

Workshop 7

Social Justice and Action: Alma Flor Ada, Pam Muñoz Ryan, and Paul Yee

Video Program Overview

Laura Alvarez and her bilingual fourth- and fifth-grade students in Oakland, California examine different perspectives and experiences of immigrants, and then formulate and defend positions on issues with which they connect personally. They examine *My Name Is María Isabel* by Alma Flor Ada, *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Muñoz Ryan, and *Tales From Gold Mountain* by Paul Yee, and compare characters' hopes, expectations, and actual experiences upon arriving in the United States. The students conduct research, which includes interviews with family members and nonfiction readings. Alma Flor Ada visits the classroom, answers questions about her novel, and facilitates discussion about social justice and taking action for change. As a culminating project, the students write and revise persuasive letters to raise public awareness about the issues they've examined.

Workshop 7 Reading List

Ada, Alma Flor. *My Name Is María Isabel*. New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1993. ISBN 068980217X

Muñoz Ryan, Pam. *Esperanza Rising*. New York: Scholastic, 2000. ISBN 043912042X

Yee, Paul. *Tales From Gold Mountain: Stories of the Chinese in the New World*. Toronto, Ont.: Groundwood Books/Douglas and McIntyre, 1989. ISBN 0888990987

Workshop Session (On-Site)

Getting Ready (30 minutes)

- Divide into pairs or small groups of three or four people. Work with those who've read different texts.
- **Summarize** the text(s) you read for your group.
- **Share** your thoughts about the following questions:
 - What were the protagonists' expectations of life in the United States? What were the realities they found when they arrived?
 - To what degree were the social justice issues similar and/or different across the texts?
 - How do the challenges facing the characters in these texts reflect society today?
 - How might your students' responses to these texts and issues be similar to or different from your responses?

Watch the Workshop Video (approximately 60 minutes)

Going Further (30 minutes)

- **Discuss** as many questions as time permits.
 - How did the combination of strategies and activities help the students understand the literature?
 - Which activities/strategies are you most interested in trying in your own class? What modifications would you make?
 - How did the teacher create a learning environment that promotes collaboration and respect for others' ideas?
 - How did the strategies help build students' language arts skills?
 - If you were to teach any of the featured literature, what resources, authors, and/or experts from your community might you use to help build students' background knowledge and contextualize the works?
- You may want to continue to explore these questions further in your journal and to share your ideas on Channel-Talk.

Between Sessions (On Your Own)

Homework Assignment

- **Go to the Web site** at www.learner.org/channel/workshops/tml and:
- **Review Workshop 7** (overview, information about the authors and literature, teaching strategies, video summaries, commentary, student work, and resources).
- **Prepare for Workshop 8** (preview the overview and information about the authors and literature).
 - **Read** *The Heart of a Chief* by Joseph Bruchac and *The Circuit* by Francisco Jiménez.
 - **As you read**, keep a double-entry journal. Divide each page into two columns. In the left column, write several quotations from the texts that are meaningful to you. In the right column, write your connections to and/or questions about the quotations.
- **Bring the texts and your journal entries** to the next workshop session.

Workshop 8 Reading List

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Heart of a Chief*. New York: Puffin, 1998. ISBN 014131236X

Jiménez, Francisco. *The Circuit: Stories From the Life of a Migrant Child*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997. ISBN 0826317979

Ongoing Activities

- **In your journal**, include thoughts, ideas, or questions you have as you review the online materials and reflect on the workshop. Note how your participation in the workshop session influenced you as a learner and as a teacher.
- **Online**, click on the Interactive Strategy Workbook. In this activity, you can read two poems and reflect on the teaching strategies featured in this workshop.
- **Share ideas** on Channel-Talk.

Notes
