

A publication of the  Department of Language and Cultural Equity

## The Blues—Teaching Social Justice Through Music

by Greg Hansen

Legend has it that the great African American composer W.C. Handy was travelling through the Mississippi Delta in 1903, when, on a lonely train platform he heard a style of music that would change his life forever. He described it as

“the weirdest

music I had ever

heard.” Captivated,

Handy was hearing

a sound that would

eventually reverberate

throughout the South and into

the world at large. It was to

become the most important

and influential of all forms of

American roots music. It was

the blues. One hundred years

later, in recognition of the

musical and cultural

significance of this seminal

music, the United States

Congress has proclaimed 2003

the “Year of the Blues.”

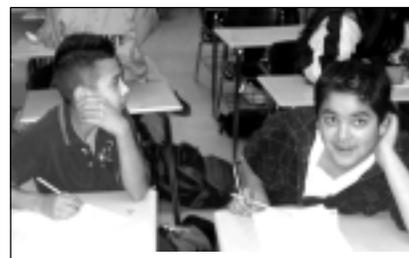
This was good news to me, a longtime fan. I considered the rich metaphor and vivid imagery that existed in blues lyrics—how beautiful and honest that poetry could be. A good justification, I thought, to bring this music into a classroom.

*“Blues is a gateway music. It started rock and rock started heavy metal. In blues, the instruments sing with the singer.”*

*Julian Meraz, 7th grade*

Reflecting on what W.E.B. Dubois wrote, “The problem of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the problem of the color line,” I began to see other reasons to study the blues. This music is the story of what African Americans endured in the South—a way to address the issue of race in our nation’s history. Studying the blues can deepen students’ understanding of rural and urban African American culture. It is a story of enslavement and the struggle for freedom, and it is a story we can never stop telling.

So CD’s and boom box in hand I headed out to Truman Middle School and Mr. Orlando Romero’s 7<sup>th</sup> grade literacy class. My “hook” was the soulful



**Malachi Rangel and Gonzalo Silva work on blues lyrics in Mr. Romero’s Media Literacy class at Truman Middle School.**

energy and rhythmic vitality of the blues. After playing a few cuts, I asked the students for words to describe what they heard and how the music made them feel. We started a word wall to introduce key vocabulary and used graphic organizers and maps to build background knowledge.

Then we looked at the lyrics themselves.

Organized in stanzas that contain three or four lines, the first line states a problem, the second restates or embellishes the problem, and the third or fourth comments on the problem, often in an ironic or humorous twist. Here’s an example from Willie Dixon’s *Bills, Bills and More Bills*:

*I got bills bills and more bills  
Bills bills and more bills  
And when you think your bills are through  
Uncle Sam is right there waiting on you.*

### Inside this issue...

- ❖ ... **Instructional Materials Adoption**
- ❖ **Assessment Update...**
- ❖ **Evite el “bajón” de cuarto grado**
- ❖ **Standards in an Eighth Grade Classroom... Content and Contexts**
- ❖ **La buena ortografía...**
- ❖ ... **Reginald Chávez: Creating a Literacy Tradition**

—continued on page 9—

## Keeping up with Instructional Materials Adoption

Where are we in the instructional materials adoption process? Well...

✓ Contact teachers at all levels across the district have now had two full days of professional development regarding the adoption process and their work with site teams.

✓ The Instructional Materials Newsletter is in the schools—if you're not seeing it, please check with your contact teacher or principal. It's a good way to stay informed.

✓ Materials up for adoption can still be viewed at the new Regional Instructional Materials Center in Montgomery Complex. The center will continue to be open through May, with materials to be given away on the last day of classes. Individuals or small groups of less than four are welcome to drop in at the center. Larger groups are asked to call in advance and book the room to make sure someone is available to help. The center is open weekdays from 8:00-12:00 and 1:00-5:00, with extended hours and Saturdays available to larger groups with an appointment. Call 880-8249, x220, to make arrangements.

✓ "Suggestion lists" will soon be released with the numeric assessment results of district evaluation teams using the rubric to review materials. These teams consist of classroom teachers, literacy leaders, instructional coaches, and resource teachers, and teams will be facilitated by Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) resource teachers.

As we head into the final stretch of the process, remember that there are four factors driving a school's choice of product: alignment with standards, the site EPSS, the school's reading/literacy program, and the student population.



*In their second day of training, middle school contact teachers learn to use the instructional materials rubric for evaluation of products up for adoption.*

The adoption process includes the purchase of products to appropriately meet the needs of all students in the school community. For a quick list of product characteristics that support the instructional needs of second language learners, please see the December issue of *Making Connections*.

So what's next?

✓ Remember that an "estimate" of the titles and number of products that a school plans to adopt needs to be submitted to DeDe Arwood, Instructional Materials Coordinator, by the end of March. This estimate can be revised later, but it's needed to make sure that the products you order will be available in the quantities you need.

✓ In April, review and confirm adoption decisions with the site team.

✓ By May 1, place instructional materials orders with the following individual at your site: elementary schools—the school secretary; middle schools—the secretary or clerk; and high schools—bookroom clerk.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact DeDe Arwood, TLS, at 880-8249, x188 or [arwood\\_d@aps.edu](mailto:arwood_d@aps.edu)

*Middle school teachers preview materials at the Regional Instructional Materials Center.*





## Assessment Update... Informing Decisions about Student Participation

It's that time again—the March testing window is just about here. In the December issue of *Making Connections*, guidelines for new English language learner (ELL)

assessment options and accommodations were described. Students will have three basic ways to participate in state-mandated assessments: take the standardized assessment; take the standardized assessment with state-approved accommodations; or take the alternative assessment. The challenge is to make the best possible assessment decision for the students in your classroom and school.

Making decisions about which assessments are most appropriate for students—with or without accommodations—will be easiest and most productive if teachers have students' English (and Spanish, where appropriate) LAS scores, previous Terra Nova or Supera scores, and information on the students' educational history, length of uninterrupted schooling in the United States, and current instructional setting, services, and performance. This process of thoughtful and informed decision-making offers a great opportunity to look closely at students' services, achievement, and instruction.

Under federal law, all students who have been in school in the United States for three consecutive years must be assessed in English, with or without accommodations. *All FEP students must be assessed in English without accommodations.* For ELL's, schools may apply for student waivers on a case-by-case basis to allow students to take Supera or the portfolio assessment for up to two additional years. Submit waiver requests on-line at [www.rda.aps.edu/testing](http://www.rda.aps.edu/testing) by Feb. 18. The request must include the following: student data, English and Spanish language proficiency information, Student Assistance Team members involved in the decision, and a justification. As schools consider waiver requests, remember that the portfolio assessment is not included in the 95% required participation by school.

Accommodations provided to ELL's must be documented on an individual basis. Detailed records including student data, justification, and type of accommodation(s) will be approved by the school's Student Assistance Team (SAT) and sent to RDA. School test reps have information from RDA on state-approved accommodations in the new assessment manual.

As you think about the students in your classroom and which assessment will be best for them, here are some examples to consider in your decision-making process:

- Joseph is an 8<sup>th</sup> grader who has been in school in the United States for three consecutive years. His home language is Russian, and he has received ESL services while in APS. He is doing well in class. His LAS score is 4/2, and he is designated LEPd. Based on this data, his teacher decides Joseph is ready for the Terra Nova with accommodations.
- Marisa is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student from Mexico. Records indicate that she has had interrupted schooling. She has been in the United States for two years and has a LAS oral score of 3, with a reading/writing score of 1. She has not received any literacy or content instruction in Spanish since she arrived here, so Supera is not recommended. While she is progressing in English, the literacy demands of the Terra Nova are beyond her. For her, the district portfolio assessment would be appropriate.
- Ricardo is a 4<sup>th</sup> grader who just came here from Mexico. He has been in school in Mexico consistently since first grade, and the Spanish LAS scores show him to be fully Spanish proficient. He would best demonstrate his knowledge on the Supera.

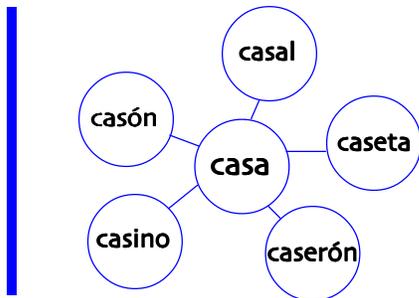
For more information, please refer to the January 2003 RDA Assessment Guidelines Revised manual, check the website at [www.rda.aps.edu/testing](http://www.rda.aps.edu/testing), or e-mail your questions to [rda@aps.edu](mailto:rda@aps.edu).

*Thanks again to Chris Fritz and Brian Kaumo, RDA, for their help with this update and their efforts on behalf of students and teachers.*



–continuación de la página 4–

**Estudiar las familias de palabras.** El crear una red de familias de palabras en español es una actividad dirigida por la maestra que se hace con el grupo entero. El objetivo es que los estudiantes se fijen en la relación entre las palabras y las analicen. La maestra escoge una palabra y les pide a los estudiantes que piensen en otras palabras formadas con esa palabra. Se les puede ayudar con preguntas o definiciones. Al principio del año la maestra puede empezar con una palabra fácil y concreta como “pan”. Les puede preguntar: ¿Dónde hacen el pan? (en la panadería). ¿Quién hace el pan? (el panadero). Conforme los estudiantes van adquiriendo más habilidad en este proceso, la maestra puede escoger una o dos palabras que los haga pensar. Aun si los estudiantes no pueden dar con todas las palabras, desarrollarán mayor entendimiento sobre el lenguaje y cómo funciona.



**Aprender sobre los cognados.** Un 60% de las palabras que encontramos en los textos escritos en inglés provienen de raíces griegas y latinas, mientras que las palabras que usamos en las conversaciones de diario tiene principalmente raíces anglosajonas. Aproximadamente un 90% del vocabulario científico en inglés tiene cognados en español. Los estudiantes de habla hispana tienen en sus cabezas una riqueza increíble de palabras de origen griego y latino. A estos estudiantes hay que enseñarles a relacionar su lengua materna con su segunda lengua. Por ejemplo, la palabra “speed” viene de la raíz anglosajona. Un sinónimo “velocity” tiene una raíz latina. El equivalente en español es “velocidad”.

Los estudiantes pueden crear sus propios bancos de cognados y añadir términos a una lista de cognados para usar como referencia. Las listas de cognados son útiles solamente si los

estudiantes han estudiado las palabras gradualmente. No les podemos dar listas y esperar que sepan cómo usarlas. Los maestros pueden usar los cognados en sus tableros.

amphibians/anfibios	tropical/tropical
reptiles/reptiles	camouflage/camuflaje
chameleon/camaleón	crocodile/cocodrilo

Conforme descubren los cognados, los estudiantes empiezan a hacer ciertas conexiones. Tal vez descubran unos cognados al hacer su trabajo durante la semana. Una buena referencia para maestros es el diccionario de cognados de NTC el cual está organizado por temas.

¿Cuál es la diferencia entre enseñar cognados y traducir? Los estudios indican que los estudiantes bilingües, al fin y al cabo, tienden a comparar de manera espontánea sus dos lenguajes. Entienden mejor cómo funciona el lenguaje debido al hecho de poseer dos lenguas. Las dos lenguas se mantienen separadas por motivos de instrucción. Lo que los maestros hacen es simplemente pasar unos minutos a la semana examinando las similitudes y diferencias entre el español y el inglés.

Saber el vocabulario académico es un requisito para poder entender el lenguaje del currículo, un lenguaje que se hace más y más complejo. Para muchos estudiantes, el único medio que tienen para adquirir el vocabulario académico es a través de la enseñanza directa en la escuela de dicho lenguaje.

*Traducido por Tomás Butchart.*

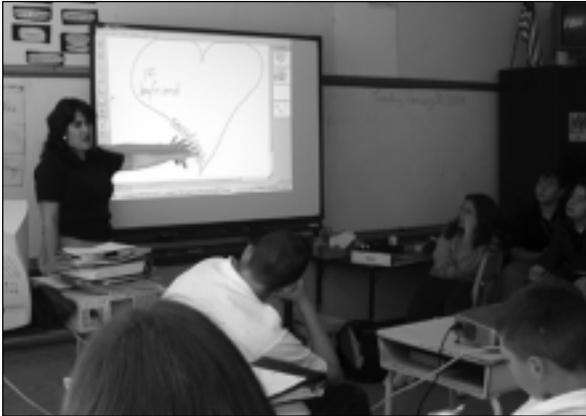


*Un grupo de estudio se junta para hablar sobre lenguaje dual en Lavaland.*

# Standards in an Eighth Grade Classroom: Thinking Through Content and Contexts

Third in a series...

by Nancy Lawrence with Ginger Looney



**Ginger Looney, McKinley Middle School, models her writing to introduce poetry.**

When Ginger Looney moved from teaching in the primary grades to eighth grade Language Arts and Literature at McKinley Middle School in August, she knew she was going to face many unfamiliar situations, exciting opportunities, and even, perhaps, some difficult experiences. There were lots of considerations: new content/curriculum, older students including English language learners, different school and faculty, materials, classroom environment... But as she started thinking aloud about her broad-brush planning for each semester, her focus became clear. Holding her *APS Standards Resource Guide* in her arms, she didn't hesitate on the bottom line: "I want to make sure I'm not short-changing the students." With this goal in mind, Ginger "thought aloud" about both content and contexts of her new teaching assignment.

**In general, how do you plan?**

**What role do the standards play?**

"I gave the students their own copy of the standards to put in their portfolios of work. We discussed each strand in depth at the beginning of the year. Occasionally, we'll go back over the standards and reference the assignment to the particular strand, but for the most part, I felt confident that they know we are addressing the standards... In the year-long skeletal plans, I see how

the standards fit; however, I need to find what is interesting/motivating for the students and then see how I can apply the standards. I think that as good teachers, we can connect almost anything that is meaningful and relevant instruction to the standards." Ginger has focused on the overarching strands of reading and writing; she has designed units which will target not only these but many Language Arts standards simultaneously.

In order to assure that she is providing effective, meaningful learning activities, Ginger surveys her students at the start of the year about their interests, ideas, and opinions, and she receives feedback and input through periodic interest inventories. She seeks to "meld all (these) together" in order to choose appropriate content and materials that students can relate to. Ginger draws on her rich background in literacy training and working with ELL's for many years in elementary schools. She confers with colleagues through collaborative planning, conversations, and other settings. She mentions in particular McKinley's librarian, Rachel Horwitz, who "offers a wealth of information about pertinent literature and relishes helping students find books... She's an invaluable resource to our school."

"The affective filter seems to be a bigger deal in mid school than it ever was in first or second grades. I'm concerned how students will maintain and improve their native tongue to continue their foundation of literacy as some students have limited literacy skills in their first language... I struggle for the equity in English language instruction to improve on the ELL's English acquisition but also to convey to the students that their native tongue is just as

**What is your biggest concern for your ELL students working toward grade-level standards?**

**How do you address this concern?**

—continued on page 7—

—continued from page 6—

important and to not have shame about continuing their native language development.” In addition, she is concerned about enjoyment and student engagement/ownership in learning. Ginger believes that “...basically, (you) create a very strong zone of proximal development for all and continue to raise the bar.” Often that means modifying assignments, choosing alternate materials, scaffolding instruction, and assessing in various formats. In a safe environment, then, “I make sure that even though ELL’s’ English is developing, I still provide them with an enticing opportunity to meet and excel in the standards equally.”

Ginger considers thoughtful planning and student involvement in their learning vital to support everyone’s growth. She contacts parents regularly, especially those of her ELL’s, to keep them informed about successes and/or needs. In this way, trust is enhanced. In class, Ginger demonstrates her own writing process, for example, and relates her experiences from her adult writing group to her students. She shares her own struggles in learning a second language. Again, the environment of trust is supported and students benefit from the rich literacy focus.

**Motivation:**  
*What has worked in literacy instruction, especially for the English language learners?*

As Ginger noted, creating the “enticing opportunities” for learning requires knowing the students and careful planning. She has included units on poetry, short story, research, whole group book study, book clubs, vocabulary study, and journaling. Within the daily work in these areas, choice is key to engagement. And “direct

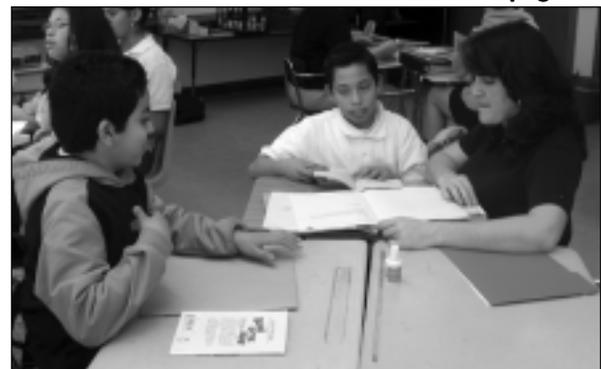
instruction and as much individualized education as possible” support students’ choices and decisions. Ginger facilitates reading/writing workshop by “giving students ownership of the topics that they write about and the books they read.” When she assigns topics for journaling or “quick-writes,” she chooses themes which resonate with students’ lives.

“In the first writing expedition of the year, besides journals, the students did partner writing of short stories—one ELL with a proficient English speaker. Together they agreed on a topic from their writing territories and collaborated... This established a confidence/comfort in ability which branched out to poetry.” Journal writing which is not corrected but graded for production is one way to improve fluency in thinking and writing—and to build confidence and motivation. the Reading Process strand states that the

APS eighth-grade Performance Standard #3 of the Reading Process strand states that the student “...uses a variety of reading processes and strategies when independently reading a variety of literary and informational texts in order to understand main story elements, author perspective, and style.” Ginger embarked on a book club project with her students as one avenue to attain this important goal. “I want the students to love to read and to do so independently because they want to, not because a teacher is telling them to read. Through giving them the choice of books from a group of seven, they have the buy-in that they are working to develop their own curriculum. Then, through the various roles of the book club members, they design their own discussion which gives them further ownership of the learning process. This enables me to facilitate more and provide the students with much more room to grow and articulate their opinions, thoughts, questions ...and how they connect to the literature and why...”

—continued on page 8—

**What is the Book Club Project?**



Ginger confers with Arkan Alhmodi (left) and Carlos Solis in their book club.

## ¡La buena ortografía te lleva al éxito!

On January 22, 2003, Valley High School hosted the District Spanish Spelling Bee. Eleven students from around the district qualified to participate in the district contest by placing first and second at the cluster competitions. Jaime López, a student at Jimmy Carter Middle School, was this year's spelling champion. He will represent the district at the state competition to be held at the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education convention in March. Kristal Martínez from Duranes Elementary School placed second, and Analy Ruvalcuba from John Adams Middle School was the third place winner. Thanks to Valley High School for hosting the event, to Susan López for her efforts, and congratulations to the students, their teachers, and their families!



*From left to right: Analy Ruvalcuba, Susan Walter Linsell, Kristal Martínez, Lorraine Baca, Jaime López, Alma Giner-García, and Glenna Voigt*

—continued from page 7—

It was lots of prep, but it's worth it to listen to the students' conversations and hear that they learn from each other. It's been amazing to see their growth!"

### **Ginger prepared for the unit by:**

- researching appropriate young adult literature;
- gathering multiple copies from various sources;
- reading and conferring about the concept and process of classroom book clubs;
- reading all of the books and describing them through book talks to students;
- consulting with students about appropriate choices in order to ensure success;
- surveying the students on their preferences;
- forming the clubs so that students would be in a group with one of their top three book choices;
- developing outlines and other scaffolds to frontload the stories for the ELL's; and
- implementing practice sessions for the member roles.

### **A Selection of Ginger's Resources**

#### Standards:

Albuquerque Public Schools Middle School Standards Resource Guide

#### Reading:

Nancy Atwell, *In the Middle*, Heinemann, 1998

Harvey Daniels, *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups*, Stenhouse, 2002

Multiple copies of young adult literature such as *The Giver*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *Beans on the Roof*, *Parrot in the Oven...*

#### Writing:

Nanci Atwell, *Lessons that Change Writers, First Hand*, 2002

Natalie Goldberg, *Writing Down the Bones*, Shambhala, 1986

#### Brainstorming/Conferring:

Friends and colleagues!

–continued from page 1–

After looking at several examples of lyrics and listening to blues from different artists and time periods, it became clear that the music was a form of protest. We compared it with today's music and discussed why the messages contained in blues music had to be subtle, sometimes using language that was a code. When Robert Johnson sings "The sun's goin' down boys, dark gonna catch me here," he is not just expressing a fear of the night, but of the dangers facing a lone black man at that time in our history. The more we looked at the lyrics, the more interest grew.

Students saw that the lyrics not only expressed hardship or sorrow, but also humor or a defiant reaction to one's troubles and life in general. We discussed W. C. Handy's statement: "The blues comes from nothingness, from want, from desire" and applied that to the hip-hop of today. The students felt that although the sound of the music was different, there were similarities in attitude. Both kinds of music were a chronicle of life, and both used poetry and driving rhythm. As 7th grader Julian Meraz put it, "Blues is a gateway music. It started rock and rock started heavy metal. In blues, the instruments sing with the singer."

One of the more salient moments in this unit was

when we listened to the Muddy Waters version of *Mannish Boy* and read along as he declared "I'm a man," actually spelling it out for the listener. It was easy for the students to understand that, in a world where you were called "boy" and often treated as less than human, a song that declared that you a powerful human being would have great appeal.

The unit culminated with the students writing their own blues songs and making their own blues album CD cover. Through the study of the blues, the students learned more about music, about America, and about men and women who created beautiful poetry that responded to the conditions of their world.

### **Crime Today**

by Matthew Baca, Truman Middle School

***There is so much crime in the world today  
There is so much crime in the world today  
It seems like it comes both night and day.***

***Almost everyone seems to like crime  
Almost everybody seems to like crime  
But for me, it's just a waste of time.***

***Crime today is like an everyday thing  
Crime today is like an everyday thing  
I hate crime, I'd rather just sing.***

***People walk around carrying a knife  
People walk around carrying a knife  
They don't realize they are wasting their life.***

You certainly needn't be a blues buff in order to introduce the music to your students. There are a large number of resources available to help you. An Internet search will yield many results, and I've listed a few of the most useful. The Cross Cultural library is stocking up on blues compilation CD's that will be available for checkout. And you can listen to blues every Wednesday evening on KUNM from 7-10 p.m.



#### **Web sites**

<http://www.blues.org>

<http://www.thebluehighway.com>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/newyork/laic/episode5/activity3/activity3.html>

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MUSIC/BLUES/rjhome3.html>

<http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/Delta/2541/index.html> (A site for blues lyrics)

#### **Cross Cultural Resource Library**

Blues CD's and African American History videos

#### **Arts Center (Montgomery Complex)**

Blues Masters Video Volumes #1 and #2. This is an excellent series that combines historical footage with rare performances by blues artists.

#### **Radio**

KUNM 89.9 FM. Blues Programming every Wednesday evening from 7:00-10:00 p.m.

## Cinco de Mayo at Reginald F. Chávez

**Álilee Bah Church displays her winning heritage essay.**



Cinco de Mayo is a favorite among annual spring celebrations, and the observance of this day has a long and vibrant history in the Reginald F. Chávez Elementary School (RCES) community. Last year, however, the traditional commemoration took a larger focus. It became a celebration not only of the Hispanic cultures, but of all the heritages represented among the students at the school. And, in the creation of this new tradition, a school-wide literacy project was born.

### THE TRADITION GROWS

In discussing the celebration, the RCES Integrated Studies Committee targeted a dual focus: They worked to preserve important traditional components while striving to include representation of all cultures. The crowning of a king and queen at each grade level was very popular and a must! In the past, students who sold the most raffle tickets as a fund-raiser for the school were awarded this honor. But the committee wanted to highlight cultures and literacy. A writing and art project in the king/queen event would make these goals visible, and, in turn, promote community awareness and involvement.

Each year since 1997, committee member and ESL teacher Thelma Aragón has worked with her students on a project about the importance of their heritage. This writing project has always resulted in significant family and community participation. The committee took the idea of a writing/art contest to Principal Mike Saavedra.

He helped support these changes with publication of newsletters and weekly updates, conferring on logistics with the committee, and promoting the project as an integral part of curriculum. "We emphasize that every activity in our school has a focus on literacy," he explained. "A prime example is redirecting the King/Queen Contest from a raffle concept to an essay contest titled 'What My Heritage Means to Me.'"

### THE PROCESS BEGINS

Heritages then became the thread which would tie together all the Cinco de Mayo activities: the music, dances, speakers, and display of the literacy/art entries would revolve around cultures of the school. But the smooth implementation of all the activities required preparation ahead of time. Since Ms. Aragón had been doing similar projects in her classroom, she spearheaded planning of the contest to select the Cinco de Mayo "royalty."

Teachers were encouraged to make the heritage project part of their curriculum. For example, Ms. Aragón frontloads the Cinco de Mayo project in several ways, starting early in the school year. She shares a photo collage of her family and of herself as a child. She describes growing up in her neighborhood, family celebrations, and meaningful community events. From this oral narrative, she focuses on printed stories about various families, reading aloud and discussing with her classes, for instance, *My Hispanic Heritage*, published by McDonald's. Finally, as she models her own writing and illustrating, the students work through the writing/drawing process for about three weeks. Although Ms. Aragón allows plenty of time to work on the project during class, she encourages students to talk with their families and to share information and stories with each other. She was delighted that "some youngsters even came to the classroom during recess to work."

For the contest, students in grades three to five must submit a written essay, of any length, along with an illustration about their heritage.

## Reginald Chavez: Creating a Literacy Tradition

by Nancy Lawrence

Younger students could substitute a craft project for writing. RCES furnishes school supplies to contestants. Family members are invited to help with their child's project, further ensuring a true community celebration. Ms. Aragón noted that, in fact, all of the 2002 entries—including those from the primary grades—contained a written segment. But she also stressed that the contest should not be frustrating for the youngsters, stating, "Fair is what works for each child in this project." The object is to encourage and honor literacy achievement and all heritages as a community.

### THE CELEBRATION

Reginald Chávez enjoys active community involvement; interest in the literacy component of the Cinco celebration proved to be high. With leadership from Lanny Tanning, President of the West Old Town Neighborhood Association, the community provided prizes, judges, and publicity. Families supported their youngsters and the teachers in preparing for the presentations, booths, and ceremonies.

After the judging of all projects, winning entries were prominently displayed in the school's front atrium. On the day of the celebration, Principal Saavedra introduced the newly crowned kings and queens to the audience, one by one, following their grand parade into the amphitheater. The festivities, featuring a variety of class presentations, continued during the morning.

Ms. Aragón feels that the emphasis on literacy and recognition of all cultures will increase parent and community involvement, perhaps with the publication of entries in an annual school book/video. "I think of this as a science fair. It can only grow and get better," she declared. In that case, Reginald Chavez's Cinco de Mayo celebration may have to relocate to a larger space: the outdoor theater was packed to overflowing last year!

### ONE FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE

Álilee Bah Church decided that she wanted to enter the Cinco de Mayo King and Queen Literacy Contest. She talked with her family about it. Álilee Bah's mother and aunts attended Reginald Chavez, and the entire family supports the school in educational and cultural goals. Lora Church considered the contest a wonderful opportunity to encourage her first grader to practice her writing while deepening her understanding of her heritage. "We worked around the kitchen table. I had to redefine "heritage" and "proud" for her. I asked questions about how she would identify herself," she explained. And she added, "I think it is important that when your child is interested in something, parents should respond. I am glad that the school changed the criteria to literacy and to include diversity of cultures."

Curtis Morgan, Álilee Bah's grandfather, is also pleased with the change in focus: "I was personally excited about that. The writing is important. Before, my kids didn't fit in." Although he did not work with Álilee Bah on the project, when he read it, he remembers still that "she said she was proud on the dance floor." And he, along with the entire family, was also proud—proud that Álilee Bah was chosen first-grade queen and that she was able to share herself, her family, and her heritage so well.

### ÁLILEE BAH'S ESSAY

My name is Álilee Bah Church. I am 7 years old. I am Navajo and Pokagon Band Potawatomi. I like to dance at pow-wows. I dance fancy shawl. I started when I was 4 years old. I like to stand next to my mom and sing at the drum. When we have ceremonies, we pray to God. We learn to be nice, to be kind and to be careful. When I hear the drums I feel something in my heart. I feel happy. I am glad I am an Indian because I love it.



*Álilee Bah Church reads with her grandfather, Curtis Morgan.*

## Making more connections!

### FYI...

APS students will be joining the **New Mexico Black Historical Colleges Tour 2003 to Atlanta, Georgia, March 21-29**. Sponsored by Albuquerque Public Schools Black Student Unions, the tour will include visits to Spelman College, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College, and Clark Atlanta University, as well as the Martin Luther King Jr. Center, Tubman African American Museum, and much more. If you have questions or would like more information, contact Joycelyn Jackson, Multicultural Education Coordinator, at 883-0440.

For all schools with bilingual education programs—just a reminder that all students participating in bilingual programs must be assessed annually with the Spanish LAS. Help is available through the LAS Testing Specialists, but priority is given to schools with large numbers of students to be tested.



The good news is that there is now a **UNISYS screen for the Spanish LAS**, and it's ready to use. This screen, the DSSAS, works just like the screen for the English LAS. In order to better track the progress students are making in their Spanish language proficiency, all

Spanish LAS scores should be entered on this screen. This will inform decisions around standardized assessments, Student Assistance Team considerations, and LAS testing plans. For more information, please call Madeleine Hubbell-Jenkins or Laurita McKinney at Language and Cultural Equity, 881-9559.

## Cross Cultural Resource Library



Monday and Wednesday:  
8:00-5:00

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:  
8:00-4:30

Closed daily for lunch:  
12:00-1:00

LIBRARY SPECIALIST: JO ANN GONZALES

## Coming Events

❖ **UNM's World Language Expo:** March 1, Ortega Hall, University of New Mexico. For more information, contact Marina Peters-Newell at [mpnewell@unm.edu](mailto:mpnewell@unm.edu).

❖ **New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education—32<sup>nd</sup> Annual State Conference:** March 19-22, Albuquerque. For more information, visit the NMABE website at [www.nmabe.net/conference.html](http://www.nmabe.net/conference.html)

❖ **Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2003—Hearing Every Voice:** March 25-29, 2003, Baltimore. For more information, please visit the TESOL website at [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org).

## Department of Language and Cultural Equity

Montgomery Complex, 3315 Louisiana Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110—505.883.0440

DIRECTOR: Lynne Rosen

ALS COORDINATORS: Teresa Archuleta,  
Cynthia Challberg-Hale, Doddie Espinosa  
ALS/SPECIAL EDUCATION/LAS COORDINATOR:

Madeleine Hubbell-Jenkins

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION COORDINATOR:  
Joycelyn Jackson

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES COORDINATORS:  
Tomás Butchart, Jason Yuen

**Making Connections** is a publication of the Department of Language and Cultural Equity, Albuquerque Public Schools; it is distributed to the Board of Education, district administrators and departments, and all schools. Please direct questions and comments to the editors: Dee McMann and Nancy Lawrence, 883-0440.

**Making Connections** is printed by APS Office Services.