

Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas

written by Juan Felipe Herrera

illustrated by Elly Simmons

About the Book

Genre: Biography/Memoir

ISBN: 9780892391660

Reading Level: Grade 4

Interest Level: Grades 2-5

Guided Reading Level: R

Spanish Guided Reading Level: R

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
4.5/0.5

Lexile™ Measure: AD910L

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Vehicles In Motion, Occupations, Mothers, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest, Immigration, Home, History, Fathers, Farming, Families, Environment/Nature, Dreams & Aspirations, Childhood Experiences and Memories, Bilingual, Poverty, People In Motion, Biography/Memoir, California, Courage, Identity/Self Esteem/Confidence, Nonfiction, Pride

Resources on the web:

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/calling-the-doves-el-canto-de-las-palomas>

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

SYNOPSIS

Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas is Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera's story of his migrant farmworker childhood. In delightful and lyrical language, he recreates the joy of eating breakfast under the open sky, listening to Mexican songs in the little trailer house his father built, and celebrating with other families at a fiesta in the mountains. He remembers his mother's songs and poetry, and his father's stories and his calling the doves. For Juan Felipe, the farmworker road was also the beginning of his personal road to becoming a writer.

BACKGROUND

An Excerpt from Social Justice Books' Review: Grace Cornwall Gonzales

"[*Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*] describes Herrera's childhood with his migrant farm worker parents in a way that leaves me in awe of its richness. In metaphor and simile, he paints the California mountains and valleys in gorgeous colors; his relationship with the land is deeply personal. The sky is his blue spoon, the "wavy clay of the land" is his plate. His dirt patio is "a sand-colored theater where I learned to sing." The tarp that makes the family tent is a "giant tortilla dipped in green tomato sauce."

Even more powerful than his description of the land that he grew up in is the way he evokes his parents and their family life. When his father builds them a one-room house on top of an abandoned car, he tells us the house was "a short loaf of bread on wheels. Inside it was a warm cave of conversations. Mexican songs and auctions blared from a box radio on the wall." The wonderful artwork on this page makes you feel like you are nestled in that cave listening to the music and family chatter. His mother and his father are both full of wonder—his father knows birdcalls that bring the doves to him, and his mother recites poetry over dinner and heals injured sparrows and the neighborhood children.

In contrast to books that paint migrant workers as both materially and culturally impoverished (and sometimes even morally bereft), *Calling the Doves* never sees the people and lands of the author's childhood as "less than." There is a sense of both excitement and loss when, at the end of the book, the family decides to settle in one place so that Juanito can go to school. Even as Juanito envisions a new life for himself, he imagines it as part of his parents' legacy: "As the cities came into view, I knew one day I would follow my own road. I would let my voice fly the way my mother recited poems, the way my father called the doves."

Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas reads well in both Spanish and English, something I have come to think of as one of the hallmarks of Herrera's work. There are ways in which the languages interweave. In Spanish, there is the distinct mark of English in terms like "troca del Army" (Army truck) and "trailas" (trailers), which helps set the book in California. Spanish words, like carpa, plantillas, campesinos, and fiesta, also work their way into the English text. There are a few awkward moments, especially when it comes to the long translations of food names. For instance, "huevos de papas o huevos revueltos" becomes "huevos revueltos—scrambled eggs or fried eggs with potatoes." But ultimately, I appreciate that the Spanish and English versions seem interdependent. For anyone growing up speaking Spanish in California, the two languages are interwoven, and this is true in Herrera's writing as well."

For the link to the full review, visit: <https://socialjusticebooks.org/calling-the-doves-el-canto-de-las-palomas/>

Immigration and Migration in the United States

Be cognizant of the students in your classroom and aware of students' living circumstances prior to reading *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*. Would this text be triggering for any students who have family members who are migrant workers? *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas* and the questions and activities in this guide help expose children to the realities of migrant workers in the United States. However, you may have children in your classroom who are currently part of a migrant worker community. Be sure to lead these activities in a manner that is sensitive to the needs and emotions of your students and that demonstrates respect for migrant workers. For more ways to engage students, families, and the school community in a thoughtful, sensitive conversation, please check out The Open Book blog (<https://blog.leeandlow.com/2018/07/11/using-childrens-books-to-talk-about-family-separation-and-immigration/>)

Note about Language

Language plays an important role in understanding stories. *Calling the Doves/ El canto de las palomas* is a wonderful example of how language tells a story and how this story can be interpreted into multiple languages. In *Calling the Doves/ El canto de las palomas*, the reader is invited to read the story in Spanish and English. It is important to consider how language helps us fully understand the story. To honor the role of the Spanish language in understanding stories, it is recommended that teachers consider the following lesson plan from Edmentum (<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/la-familia#sect-introduction>). If the teacher knows how to speak Spanish and English, then it is encouraged to share the story in both languages. If the teacher does not know one of the languages, then it is encouraged to acknowledge the unknown language as an additional interpretation of the story.

Additional Resources

The historical background, issues, context, and data about migrant students is expansive and complex.

The Pulitzer Center works to increase teacher and students' global competency, critical thinking, and communication skills. Additionally there are multiple lesson plans and other resources to support exploration in the classroom.

(<https://pulitzercenter.org/builder/lesson/migrants-experience>)

Colorin Colorado is a bilingual site for educators and families of English language learners. They offer multimedia resources, classroom materials, and lesson plans for all ages about the topic of immigration in the United States.

(<https://www.colorincolorado.org/immigration/curriculum>)

Facing History and Ourselves uses lessons of history to challenge teachers and their students to stand up to bigotry and hate. Among their goals are the desire to create safe spaces for one another and act with empathy and kindness. They offer a free list of resources to assist in that process.

(<https://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/10-resources-for-teaching-immigration>)

Re-imagining Migration is an organization that provides resources and information about supporting immigrant youth (<https://reimaginingmigration.org/our-story/>). For more resources

on teaching about migration with children's books, see the blog post that's aligned with the Re-imagining Migration framework (<https://blog.leeandlow.com/2019/10/24/teaching-migration-through-childrens-books/>).

The Department of Education, Office of Migrant Education provides excellent leadership, technical assistance, and financial support to improve the educational opportunities and academic success of migrant children, youth, agricultural workers, fishers and their families.

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-migrant-education/>

Poverty

Every child deserves to live in a world where they can learn, thrive, and live up to their fullest potential. Unfortunately, about 1 in 7 children, nearly 10.5 million, are growing up in poverty. Poverty and income inequality leave children without reliable access to nutritious food, healthy homes, quality health care, and other resources to support their healthy development and later success.

The Children's Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind works to ensure every child has a healthy start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. The CDF champions policies and programs that lift children out of poverty and protect them from abuse and neglect. They offer information about different resources to assist in that mission. (<https://www.childrensdefense.org/about-cdf/>)

The National Center of Children in Poverty works to advance policies to achieve equity in economic opportunity, mobility, and security for families in the United States. They partner with advocates, policymakers, program administrators and service providers to design and implement policies and programs the better support low-income families and children.

(<https://www.nccp.org/about/>)

The National Education Association believes in opportunity for all students and in the power of public education to transform lives and create a more just and inclusive society. They have created a handbook that provides a list of resources for educators to use in expanding their capacity to teach students from poverty.

(<https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/NEAPovertyTraumaHandbook.pdf>)

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- Ask students to tell you what they know about California. Where is it on a map? How close is it to Mexico? What is the weather like? This will help students understand how the setting connects to the story.
- Ask students if they have ever been to a farm on a class trip or with their family. (i.e., apple farm, pumpkin patch, etc.) Allow time for them to share things they saw and things they did. As they listen to the story, have students reflect on farms in their area as compared to the farms featured in the story. What fruits and vegetables are grown at their local farms, as compared to what's shown in *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*?
- Ask students what they know about migrant or seasonal farmworkers. Where are they from? Where do they live? What kind of work do they do?
- Ask students what they know about immigration. Why do people immigrate to the United States? Discuss events in U.S. history and world history related to immigration and immigration today.

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- Talk about the title of the book and look at the cover. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about.
- Read the story summary. What will you be reading about? How does it match with the book cover and their initial thoughts after just reading the title?
- Take students on a book walk and draw attention to illustrations.
- What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- Read the author bio. Why do you think he chose to write this book? Would you consider him qualified to write this story?
- Point out that this book is bilingual. Ask students why a book might be written this way. Why does it matter what language an author uses? How does a language change how a story is told or who hears it?

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers: What is life like as a migrant farmworker in the United States?
- Poverty: How does poverty affect Juanito's life? How has it affected his parents' life and the life of the those in his community?
- Encourage students to consider why the author, Juan Felipe Herrera, would want to share this story with young people.

Use the link below to listen to Juan Felipe Herrera explain why he wrote the book in his own words (https://www.teachingbooks.net/book_reading.cgi?id=10488&a=1). Students can reflect on what they learned from the interview with author Juan Felipe Herrera and how that can aid them in their reading and interpretation of the story.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Content Specific

campesinos, carpa, canvas, tortilla, chassis, auctions, guisado, roost, eucalyptus, plantillas, fiesta, churros con canela y azucar

Academic

blared, perch, swerved

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Where was Juanito born?
2. What is a labor camp?
3. Where would the family sleep at night?
4. What would Juanito's mother make for breakfast?
5. Where would the family eat?
6. Describe the house Juanito's father built.
7. What did Juanito use as a bathtub?
8. Where did Juanito learn to sing?
9. How would Juanito's father call the birds?
10. Where are Juanito's parents from?
11. What was Juanito's mother's special skill?
12. How would Juanito's mother help the neighborhood children?
13. Why types of things would Juanito's father be given for his work?
14. Why did Juanito love the night?
15. What was a fiesta?
16. When did Juanito start school?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What does the title *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas* mean to you after reading the book? Why do you think the author chose this particular title?
2. Why do you think the author chooses to write the story in both English and Spanish?
3. In the text, the author, Juan Felipe Herrera, writes, "From the distance, my house was a short loaf of bread on wheels. Inside it was a warm cave of conversations." What do you think he

means by this? How does it reflect what Juanito's life was like?

4. How does the illustrator, Elly Simmons, use color to convey how Juanito feels?
5. What are some of the qualities you would use to describe Juanito's parents? What would you say was the most important thing they gave to Juanito?
6. Can you think of a time when you were sick and someone took care of you? How did they make you feel better?
7. How did the changing seasons affect the work? How did it affect how they were paid?
8. What do you think home means to Juanito?
9. What was something Juanito learned as a child that helped him as an adult?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Have you ever moved homes more than once? What was it like? What did you like about moving? What didn't you like? What did it feel like to enter a new school, especially if it was during the middle of the school year?
2. How has this book changed how you think about immigration? How did his parents' decision to come to the United States change Juanito's life?
3. What connections did you make between this book and what you have seen in the world, such as online, on television, or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?
4. Did you think of any other books while you read *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*? Why did you make those connections?
5. What do you think Juan Felipe Herrera's message is to the reader? Think about all the possible motivations behind Juan Felipe Herrera's intentions to write the book. What do you think he wanted to tell his readers?

ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.

- Have students work in pairs to tell what they learned about one of the poems. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
- 4. Have students give a short talk about what family and community mean to them.
- 5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students, and several words are printed in bold. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Which illustration in *Calling the Doves* best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it is. How does it portray that emotion?
2. Choose an emotion that interests you: happiness, sadness, fear, anxiety, faith, hope, perseverance and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *Calling the Doves*.
3. Community and family are themes in the book. Share at least one way you actively support your community or family at school or at home.
4. When Juanito turns eight, his mother decides it is time for him to go to school. Juanito has never been to school. This is a huge change for Juanito. Change can be scary. In life when we are faced with life changes it sometimes helps to create a tool to aid in visualizing what your life will be like to make the change less scary. Using poster board, glue, scissors, paper, pencil, and old magazines, create a vision board to help you begin to navigate the change. Gather the materials and take 3-5 minutes to close your eyes and imagine what your life will be like after the change. Open your eyes and jot down what you say on the paper. Look through the magazines and cut out the images and words that attract you. Arrange your images on the poster board and glue them into place. Hang your vision board somewhere you will see it daily.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Along with *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*, read Juan Felipe Herrera's other memoir, *The Upside Down Boy/El niño de cabeza*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-upside-down-boy-el-nino-de-cabeza>). Using a Venn diagram, compare Juanito's life in school to his life as a migrant worker. What were some of the challenges he faced? How was his life the same? How was it different? How did he overcome obstacles that were presented in the story? Write an essay comparing the two books, and what students learned from each text.
- **Have students read and compare the experience of another migrant child in the book, *Amelia's Road*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/amelia-s-road>). Using a Venn diagram encourage students to compare and contrast each child's experience as a migrant worker. How are their experiences similar? How are they different? Have students write a paragraph about what they notice in the books that feels familiar to them and what feels different.
- **Conduct an author study of Juan Felipe Hererra and his children's books.** More ideas are available from The Open Book blog. (<https://blog.leeandlow.com/2015/06/15/using-picture-books-to-teach-and-discuss-poet-laureate-juan-felipe-herrera-with-students/>)
- **Have students come up with a list of questions to ask author Juan Felipe Herrera.** What do students want to know about the process behind writing a children's book? How did the author come up with the idea to write *Calling the Doves*. What about his other books? Learn more about his work and life from the Poetry Foundation (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/juan-felipe-herrera>) and the Library of Congress (<https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poets-laureate/item/n79033227/juan-felipe-herrera/>).
- **There are many similes and metaphors in *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*.** Figurative language creates comparisons by linking the senses and the concrete to abstract ideas. Similes and metaphors are figures of speech in which two different things are compared. Similes compare things using the words "like" or "as". Metaphors compares two things that are not alike and replaces the word with another word. Some examples of simile include: "She sleeps like a baby all night" or "His eyes were as blue as the ocean." Examples of metaphor include: "Her voice was music to my ears." Fold a sheet of paper in half and label

one side similes and the other metaphors. With a partner go through the story and find a and write the figure of speech on the correct side. Draw a picture of the things being compared for each example.

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **To familiarize students with significant as well as lesser-known figures from migrant culture, have them research the lives of innovative political, scientific, or artistic leaders who were once migrants themselves.** Have students create a poster highlighting the role model of their choice. Students may choose figures like Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, Tomas Rivera, Paul Rodriguez, Luis Valdez, or Sauveur Pierre, or distinguished individuals from local migrant communities.
- **Have students find and print a photograph of their chosen figure from the previous activity and place it in the middle of their poster and lightly trace around it.** Set the photo aside. Using a ruler, have students draw lines from the traced outline to the edge of the paper creating wedge-shapes around the paper. Next, using a black sharpie, write a fact about the chosen figure in each section. Include information about their life, facts, and major accomplishments. Trace over the section lines with crayons and use watercolors to color in each section. When paint is dry, glue the photo of your figure in the middle of the poster.
- **Conduct a unit on migrant workers and how their work is incredibly impactful to society.** The Library of Congress has resources dedicated to the Migrant experience throughout American history (<https://www.loc.gov/collections/todd-and-sonkin-migrant-workers-from-1940-to-1941/articles-and-essays/the-migrant-experience/>). Additionally, consult Learning for Justice's "More Than Migrants" for project ideas on how to teach about the importance of migrant workers in the classroom (<https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/more-than-migrants>). Consult the Background section of this guide for additional organizations and resources. Encourage students to find more information about how migrant workers' contribute to the economy, as well as advocating for more rights, pay, and other benefits that migrant workers need.
- **Have students find out if the school has any special programs for new students enter the school after the school year has already started.** If not, have students develop a program that might help new students adjust to their new school. Students can follow the steps provided here: 1) Identify the problem. 2) Research the causes. 3) Brainstorm possible solutions. 4) Identify resources and people that can help. 5) Conduct the project. 6) Reflect on what was learned during the project.
- **The bean game, developed at Utah State University, helps students understand the costs associated with covering our basic needs and the types of decisions that sometimes need to be made when there is not enough money to cover those**

needs. Have students complete the activity and reflect on what they learned about how much money is needed for basic needs in this country (https://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/files/page/files/bean_game.pdf).

Science/STEM

(1-ESS1-1 Earth's Place in the Universe: Use observations of the sun, moon, and stars to describe patterns that can be predicted.) (2-LS4-1 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity: Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.)

- **Conduct a study on constellations.** Juanito often slept under the night sky and watched the stars sparkle through the tiny holes of the canvas that he and his family slept under. Stars are big balls of hot gases in the night sky that appear to twinkle at night. The hot gases give off light. Encourage students to research constellations. Students should understand that certain groups of stars form pictures and that there is a story behind each picture (<https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/primary-resource/16215-2/>).
- **After researching different constellations choose 1-2 to draw on the bottom of a paper cup.** Using a push pin, poke holes in the cup where the stars should be. Cut off the lights and using a flashlight, project the different constellations onto the wall.
- **Have students research habitats. Like humans, all animals and plants need a place to live.** In *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*, Juanito and his parents live in the mountains and valleys of California. There are other animals and plants that call that area home. Encourage students to research one of the animals mentioned in *Calling the Dove/El canto de las palomas* (i.e. doves, grey wolves, rabbits, turkeys, etc.) and explore its habitat. Explain how California provides food, water, and shelter for the animal chosen. Using a shoe box and classroom materials like clay, construction paper, glue, scissors, paint, markers, sticks, leaves, grass, tissue paper, cotton balls, popsicle sticks, and figurines, to create a model habitat for the animal chosen. Have students present their dioramas to the class.

Art/Media

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Encourage students to search the internet for examples of traditional Mexican amate art.** Compare the images that come up to the illustrations in *Calling the Doves/El canto de las palomas*. How are the examples similar to the illustrations in the story? Pay particular attention to the vibrant use colors, very decorative, the different use of perspective, a lot happening in the pictures (i.e. many aspects of an event instead of just one point from the event) (<https://www.internationalfolkart.org/learn/lesson-plans/mexican-amate-paintings.html>).
- **Gather the materials below and create a traditional Mexican amate picture:**
 - Brown paper bags, cut into large rectangles
 - Black markers (sharpies are great)

- Bright Tempura Paint (fluorescent colors work well)
- Examples of real amate paintings. If you do not have any, google amate paintings.
- **Have the children crumple and smooth out the brown paper bag several times to create a "softer" appearance.** Using the sharpies have students draw flowers, animals, and birds on their brown paper. Next, they can paint their drawings using the bright paint using white to accent their creations. Typically, amate paintings do not have background colors and are usually painted within the thick black lines.

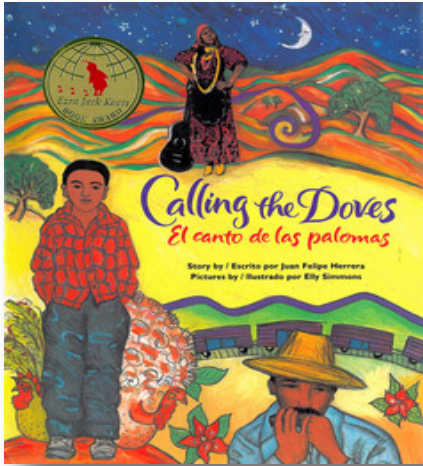
School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Provide students other titles of books about immigration experience. (i.e., *Amelia's Road*, *Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*, *Coming to America*, etc.)** What themes do these books have in common? What topics do the books share? How are the characters similar? How are they different?
 - **Many of Juanito's memories are of the delicious foods his family ate during their times as migrant workers. Sweet tortillas were a special treat.** Follow the recipe below to make these tasty treats at home.
 - 1 package Flour tortillas
 - ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
 - 1 tsp Cinnamon
 - ¼ cup granulated Sugar
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
 2. Brush your tortillas with melted butter.
 3. Combine the cinnamon and sugar in a small bowl. Sprinkle over tortillas.
 4. Cut the tortillas into wedges (like a pizza) and put triangles in a single layer on a large baking sheet. Use a pizza cutter to make this step super quick and easy.
 5. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, until chips are crispy and golden brown/



Ordering Information

General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/calling-the-doves-el-canto-de-las-palomas

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Juane Felipe Herrera is an American poet, author, and activist of Mexican descent who became the first poet laureate of the United States. Calling the Doves is Herrera's account of his nomadic childhood among migrant farmworkers. He lives with his family in Fresno, California.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Elly Simmons is an internationally-exhibited painter and illustrator from San Francisco. In addition to Calling the Doves, she has illustrated books with Children's Book Press and has been commissioned for numerous public projects. She lives with her family in Lagunitas, California.

REVIEWS

"The combination of a beautiful text and radiant paintings makes Calling the Doves an excellent bilingual picture book." –*School Library Journal*

"A welcome alternative to the usually bleak portrayal of the migrant farmworker experience, this is an inspirational self-portrait of a loving Latino family. A poetic picture-book memoir that will add beauty to any literature. . . collection." –*Booklist*

"Color pencil and acrylic paintings express the warmth and security felt by a child growing up in a loving household." –*CCBC Choices*

ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

LEE & LOW BOOKS is the largest children's book publisher specializing in diversity and multiculturalism. Our motto, "about everyone, for everyone," is as urgent today as it was when we started in 1991. It is the company's goal to meet the need for stories that children of color can identify with and that all children can enjoy. The right book can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, prompt discussion about race and ethnicity, and inspire children to imagine not only a world that includes them, but also a world where they are the heroes of their own stories. Discover more at leeandlow.com.