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We Are Family

CONNECTIONS

Literature Connection—*Going Home* by Eve Bunting

Going Home is a story of a family returning to Mexico to visit relatives. The wonderful language and beautiful illustrations in this book can be shared with students doing this reader's theater.

Content Connection—Social Studies, Ancestry

Read *We Are Family* while studying families. A study of ancestors, countries around the world, or different cultures could be incorporated into this lesson.

OBJECTIVE

Students will learn about setting, main characters, main events, sequence, and problems in stories.

VOCABULARY

1. Introduce the key vocabulary words from the script. Write each word on the board. Read each word aloud.
2. Describe the meaning of each word and point out its use in the script. Show pictures that represent the meaning of each word if you have them.
3. Help students create meaningful sample sentences with the vocabulary words. Provide a sentence starter for students to use for the first word. Write this sentence starter on the board and read it aloud. Then have students work in pairs to complete the sentence. Repeat this activity for the other vocabulary words.
 - **abuela**—the Spanish word for *grandmother*
 - **abuelo**—the Spanish word for *grandfather*
 - **adiós**—the Spanish word for *goodbye*
 - **carne asada**—a meat dish that comes from Mexico
 - **cousins**—children of a parent's brother or sister
 - **engines**—parts of the plane that keep it flying
 - **luggage**—suitcases and other items packed with clothes for a vacation

BEFORE THE READER'S THEATER

1. Read the title of the script. Explain that this is a story about one family's trip to visit relatives in Mexico. Ask students to think of a family trip that they have taken to visit relatives. Let students share their experiences in pairs.
2. Talk with students about the different elements of a story. Review each, if necessary. Write the following elements on the board: *setting*, *main characters*, *events*, *sequence*, and *problems*. If necessary, use another story as an example and discuss each story element in more detail.

We Are Family *(cont.)*

BEFORE THE READER'S THEATER *(cont.)*

3. Show students the Parts of a Story Map graphic organizer (page 59 or storymap.pdf). Explain that they will be looking for these story elements as they read the script and will complete the map when they are finished reading.
4. Read the script aloud, modeling appropriate reading strategies while you read. To help build fluency and comprehension, it is important for students to hear the script read aloud before practicing on their own.

DURING THE READER'S THEATER

1. Divide the class into groups of five to read and practice the script.
2. Have students work as a group to choose and highlight their parts in the script (Narrator, Diego, Dad, Mom, or Abuela).
3. Give students a few minutes to practice reading with expression in their voices. Additionally, students may decide on a few props or materials to use during their reading. They need to use materials that can be easily acquired or assembled in the classroom.
4. After practicing, each group performs the reader's theater for the class. They may also perform for another class.

AFTER THE READER'S THEATER

1. Give each student a copy of the Parts of a Story Map graphic organizer. Let them choose to work independently or with a partner. Discuss the parts of the story before asking students to complete the story map.
2. Each student should complete the map, representing the events of the story with either pictures or words. Remind students that the events must be shown in the correct sequence. Have students share their completed work in small groups or as a class.

RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Group Discussion Questions

- Why is it important for Abuela to speak both Spanish and English?
- Does Diego's family remind you of your own? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the author has Diego say "Adiós" at the end of the story?

Written Response Question

- Why might it be important for Diego to continue to practice his Spanish?

Name _____ Date _____

Parts of a Story Map

Setting

Characters

Event #1

Event #2

Event #3

We Are Family

BY CHRISTINE DUGAN

A reader's theater with five parts



Narrator: The airplane engines roar. The Chavez family is excited about this trip. They are going to Mexico to visit their relatives.

Diego: Mom, how long will it take to get to Mexico?

Mom: A few hours, Diego. We will be there by tonight.

Diego: What will Abuela make us for dinner?

Mom: I do not know. Let's wait and see.

Narrator: Diego had never been to Mexico. His family had moved to America before he was born.

Diego: Dad, are you excited to go home to Mexico?

Mom: Yes. I want you and your sister to see Abuela and Abuelo.

Diego: I have never been to Mexico. And my Spanish is not very good. What if I can not even talk to them?

Dad: Well, Abuela speaks some English. And maybe you can learn to speak Spanish better on our visit.

We Are Family *(cont.)*

Diego: All of my friends speak English.

Dad: But Spanish is a part of who we are.

Narrator: The plane lands. Diego and his sister, Gabriela, wait to get off the plane. Soon, they are picking up their luggage.

All: Abuela!

Abuela: Diego! You are such a big boy. Come give Abuela a hug.

Narrator: Diego was shy. But he hugged his grandmother. He knew she missed him a lot.

Abuela: Are you hungry?

Mom: Yes, we are!

Abuela: Well, let's go home and have dinner. We have some people waiting to see you there.

Narrator: They arrive at Abuela's house. Many aunts, uncles, and cousins are waiting for them. Diego's grandfather is there. Everyone calls him Abuelo.

Abuela: My little Diego. What would you like to eat?

We Are Family (cont.)

Diego: Do you have pizza?

Abuela: No pizza. I have tortillas and frijoles.

Diego: Frijoles? What is that, Abuela?

Abuela: Beans.

Diego: Oh, that is right. I forgot what the word meant.

Abuela: I know. It is easy to forget a language if you do not use it every day.

Diego: But you know so many English words.

Abuela: That is because I use it every day at work. I also speak English when I call your mom. I like to know the languages that everyone in my family speaks.

Narrator: Diego knew some Spanish. But he did not know enough. He could not even talk to Abuelo.

Diego: My Spanish should be better.

Abuela: Oh, do not worry. You are doing a good job. Just practice while you are here. You will get better quickly.

We Are Family *(cont.)*

Narrator: Diego and his family stayed in Mexico for three weeks. They did many things. Diego spent a lot of time with Abuelo.

Mom: It seems like you and Abuelo get along well.

Diego: He is helping me with my Spanish.

Mom: I thought you did not want to use your Spanish.

Diego: Abuela says it is important to speak the languages that family members speak. I want to speak Spanish more at home.

Mom: Well, I am glad you feel that way.

Diego: Mom, will you make carne asada when we go home?

Dad: What? I thought you liked pizza.

Diego: I do, but I like other things, too. I like the foods Abuela cooks for me.

Mom: Maybe Abuela could teach you how to make carne asada.

Diego: Great idea. I will go ask her. Adiós!

All: Adiós!