, his manner and length of leadership, the benefits that have arisen from his rule, and so on. These questions make it imperative that students actually perform the research in an effective manner, as well as challenge the student body exponentially to think critically, provoking a high- order thinking. This could be an extremely beneficial tool and process for an adult English learner of Guatemalan descent; the student is given autonomy and in the same instance, asked to seek and share information about his or native country, instilling a sense of self-worth and cultural pride instantaneously.

The students will conduct research regarding chocolate (chocolatl) and different aspects of this "food of the Gods." One group can examine the process in which chocolate is made, starting with the picking of the cacao beans; another group can focus on the utilization of chocolate as a form of currency; another on chocolate as a health remedy; and so on. This project can be in-class primarily, in case the English learners haven't much familiarity with technology or paper-based research methods and require instructor assistance. What is not done in class can be completed on the students' own time—each individual will be held accountable for their portion to contribute to the group. Perhaps as a culminating activity, the students can actually learn how to make chocolatl and do so in class (assuming that the resources are available, of course).

Please forgive that this is a much more detailed account of a lesson than any of the previous or following; since I am the creator, I naturally have much more upon which I can expound.

McCunney, Michelle. (1997). Mario's Mayan Journey. Mondo Publishers.

[ISBN-13: 978-1572552036]



Reading Level: 4.3

Lexile Measure: 740, Level P

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: Low Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

Mario, a young Mexican boy, is fascinated by stories of the Mayan people and their artifacts. He dreams himself into a jungle setting with a boy and girl who switch to Spanish when he doesn't understand their Mayan language and take him on a journey into the past. Mario's elaborate adventure includes riding on the backs of flamingos to the Temple of the Warriors in Chichen Itza, where the triage examines a mural that depicts Mayan life. To both his displeasure and fascination, Mario awakens in his own bed and decides to capture the details of his journey on the walls of his bedroom, creating a constant reminder for himself of that magical night in the jungle.

Pastel watercolors portray an uncharacteristically pale, but ornate jungle that is inhabited by an array of beautifully exotic creatures. The illustrations are not over-done, thus not proving to be an inevitable distraction for a child reader, but catering to an older population in the same instant. The text itself is simple, including short conversations in Spanish.

The book includes a glossary with pronunciation guides and definitions for unfamiliar words such as "anthropology," "Chichen Itza," "ocelot," etc. The short bilingual conversations that are exchanged between the protagonists (e.g., "'Ven con nosotros,' they said.' Come with us'") expand the linguistic appeal of the story, allowing for potential code-switching and student interaction. The pale green maps of the Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico, and parts of Central America on the endpapers provide a geographical context. The incorporation of the dual languages and location make this book relatable from any individual coming from this general

vicinity. The imaginative nature of the work would also allow for an adult to time-travel a bit, reminiscing on childhood fantasies.

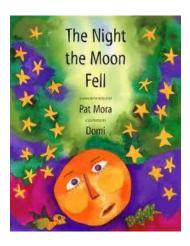
Available Formats: Print

Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://ww2.valdosta.edu/~crtaylor/intro.html

A wonderful site that addresses the many facets of the Mayan culture. The creator provides an abundance of additional sources that would allow for the instructor to expand as vastly as necessary depending on the interests of the student body. I appreciate that the resources cater to the curious mind in that social and cultural history are of great emphasis—this is a factor that is particularly effective in intriguing and maintaining the attention of an adult learner, as the book becomes more relevant through the emergence of profound historical connections. The creator of this compilation also includes a booklist for additional research and reading; many of said books are also contained within this booklist, attesting to their validity of relevance. This site would be an extremely useful tool for the new teacher that is just starting off, as it provides ample opportunity for adaptation of lessons, and could easily facilitate creative development and expansion to suit the specific needs of the learners.

Mora, Pat. (2000). The Night the Moon Fell: a Maya Myth. Ontario: Groundwood Books/ House of Anansi Press. [ISBN-13: 9780888999382]



Reading Level: 3.4

Lexile Measure: 530

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: Low Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

One night, a gust from her grandfather's blowgun causes Luna, the moon, to tumble from the sky and shatter into pieces in the dark ocean. With the help of the little fish, her own will, and strength, she rises, beautiful and round once again, taking her new friends with her to create the Milky Way.

Pat Mora retells this Mayan folktale and incorporates themes of friendship, compassion, and teamwork. The text is extremely comprehensible and poetic, allowing for the reader to experience a different genre. The illustrations are brilliant and colorful, and undoubtedly capture the essence of the text while maintaining the reader's attention. Folktales typically include a moral or two for the reader to take away and implement into their reality—this creates a higher interest level within an older student body. The fact that the folktale itself is of Mayan origin elicits immediate connection for those who are descendants of the area and/ or indigenous community.

Available Formats: Print, both in English and Spanish

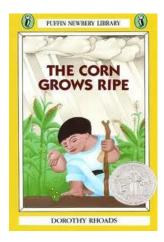
Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://www.patmora.com/ideas.htm#moon

This is a direct link to Pat Mora's site, more specifically the page that provides lesson plan ideas for educators for this work. Many of the ideas for expansion include further research by the students in regards to folk-tales, in which students are encouraged to channel more critical/analytical thinking. http://www.lcweb.loc.gov/folklife as a resource for students, so that they may have a reliable place to begin their inquiries. Also,

http://www.lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/teachers/index.html is provided specifically for educators' expansion of lesson plan resources in relation to this work, as well as all inclusive themes.

Rhoads, Dorothy. (1956). The Corn Grows Ripe. New York; Puffin Books, a division of the Penguin Group. [ISBN-13: 9780140363135]



Reading Level: 4.7

Lexile Measure: 750

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: High Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

When his father is badly injured in an accident, a young Mayan boy called Tigre wonders who will plant and harvest the corn that is his family's only method for survival—as well as pleasing the Mayan gods. Twelve-year-old Tigre has never performed the tasks of a man; he will now have to assume responsibility of the family and take his father's place.

The text itself is on the larger side, hinting that it was intended for children. However, the illustrations are sketch-like and are not necessarily compatible with younger, easily distracted minds. The quantity of words can be problematic for a younger audience, and they will be drawn away from the story, as the illustrations are lack-luster from a child's standpoint and will not help to maintain concentration. For these stylistic reasons, I believe that the book could be more suitable and effective when utilized in an adult EL setting. Guatemalan immigrants could very easily connect to the hardships that Tigre faces within the story; perhaps the reader too had to put his life ambitions on hold to assist the family.

Available Formats: Print

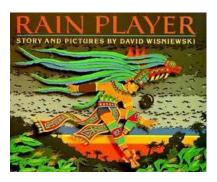
Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://www.highsmith.com/pdf/librarysparks/2007/lsp_nov07_ker_mayan_lessons.pdf

Although this newsletter is dated, it provides wonderful ways in which this text can be integrated cross-disciplines, through deepening the context to the Maya in a more general sense. It provides activity ideas for every discipline that one can think to incorporate into this lesson, and in doing so, caters to a larger audience with differentiated interests and intelligences. The part that I find to be of greatest value, however, is the booklist at the end of the work; all of the books listed seem to lend themselves to a varied reader, a component that is particularly crucial

while dealing with English learners. The list also includes a film or two, which becomes beneficial when a student's proficiency level is lacking, or for the student who just does not care to read.

Wisniewski, David. (1991). Rain Player. New York: Clarion Books, a Houghton Mifflin Company imprint. [ISBN-13: 978-0395720837]



Reading Level: 3.8

Lexile Measure: 530

RI Adult ESL Proficiency Level: High Intermediate

Annotated Summary of Text:

The ancient Mayan belief that the future was divinely decreed and could not be altered is the basis for this original tale of a boy who must defeat the Rain God in a ball game to save his people from devastation. The ball game itself was viewed as a tribute to the deities, and can be examined as such within ancient manuscripts such as the *Codex Borgia*.

The text is a bit more complicated and might require a high intermediate proficiency to read without much difficulty. Mayan art and architecture form the foundation of inspiration for the cut-paper artwork, which is extremely bold and indigenous in nature. The illustrations are not directed towards a child audience necessarily, since it is detailed and representative of a culture. An adult English learner from Guatemala might appreciate the tale because although fiction, the historical themes or religion and worship remain to be extremely prominent factors in this particular cultural group.

Available Formats: Print

Additional Resources for Expansion Purposes:

http://ww2.valdosta.edu/~crtaylor/intro.html

A wonderful site that addresses the many facets of the Mayan culture. The creator provides an abundance of additional sources that would allow for the instructor to expand as vastly as necessary depending on the interests of the student body. I appreciate that the resources cater to the curious mind in that social and cultural history are of great emphasis—this is a factor that is particularly effective in intriguing and maintaining the attention of an adult learner, as the book becomes more relevant through the emergence of profound historical connections. The creator of this compilation also includes a booklist for additional research and reading; many of said books are also contained within this booklist, attesting to their validity of relevance. This site would be an extremely useful tool for the new teacher that is just starting off, as it provides ample opportunity for manipulation of lessons, and could easily facilitate creative development and expansion.

REACH. INSPIRE. CONNECT.



The Booklist Project

A Project of the M.Ed. In TESL Program,

Feinstein School of Education and Human Development Rhode Island College

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