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Yum! ¡MmMm! ¡Qué Rico!: America's Sproutings (Spanish Edition)



Synopsis

Peanuts, blueberries, corn, potatoes, tomatoes, and more—here is a luscious collection of haiku celebrating foods native to the Americas. Brimming with imagination and fun, these poems capture the tasty essence of foods that have delighted, united, and enriched our lives for centuries. Exuberant illustrations bring to life the delicious spirit of the haiku, making Yum! ¡Mmm! ¡QuÃ© Rico! America's Sproutings an eye-popping, mouth-watering treat. Open it and dig in!

Book Information

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Age Range: 5 - 11 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 6

Customer Reviews

"This inventive stew of food haiku celebrates the indigenous foods of the Americas." - starred review, English edition --Booklist "Mora's descriptive poetry features wonderful word choices and gets it right to the essence of each food...Perfect for sharing as part of the curriculum or just for fun." (English edition) --Book Links "Teachers will find this a welcome addition to their social-studies units, but it should also win a broad general audience for its inventive, fun-filled approach to an ever-popular topic: food." (English edition) --School Library Journal "This inventive stew of food haiku celebrates the indigenous foods of the Americas." - starred review, English edition --Booklist "Mora's descriptive poetry features wonderful word choices and gets it right to the essence of each food...Perfect for sharing as part of the curriculum or just for fun." (English edition) --Book

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Pat Mora, a popular presenter across the country at conferences, campuses, libraries, and schools, speaks and offers workshops on literacy, creativity, leadership, the writing process, and serving diverse populations. "Sharing Bookjoy: Creative Literacy Leaders" and "ZING! Seven Creativity Practices for Educators and Students" are among her more popular themes. The author of award-winning books of nonfiction and poetry for adults and of many children's books, Pat received honorary doctorates in letters from North Carolina State University and SUNY Buffalo and is an honorary member of the American Library Association. Among her other awards are the 2006 National Hispanic Cultural Center Literary Award, a Civitella Ranieri Fellowship, a Visiting Carruthers Chair at the University of New Mexico, a Poetry Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a Kellogg National Leadership Fellowship. A former teacher, university administrator, and consultant, Pat is the founder of the family literacy initiative El día de los niños/El día de los libros, Children's Day/Book Day (Día), now housed at the American Library Association. The yearlong commitment to linking all children to books, languages, and cultures and of sharing what Pat calls "bookjoy," culminates in national celebrations in April. Pat was named one of the "Fifty Most Inspiring Authors in the World" by Poets & Writers magazine in February 2010.

The illustrations in this book are so beautiful. My daughter likes to "read" it by herself and point out all the fruits and vegetables. We, even as adults, learned some new facts. The rhymes are not that catchy, but we still like the book.

¡Yum! MmMm! Que Rico! America's Sproutings / Brotes de la Américas, written by Pat Mora and illustrated by Rafael López, is available in both English and Spanish editions, although I will be reviewing the latter. In this wonderful collection of poetry, Pat Mora takes us on a gastronomic journey of the Americas through a series of fun haikus. Each poem focuses on a crop native to these continents, culminating in a full harvest of celebration and praise. The descriptions of food and cuisine alongside the bright, multicolored illustrations at once awaken the senses while guiding readers through the history of agriculture in the Americas. Mora introduces her book by acknowledging the influence of her anthropologist husband who teaches about the origins of agriculture, an inspiration that certainly resonates throughout her collection. Readers will

undoubtedly revel in this delicious feast of knowledge, art and poetry. Each page is dedicated to a specific food. The poems on each page follow the structure of Japanese haikus, a form of poetry in which each poem consists of seventeen syllables. At the bottom of each page Mora also provides a paragraph of background information about where the food can be found, where it originates, and how various cultures tend to prepare it. This book is most suitable for children ages 7-12. Although the long, informative paragraphs on each page might be more interesting for older readers, younger readers will surely appreciate the anthropomorphic images of, for instance, a dancing pineapple and a smiling piece of toast. The collection has an unfettered tone of cheer and delight that will spread to readers of all ages. As Lee and Low Books states, "Brimming with imagination and fun, these poems capture the tasty essence of foods that have delighted, united, and enriched our lives for centuries." Indeed, Mora's poems as well as LÃpez's illustrations emphasize not only the wonderful pleasure of food, but also the cultural, societal and familial importance related to sharing food with others. The beautiful illustrations are done with acrylic on wood panels and show a range of family, friends, and community members enjoying each other's company and various foods. Although the featured foods come from across the Americas, North and South, many of the illustrations seem to evoke the warm climate of Central America. According to Lee and Low Books, illustrator Rafael LÃpez "grew up in Mexico City, and his art is strongly influenced by the work of Mexican muralists." Additionally, "he has created many large murals for public spaces, including the Urban Art Trail Project in downtown San Diego." The images are certainly reminiscent of mural art with their bright colors, mesmerizing patterns and attention-grabbing compositions that depict scenes from every-day life (albeit with a twist of the imaginary). Within the paragraphs of background information provided on each page, Mora also includes etymological tidbits on how these foods got their names. For example, the pecan was called "pacane" by the French, which means "nut that you must open with a rock." Mora does not shy away from discussing the influence of European colonizers on the peoples of the Americas. A useful resource for teaching about history, conquest, and colonization, Mora also describes how the crops were used both before and after European settlers arrived. In the back of the book she includes a note to readers where she states that people of the Americas enjoyed these foods long before Christopher Columbus or any other European arrived. This is a valuable topic to mull over with students during the Thanksgiving season. While we use this month of November as an occasion to show thanks and appreciation to our loved ones, and to enjoy our favorite foods, let us also use this month as an opportunity to critique the origins of the Thanksgiving holiday in the Americas. It is always an important time for better understanding the history, traditions

and ongoing experiences of indigenous peoples. Moreover, in her note to readers, Mora explains her love for diversity amongst people and within poetry: *“Me gusta la diversidad en la gente y en la poesía.”* She adds that one of the reasons the haiku poems were so fun to write is that they permit the creator to jump from subject to subject, from image to image, given their short and sweet format: *“El haiku invita en saltar de imagen en imagen.”* To embrace her love for diversity, Mora uses the haiku poems to cover a wide range of foods, countries and cultures. As we are all always looking for ways to diversify children’s literature, I’m sure readers will appreciate Mora’s open celebration of diversity. To bring this style into the classroom, the concise, easy-to-digest format of Mora’s haikus could easily inspire a poetry lesson where students write their own haikus about their favorite foods. As a blogger from Wildrose Reader states, A classroom teacher could certainly use Mora’s book as an inspiration for a classroom poetry-writing activity. Imagine a teacher bringing in foods like kiwi fruit, avocados, mushrooms, mangoes, scallions, bananas, apples, and strawberries for students to observe, eat, and then write poems about. The students could describe the foods in regard to how they look, smell, feel, and taste. Students could also be encouraged to make comparisons and to use figurative language as Mora did when describing the foods and gustatory sensations. This would be the perfect opportunity for children to delve into their creative sides and reflect upon the beauty in every-day objects. Students will also build upon their vocabulary (in English or in Spanish) as they think of descriptive words and adjectives. Furthermore, the practice of working from a still-life model spans all different forms of art from all different cultures, and has been used by peoples for centuries and centuries. This kind of artistic lesson could lead to other lessons on important literary or artistic figures, including Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, who also produced a series of *odes* to ordinary objects. According to Words without Borders, *“We enjoy the world anew through his eyes: yes, a simple artichoke can be seen as a soldier, wrapped in armor and ready for battle; an onion is more beautiful than a bird / with blinding feathers.”* Additionally, Mexican artist Frida Kahlo has produced a series of still-life paintings from different assortments of fruits and vegetables. Students could create still-life paintings or drawings like Kahlo’s while also learning about the influential icon. Rarely does a children’s book open the door to such a wide variety of lessons on the literary and fine arts, that can also be adapted to fit a variety of age groups. A perfect addition to any classroom or personal library! For the complete review and additional resources, check out our *Vamos a Leer* blog at teachinglatinamericathroughliterature.com.

Beware: This book will make you feel hungry! Through Pat Mora's wonderful haikus (a traditional and very popular form of Japanese poetry) and Rafael Lpez's vivid illustrations, we are introduced to a wide variety of foods from the Americas. From blueberries and papaya, to pumpkin and vanilla, readers will have the opportunity to discover and learn about crops that have been growing in our lands for centuries. Mora uses this opportunity to present us with 14 different types of foods accompanied by a haiku, an illustration, and an informational paragraph for each. This combination effectively makes this book a fun, poetic, and informational read. Mora's short poems strive to capture the various feelings and sensory experiences we encounter when we eat and enjoy these foods. The informational paragraph provides us with the etymology, origin and uses for each food, and some of them even include national holidays across the region that celebrate them. Even though food is the main character of the book, children and nature are presented throughout each page, as they interact with the food that is being discussed. Through cheerful and colorful illustrations, Lpez supports Mora's words with lively anthropomorphic foods, suns and moons, friendly animals, and picturesque landscapes. The book also embraces the real diversity of the Americas, giving us multiethnic and multiracial children and their families enjoying and being part of this magic realism journey of foods and words. Among the food, colors, and haikus there is an important aspect that is constant throughout Yum! Mmmm! Qu Rico!, although featured discreetly: a strong sense of how vital sharing is "sharing the land with nature, humans, and animals, as well as sharing the products of our land with others. It stresses the need to understand the importance of a non-exploitative relationship with nature and our role in taking care of our land. We can see this aspect clearly with Lpez's constant use of images of children and families, seen either eating or preparing food together, planting seeds, and picking crops, as well as images of nature watering our soil. There's no doubt that this book will encourage children to eat fruit, vegetables, and other natural foods. At the same time, it will help them to recognize the work that needs to happen to enjoy those foods. Yum! Mmm! Qu Rico! America's Sproutings was the first collaboration between Pat Mora and Rafael Lpez. Published in 2007, the book won several awards such as Bank Street Children's Books of the Year (2008), Amricas Award (2007) and American Library Association (ALA) Notable Books (2008). It was also included in the Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List (2008-2009), Great Lakes Great Books Award Master List (2008-2009) and ALA's Top Ten Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers.

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