

## **Juvenile Fiction: Hispanic Heritage Month Recommendations**

### **Authors of Note:**

Pam Munoz Ryan	Claribel Ortega	Meg Medina
Alexandra Diaz	Celia Perez	Juana Medina
Aida Salazar	David Bowles	Jennifer Cervantes

### **Realistic Fiction**

#### ***The Dream Weaver* Alegre, Reina Luz (Gr 3-5)**

Twelve-year-old Latinx Zoey navigates the tricky waters of friendship and family while searching for a way to save her grandfather's bowling alley from closing.

#### ***Shine on, Luz Véliz!* Balcárcel, Rebecca (Gr 3-6)**

When an injury keeps her from playing soccer, Luz needs to figure out who she is off the field. Her dad is distant, and a life-altering revelation rocks her Guatemalan family when a big secret is revealed. How much change can one sixth grader take? As Luz feels her world falling apart, she discovers robotics class, which helps her thrive in a way she's never known before.

#### ***They Call Me Güero: A Border Kid's Poems* Bowles, David O. (Gr 5-8)**

Twelve-year-old Güero, a red-headed, freckled Mexican American border kid, discovers the joy of writing poetry, thanks to his seventh grade English teacher. Novel in verse.

#### ***Lola Levine is Not Mean (Lola Levine series: book 1)* Brown, Monica (Gr 1-5)**

Second-grader Lola has a wonderful family, a great teacher, and the best friend ever, Josh. They all help her feel better after she is teased and forbidden to play team sports at recess for having accidentally hurt classmate Juan during a soccer game.

## **Realistic Fiction recommendations continued**

### ***Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish* Cartaya, Pablo (Gr 4-7)**

After a fight at school, Marcus's mother takes him and his younger brother, who has Down syndrome, to Puerto Rico to visit relatives they do not remember or have never met, and while there Marcus starts searching for his father, who left their family ten years ago and is somewhere on the island.

### ***Allie, First at Last* Cervantes, Angela (Gr 4-6)**

Fifth-grader Allie Velasco has never finished first in anything, and lately things have been going badly, but now she is determined to win the Trailblazer contest with a photographic presentation about her great grandfather, the first Congressional Medal of Honor winner from their town.

### ***Efren Divided* Cisneros, Ernesto (Gr 4-6)**

While his father works two jobs, seventh-grader Efrâen Nava must take care of his twin siblings, kindergartners Max and Mia, after their mother is deported to Mexico.

### ***The Only Road* (series: book 1) Diaz, Alexandra (Gr 4-6)**

Twelve-year-old Jaime makes the treacherous journey from his home in Guatemala to his older brother in New Mexico after his cousin is murdered by a drug cartel.

### ***Stella Diaz Has Something to Say* (Stella Diaz series: book 1) Dominguez, Angela (Gr 3-5)**

Stella loves spending time with her mom, her brother, and her best friend Jenny. Trouble is, Jenny is in another class this year, and Stella feels very lonely. When a new boy arrives in Stella's class, she really wants to be his friend, but sometimes Stella accidentally speaks Spanish instead of English and pronounces words wrong, which makes her turn roja...

### **Realistic Fiction recommendations continued**

#### ***Sarai and the Meaning of Awesome (Sarai series: book 1) González,, Sarai (Gr 2-4)***

Fourth grader Saraí Gonzalez can do anything. She can bake, dance, and run her own cupcake business. But when Saraí's grandparents are forced to move, even Saraí's not sure what to do. So she hatches a super-awesome plan to buy back the house. Will Saraí find a way to save the day?

#### ***Knight of the Cape (Definitely Dominguita series: book 1) Jennings, Terry Catusus (Gr 2-4)***

All Dominguita wants to do is read. Especially the books in Spanish that Abuela gave to her just before she moved away, classics her abuela brought with her all the way from Cuba when she was a young girl. One of her favorites, *Don Quixote*, tells of a brave knight errant who tries to do good deeds. Dominguita decides that she, too, will become a knight. And when the class bully tells Dominguita that girls can't be knights, Dom is determined to prove him wrong.

#### ***Juana & Lucas (Juana & Lucas series: book 1) Medina, Juana (Gr 2-4)***

A spunky young girl from Colombia loves playing with her canine best friend and resists boring school activities, especially learning English, until her family tells her that a special trip is planned to an English-speaking place.

#### ***Merci Suárez Changes Gears (Merci Suarez series: book 1) Medina, Meg (Gr 4-7)***

Sixth grader Merci has never been like the other kids at her private school, because she and her brother are scholarship students. When Edna Santos sets her sights on the new boy who happens to be Merci's school-assigned Sunshine Buddy, Merci becomes the target of Edna's jealousy. At home, Merci's grandfather Lolo, has been acting strangely lately. What's a girl to do?

### **Realistic Fiction recommendations continued**

#### ***Join the Club, Maggie Diaz* Moreno, Nina (Gr 3-6)**

Maggie is excited to start 7th grade with her best friends and finally get a cellphone, but after school her friends are wrapped up in their various clubs. So Maggie decides that she will find a club to join as well--but trying out ALL the different clubs while still juggling school work is exhausting and confusing--and soon it seems like everybody is mad at her, and the cellphone of her dreams is getting further and further away.

#### ***Silver Meadows Summer* Otheguy, Emma (Gr 4-6)**

Eleven-year-old Carolina moves with her family from Puerto Rico to upstate New York, where she attends Silver Meadows camp with her cousin, finds an abandoned cottage, and reclaims parts of the life she left in Puerto Rico.

#### ***First Rule of Punk* Pérez, Celia (Gr 3-6)**

Twelve-year-old María Luisa O'Neill-Morales (who really prefers to be called Malú) reluctantly moves with her Mexican-American mother to Chicago and starts seventh grade with a bang--violating the dress code with her punk rock aesthetic and spurning the middle school's most popular girl in favor of starting a band with a group of like-minded weirdos.

#### ***Stef Soto, Taco Queen* Torres, Jennifer (Gr 3-5)**

Mexican-American Stef Soto is hoping to break free from her overprotective parents and embarrassing reputation from her family's taco truck business, but she soon learns that family, friendship, and the taco truck are important and wonderful parts of her life.

## **Fantasy/Science Fiction/Horror**

### ***Charlie Hernández and the League of Shadows* (series: book 1) Calejo, Ryan (Gr 4-8)**

Charlie Hernández loves his abuela's stories, drawn from Latino and Hispanic folklore. But shortly after his parents disappear, he grows horns and feathers and finds himself at the heart of a battle to save the world. Turns out the stories are real...

### ***The Storm Runner* (series: book 1) Cervantes, Jennifer (Gr 5-8)**

To prevent the Mayan gods from destroying the world, thirteen-year-old Zane must unravel an ancient prophecy, stop an evil god, and discover how his physical disability connects him to his father and his ancestry.

### ***The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez* Cuevas, Adrianna (Gr 4-7)**

When Nestor Lopez moves to New Haven, Tex., to live with his abuela while his father is deployed to Afghanistan, he doesn't expect to be there for long. His plan is to avoid making friends and attachments, and certainly not to let anyone know that he can speak with animals. Despite this, he soon winds up joining the school trivia club and his gift rapidly sucks him into a mystery involving missing animals and the threat of a terrifying shape-shifting tula vieja--a witch.

### ***The Keeper* McCall, Guadalupe Garcia (Gr 4-6)**

James always knew moving from Texas to Oregon was going to be horrible. But no sooner have he and his family arrived in their new home than he starts getting mysterious letters from someone called the Keeper. Someone who claims to be watching him. Someone who is looking for "young blood." James and his sister, Ava, are obviously in danger. But the problem with having a history of playing practical jokes is that no one believes James--not even his parents.

## **Fantasy/Science Fiction/Horror recommendations continued**

### ***Paola Santiago and the River of Tears* (series: book 1) Mejia, Tehlor Kay (Gr 5-8)**

In Silver Springs, Arizona, her mother's stories of the monstrous La Llorona are thrilling but unbelievable to science-loving Paola until she and her best friends Dante and Emma take a walk through a cactus field near the Gila River...and Emma disappears.

### ***A Dash of Trouble* (Love Sugar Magic series: book 1) Meriano, Anna (Gr 3-6)**

Amor y Azúcar Panadería is bustling on the eve of Dia de los Muertos, and all Leonora Logroño wants to do is help. But Leo is repeatedly told she is too young to participate in the family business. When she discovers that Mama, Tia, and her sisters are brujas, Leo steals a book of magical recipes and begins experimenting...

### ***Ghost Squad* Ortega, Claribel (Gr 4-6)**

Shortly before Halloween, Lucely and her best friend, Syd, cast a spell that accidentally awakens malicious spirits, wreaking havoc throughout St. Augustine. Together, they must join forces with Syd's witch grandmother, Babette, and her tubby tabby, Chunk, to fight the haunting head-on and reverse the curse to save the town and Lucely's firefly spirits before it's too late.

### ***Witchlings* Ortega, Claribel (Gr 4-7)**

Seven Salazar is a Witchling who is excited to be placed in a coven and come into her full powers during the approaching Black Moon Ceremony; so it's a devastating shock when the big day comes and Seven is instead made a "Spare" with two other girls. Determined to cast off this undesirable fate, the three girls undertake an impossible task so that they might become fully fledged witches in a coven of their own making.

## **Fantasy/Science Fiction/Horror recommendations continued**

### ***Pilar Ramirez and the Escape from Zafa* Randall, Julian (Gr 3-7)**

While doing research for her documentary about her cousin Natasha--who disappeared in the Dominican Republic during the Trujillato--twelve-year-old Pilar Violeta Ramirez is transported to Zafa, an island where Dominican myths and legends come to life and where her cousin is being held captive in a sinister magical prison. Pilar must defeat the Dominican bogeyman if she hopes to free Natasha and return home to Chicago.

### ***Cece Rios and the Desert of Souls* (series: book 1) Rivera, Kaela (Gr 5-7)**

Living in Tierra del Sol is dangerous, especially in the criatura months, when powerful spirits roam the desert and threaten humankind. But Cecelia Rios has always believed there was more to the criaturas. But only brujas--humans who capture and control criaturas--consort with the spirits, and brujaeria is a terrible crime. When her older sister is kidnapped by a powerful dark criatura, Cece is determined to bring Juana back --whatever it takes.

### ***Mañanaland* Ryan, Pam Muñoz (Gr 3-6)**

Twelve-year-old Max, who loves the legend Buelo tells him about a mythical gatekeeper who can guide brave travelers on a journey into tomorrow, sets out on a dangerous quest to discover if he is true of heart and what the future holds, armed with a treasured compass, a mysterious stone rubbing, and Buelo's legend as his only guides.

### ***Lotería Valenti*, Karla Arenas (Gr 3-6)**

The turn of a card could change your destiny in this captivating middle grade adventure based on the Lotería card game and perfect for fans of *Coco*. While searching for her missing cousin, a young girl is transported to a mythical kingdom, becoming entangled in a perilous game of chance...

## **Historical Fiction**

*Maribel versus the Volcano: A Mount St. Helens Survival Story (Girls Survive series)*

**Gómez, Sarah Hannah (Gr 3-5)**

Twelve-year-old Maribel daydreams at school, but when she defies evacuation orders to return home just as Mount St. Helens erupts in 1980, she must focus in order to survive.

*The Wind Called My Name* Sanchez, Mary Louise (Gr 4-6)

When ten-year-old Margarita Sandoval's family moves to Wyoming during the Great Depression, she faces racism, homesickness, and the possibility that her grandmother's land in New Mexico may be lost.

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