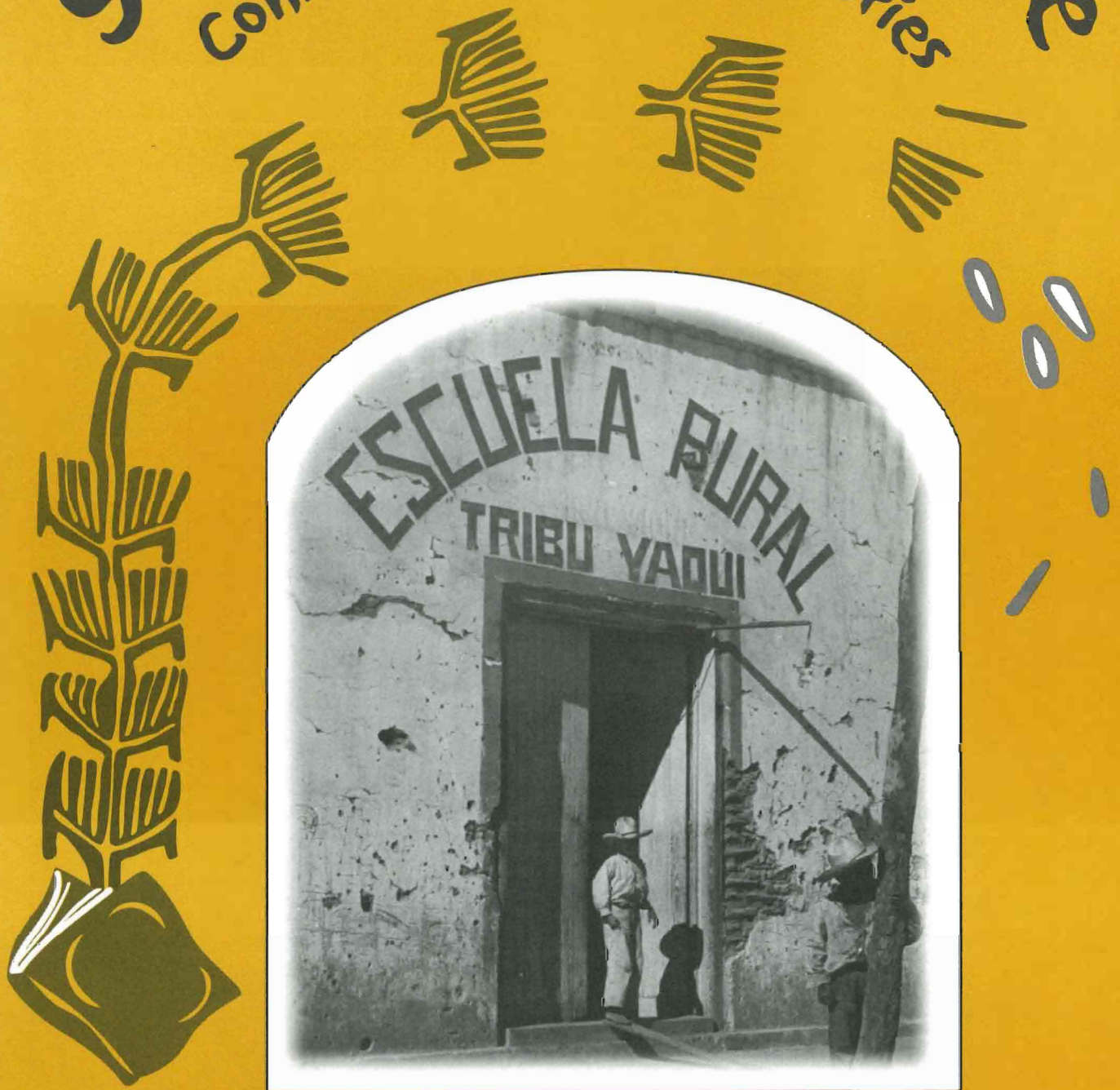


Seeds of Knowledge

Connections Through Stories



Ethnobotany, Storytelling, and Oral History
Lawrence Intermediate School, 2002

This Publication supported by
Pima and Santa Cruz
School to Work

Seeds of Knowledge

Connections Through Stories



Ted Ramirez sings
corridos, Lawrence
Family Night, 2002

Table of Contents

Introductions

Ties That Bind ii

How it All Began iii

Acknowledgements. iv

Storytelling Revisited. 1

La Llorona. 2

Coyote. 13

Hitevi. 28

Graphic Organizers 44

Ethnobotany in Action. 46

Oral History: Ethnobotany 54

Oral History: Family and Community Culture 63

Introductions

The Ties That Bind

Seeds of Knowledge is the result of a collaborative effort between the Educational Enrichment Foundation, the Rio Nuevo School Partnership, the Arizona Humanities Council, First Page Literacy, Pima County Community College Pascua Yaqui Connection, and creative teachers at Lawrence Intermediate School. This year-long project incorporated teacher workshops, class field trips, an oral history family night, classroom units on folklore and environmental studies, student art and writing activities, as well as this culminating publication. The publishing of *Seeds of Knowledge* is due in no small part to the tireless efforts of Curriculum Resource Teacher Gopa Goswami, who managed this complex project on-site at Lawrence Intermediate School.

Seeds of Knowledge is designed to be a resource and model for a follow-up book to be authored by Lawrence students. Along with the documentation of the learning process, the project goal is to preserve and pass down family histories as well as cultural traditions.

The Lawrence community is rich in cultural traditions, and research has demonstrated important benefits for students who maintain their cultural identification. Sonia Nieto reports in *Culture and Learning* that researcher Donna Deyhle (1992) found that Diné (Navajo) students who came from the most traditional homes, spoke their native language, and participated in traditional religious and social activities were among the most academically successful students in school.

Similar findings have been reported for students from other cultural backgrounds as well. One study found that the more Asian students adapted their behavior to fit in with the mainstream U.S. culture, the more their emotional adjustment suffered (National Coalition, 1988). Another study of Southeast Asian students found a significant connection between grades and culture: that is, higher grade point averages correlated with the maintenance of traditional values, ethnic pride, and close social and cultural ties with members of the same ethnic group (Rumbault & Ima, 1987). Likewise, based on her extensive research with adolescent students of diverse ethnic backgrounds, Jean Phinney (1993) determined that adolescents who value their ethnicity are more likely to be better adjusted than those who do not.

Could it be that close ties to family, culture, and tradition would benefit all our children?

Beth DeWitt
Rio Nuevo School Partnership Coordinator

How it All Began!

Two classroom teachers, our school librarian and I got together during our winter break to plan a two year collaboration where we would explore the possibility of making connections between school and student home and community cultures through curriculum. Later, two more teachers joined the collaboration. Ethnobotany and storytelling were the topics that teachers wanted to study with their students. We also realized that these topics were ideal for creating connections between the rich cultural knowledge of our home communities and the curricular pursuits at school. Based on our plans to create culturally responsive curriculum, an Educational Enrichment Foundation grant was received to buy books, to make community connections and to publish a book on our exploration of the Southwestern tradition of storytelling and ethnobotany.

We began by collaboratively planning an inquiry of relationships that exist between plants, animals and the environment in the Sonoran desert. We then studied the relationship that native and local cultures have with plants and animals of the desert in which they have lived for centuries. We also embarked on a study of how some of these relationships between plants, animals and the natural world are depicted in the tradition of storytelling in the southwest. A variety of folk stories such as Coyote stories, La Llorona stories, weaving stories, Yoeme, and Tohono O'odham stories were explored with students. Based on student interest, each teacher then embarked on an in depth study of a particular genre of traditional stories.

Meanwhile, we prepared to make much needed connections with sources of community knowledge and culture in order to learn about the practice of ethnobotany and storytelling in our communities. We collaborated with Beth DeWitt, the coordinator of the Rio Nuevo Project of the Arizona State Museum to become more informed about engaging in oral history interviews to learn more about previously undocumented local cultural history. The collaboration between the ethnobotany and storytelling inquiry, the literacy class teachers, Jane Nichols, literacy resource teacher, Stella Soto, community representative, Community experts, Leza Carter, outdoor learning teacher, John Torrejon, technology teacher, Arizona State Museum, Pima Community College Pascua Yaqui Connection and the generous support of First Page Literacy Fund culminated in an extremely successful family oral history night which attracted one hundred and fifty community members. Leza Carter and Cassie Gribble's class planted a medicinal garden based on their research on the topic and what they had learned about local practice from the family oral history night. This publication represents the initial *seeds of knowledge* that we have planted as part of a two-year collaborative inquiry into a culturally responsive curriculum where we hope to create genuine connections between community and school culture and knowledge.

Kay Thill, a Title I math resource teacher, Leza Carter, Chad King, U of A CATTS Fellow, Adam Lopez, artist from Tucson Pima Arts Council and Elda Lopez, librarian contributed valuable learning experiences to the collaborative inquiry. Beth DeWitt coordinated some student enrichment opportunities and contributed classroom materials.

Acknowledgements

Together we are planting the seeds of unity, nurturing excellence, and developing responsibility to harvest a better future.

From the Lawrence Mission Statement

Seeds of Knowledge was sponsored in part by an Educational Enrichment Foundation Library Power Grant, which is designed to expand and enrich student learning in the Tucson Unified School district. This family literacy collaboration was generously supported by a First Page Literacy Grant which supports outstanding literacy programs in TUSD.

This publication was also sponsored by the Arizona State Museum's Rio Nuevo School Partnership, which supports student exploration of local history and cultural heritage. The Partnership is an educational component of the City of Tucson's Rio Nuevo project, which is searching for the city's historical roots as it plans for the future.

This project was supported by a generous grant from the Arizona Humanities Council.

Seeds of Knowledge could not have become a reality without the contributions of many people. A special thanks to Lawrence Principal, Dr. Anna Rivera, for her support and guidance. Our thanks to the oral history interviewees who gave so generously of their time and wisdom during Family Night, and to Lawrence staff who made the evening such a success. The editors would like to express their appreciation to the creative Lawrence teachers whose student work appears in this project, and to book designer and art teacher Kathleen Koopman for the layout and design of this publication. We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals who gave so generously of their time and expertise:

Dr. Anna Rivera, Principal
Cassie Gribble, Third Grade Teacher
Marlene Grijalva, Third Grade Teacher
Herminia Valenzuela, Third Grade Teacher
Ramona Juarez, Third Grade Teacher
Felipe Molina, Bilingual Fifth Grade Teacher
Victoria Hawk, Fifth Grade Teacher
Barbara Njock, Fifth Grade Teacher
Lawrence Literacy Class Teachers
Kay Thill, Title I Math Resource Teacher
Leza Carter, Pascua Yaqui Outdoor Educator
Pascua Yaqui Edge Students
Mary Jane Buenamea, Native American Tutor
Narcisco Bule, Yoeme Language Instructor
Maria Cupis, Yoeme Language Instructor
Elda Lopez, Librarian

John Torrejon, Technology Resource Teacher
Jane Nichols, Literacy Resource Teacher
Lucy Weeks, Speech Pathologist
Stella Soto, Community Representative
Rene Carpio, Special Education Teacher
Esperanza Molina, Counselor
Ted Ramirez, El Cantador
Dr. David Betts, professor, Dept. of LRC., U of A
Elaine Mariolle, PCC Pascua Yaqui Connection
Kathleen Koopman, Book Design and Production
Hal Jackson, PCC Media Production
Adam Lopez, artist, Tucson Pima Arts Council
Chad King, U of A CATTS Fellow
Lawrence Parent Volunteers
Community Experts
And those not mentioned but not forgotten



Drawing by Alejandra Esquivias

Storytelling Revisited

La Llorona, The Weeping Woman

Coyote, The Trickster

Hitevi, The Healer

The following is an interview which documents the inquiry process behind the “La Llorona” writing project. In an interview with Ms. Goswami, Ms. Gribble, a third grade teacher, shares how her students came to write their own versions of the La Llorona stories and what the process entailed.

La Llorona

The story of La Llorona (The Weeping Woman) is one of the most widely told Hispanic legends in the American Southwest. In this tale of love and betrayal, La Llorona is abandoned by her lover and drowns their children and her self in a fit of rage. Refused entry into heaven without her children, La Llorona is doomed forever to wander the earth's waterways, wailing as she searches for her offspring. Even in Tucson, La Llorona has for many years helped parents gather up their children, who dread an encounter along the Santa Cruz or the acequias with her terrifying ghost after dark.

- Ms. Gribble** As we studied stories from various native traditions, we looked at the reasons why people within certain cultures told the stories—the social purpose these stories served, rather than the morals of the stories. For example, the La Llorona stories were told to control children's behavior. They would be scared to go out at night or in certain locations.
- Ms. Goswami** What are some other types of stories that you read with your students besides La Llorona stories?
- Ms. Gribble** We read quite a few creation stories from different native tribes. We read a lot of Coyote Stories—of Coyote being a trickster.
- Ms. Goswami** I remember joining some of the discussions that you had in your classroom about coyote stories.
- Ms. Gribble** Yes! There was always a lesson attached to certain stories—usually about being lazy.
- Ms. Goswami** What about the creation stories—what are they about?
- Ms. Gribble** The creation stories are about how the Native tribes came to be and about how people came to be on the earth. In the majority of the stories that we read, the animals and people could talk to each other in the very beginning of time. Then something happens and they no longer can communicate in the same way.
- Ms. Goswami** Why did your students decide to focus on writing La Llorona stories?
- Ms. Gribble** Students were really intrigued by the La Llorona stories.
- Ms. Goswami** What were some of the joys and challenges of the process of writing the La Llorona stories?
- Ms. Gribble** The La Llorona stories were hard to develop. The La Llorona is a complex character and the story itself has many elements.
- Ms. Goswami** How have you and your students handled these challenges?
- Ms. Gribble** We read quite a few versions of the La Llorona stories. So I engaged the students in lots of read-alouds. They also re-read the stories that I read to

them. We engaged in discussions where we compared the different versions. Students also wrote and rewrote their La Llorona stories.

Ms. Goswami Was there a lot of variety in the different versions of the La Llorona stories?

Ms. Gribble The Southwestern versions are pretty similar. However, “Maya’s Children” and “Peretitta and the Ghost Woman” were somewhat different. Maya’s children are written for younger children. So the mother does not kill the children. Instead Señor Tiempo takes the children away from her.

In the La Llorona story from Argentina, there is only one child. The mother was using a rock to beat the clothes as she was doing laundry. She accidentally hits the child in the head.

In the Norwegian tale, it doesn’t say how the child dies. And it’s the child that comes back as a ghost. He comes to the cobbler shop and dances as a ghost.

Ms. Goswami Do you have some final thoughts to share about the re-writing of the La Llorona stories?

Ms. Gribble Students decided to write their own version of the La Llorona stories because they have really enjoyed it. It’s been entertaining for them to hear each other’s versions of the La Llorona stories. They have worked hard and yet they have also enjoyed working at making their versions believable.



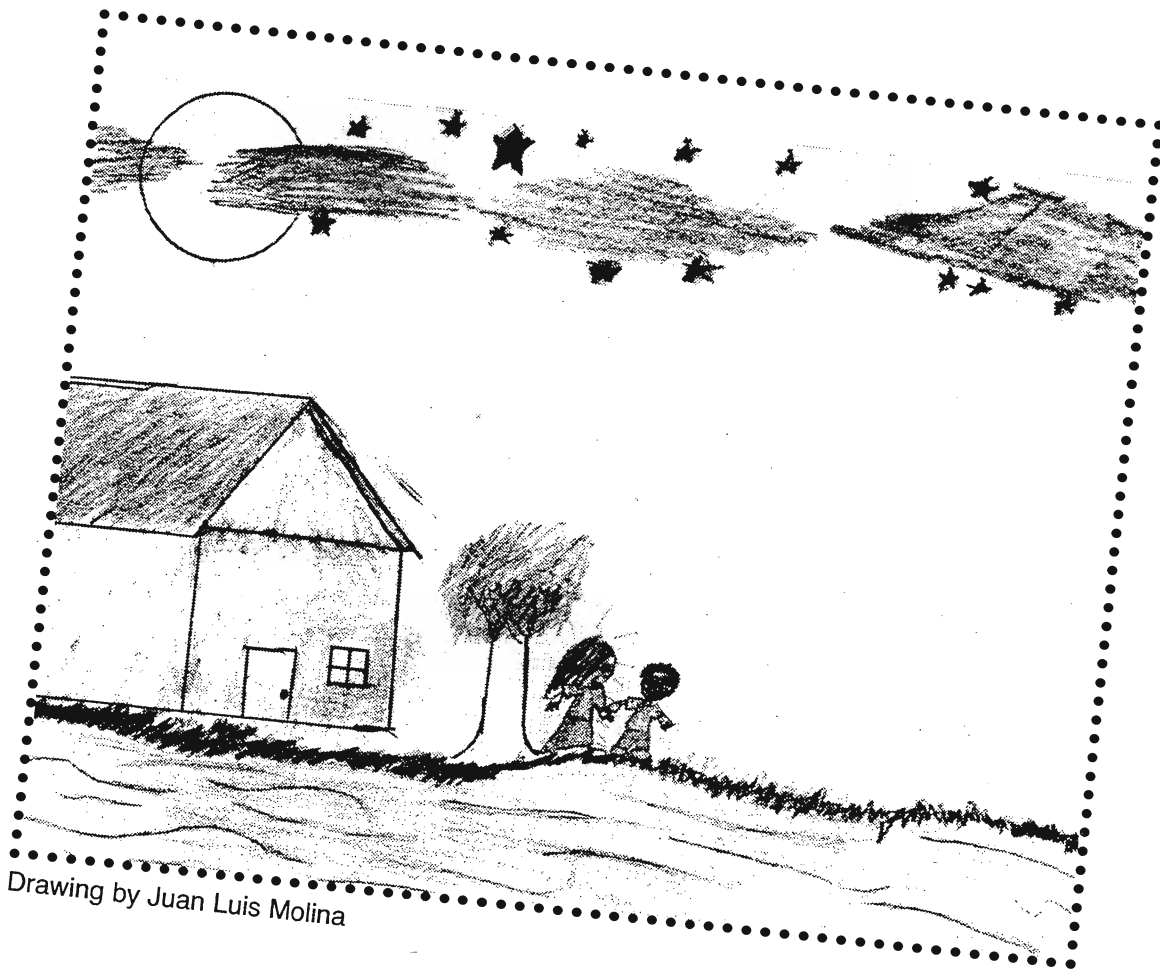
Artwork by Richard Alvarez and Albert Valenzuela

La Llorona Stories

LA LLORONA

by Eddie Lopez

One day I was walking by the river. It got dark when I heard a voice. It was La Llorona. I ran to my house. I went inside and stayed awake all night. The next day I was swimming in the Casquada River. Then I saw her again. But this time I didn't run away. I asked her "Why were you chasing me." She said, "You are my child." I said, "I am not your child." I asked her, "What's your name?" She said, "Maria." Then she told me her sad story. Maria told me that she killed her own children. Her husband left with another woman. She had a terrible rage inside her. And she threw her kids into the river. And now she is known as La Llorona because she goes everywhere that water flows and looks for her children. That night I learned my lesson. I decided not to play outside when it is dark because La Llorona might think that I am one of her children and get me. So when my mom warns me about La Llorona, I go inside and stay inside for sure.



Drawing by Juan Luis Molina

La Llorona Stories

LA LLORONA

by Oscar Molina

One day Orlando and Kathy came home from school. They went to the Santa Cruz River. It was getting dark. Kathy said, "Lets go." Orlando said, "No." "Okay, let's go, well." It was so dark. They saw a lady in a white dress. The lady had a skull face. They ran as fast as they could. The lady almost got Orlando. They got to the house and locked the door. There was a handprint on Orlando's arm. The next morning, Orlando got sick because the burn on his arm was so bad. He had to go to the curandera for medicine. The curandera gave Orlando some aloe vera for his burn. Orlando rubbed the Aloe Vera. Even after the burn healed, Orlando always had a scar to remind him of when he saw La Llorona.

LA LLORONA

Lisa Lucero, Isadora Estrella, and Jennifer Miranda
My grandparents told me this about La Llorona.

Once upon a time there lived a beautiful woman named Luisa. All the men in the village wanted to marry her. One day this handsome man came to Luisa's village. He came right to Luisa. He said, "You are beautiful like a rose." As they grew older they started to like each other more and more and they got married. Nine months later they had two beautiful children. The man got mad because she began to get poor. So he left to be with another woman. Luisa became mad and grabbed her children by the arm and dragged them to the river. She grabbed them, threw them in the river and walked away. When she looked back, they were gone. She realized what she had done. She started to cry. Then she threw herself into the river, trying to get the kids. The river began to pull Luisa under and she drowned. People who lived by the river heard screaming at night, when there was a full moon. People say it is La Llorona crying for her kids. They tell their kids to get inside when it is dark, or La Llorona will mistake them for her kids and get them.

Now, she has been heard in Tucson for a long time. My grandparents told me this story so I won't want to play outside at night.

The End

La Llorona Stories

WHEN WE RAN INTO LA LLORONA

by Juanito Moreno, Jonathan Rojas-Valdez, Junior Aguirre, Victor Chaney

One hot day in the forest Juanito, Jonathan, Victor, and Junior were camping near a river. Junior wanted to see the sights in the forest and wandered off. Jonathan was lying by the river. Suddenly, he heard a crying sound and ran as fast as he could to the campsite. Once he got to the campsite, Jonathan was so scared that he fainted, because he thought the crying was La Llorona. When he woke up he told us what he thought he heard.

Since our parents were with us at the campsite, we felt brave enough to tell La Llorona stories that night and after that we went to bed. In the middle of the night, Victor woke up and asked Juanito where the restroom was. Juanito said, "It's by the river." So Victor went outside to the outhouse. Suddenly he heard a crying sound that said, "Where are my children?" This time he was sure it was La Llorona.

So Victor stayed as quiet and as still as he could. Soon the crying sound was gone and Victor went out of the outhouse and ran into the tent.

When Victor got inside the tent, he woke his friends, Juanito, Junior, and Jonathan. Victor said, "I believe what Jonathan told us before, about seeing that lady named La Llorona because I think I just heard her too."

We decided to go all together and find out for ourselves if La Llorona was really out there. So we put on our shoes, grabbed a flashlight and went out in search of La Llorona. We walked toward the forest. Suddenly we saw a yellow light in the distance. And then we noticed that the light was getting closer. We huddled together and we were frozen with fright.

When the light came really close we saw that it wasn't a light at all. It was a beautiful lady dressed in a very bright yellow, flowing dress. She stopped right in front of us and asked if we knew the story of La Llorona.

Just then, Junior's dad came running as he yelled our names saying "Junior, Victor, Juanito, Jonathan where are you?" We called back "We are here Mr. Aguirre." When Mr. Aguirre reached us, we turned to the beautiful lady to introduce her to Mr. Aguirre. But to our surprise, she had disappeared.

The next morning it was time to leave to go home. And to this day, we all tell stories about that full moon night when Juanito, Victor, Junior and Jonathan ran into La Llorona.

THE DAY WE SAW LA LLORONA

by Shanice Matus, Alejandra Esquivias, Arelina Castillo-Flores

On a full moon night my friends Arelina and Shanice came over to my house for a slumber party. At midnight when we were about to go to bed we heard a noise by the river. The Gila River ran by my house. We went outside to see what was going on. When we went outside we saw a woman dressed in white crying for her children. Then she saw us; she thought we were her children. She started to chase us. We started to run away but we tripped on some pebbles.

She stopped and walked toward the river. We looked back, and we notice that she had scratches on her face and her tears were blood red. As she floated in the river she started crying again. She told us that she was looking for her children because she wanted to go up to heaven but God said, "No, you can't come because you don't have your children with you!" The lady we call La Llorona looked at Ale and picked her up and headed towards the river. Arelina and Shanice ran to save Ale but La Llorona pushed us aside and we fell. By the time we got there Ale was in the river. Arelina shouted, "La Llorona, give her back to us!" La Llorona said "No." "But we will do anything just anything," Arelina pleaded. "You will?" La Llorona replied. "YES!" said Arelina "Find my children and I will give your friend back to you," ordered La Llorona. So Arelina and Shanice searched everywhere in town for her children. Then they looked in the cemetery and that's where they found Maria junior and Papito buried there. Shanice and Arelina ran to La Llorona and said, "We found your children." So we took her to the cemetery and La Llorona was so happy to see her children. Then a bright light came down and took La Llorona and her kids to heaven. We went back to the river and Ale was waiting for us. We finally went back home. We've heard that since La Llorona found her children she is known as Maria because she stopped crying for her children.

The End



Drawing of La Llorona by Victor Chaney

La Llorona Stories

AT THE BEACH

by Jasmine Cupis, Virginia Frias and Ara Torres

One summer morning Jasmine, Virginia and Ara were packing their bags to go to the beach. When they got to the beach it was night. They put their tents up and then a voice said "O where are my children." They were frightened. They looked back, saw a girl in a white dress, she had no face. She had brown hair. She was by the beach. She walked toward us and said, "Come my children." Virginia and Ara ran because they knew it was La Llorona because she had a white dress on and she cries for her children. They packed their bags and never went back to the beach because they were scared La Llorona will find them and take them away.

The End

THE CAVE OF LA LLORONA

by William Espinoza and Frank Digiorno

One day, B.J and Frankie were by the river skipping rocks. We heard a crying sound. Then we saw a lady with a white dress, and a skull face. She was floating over the water and we could see through her. We thought it was La Llorona. We started running away. Then, we tripped over a rock. She came up to us and grabbed us. She took us to a cave. We saw a lot of ghosts there. She took us to the back of the cave where there were bats. We couldn't see. She disappeared and we couldn't find our way out. We threw rocks at the bats. The bats got scared and they were flying out of the cave. We followed them and found our way out of the cave.

We were walking and saw a light coming toward us. When we got close to the light, we yelled, "Help! Help!" Somebody answered, "Is that you B.J. and Frankie?" We said, "Yes! Come and help us." And they came and got us. It was our mom and dad. Frankie and I were really happy to see them. We all went home and ate dinner.

MEETING LA LLORONA

by Jose Rojas and Reggie Campbell

One day at the end of June, when it was blistering hot in Tucson, my family decided to go to Rocky Point to cool off. And my friend Reggie was joining us. The minute we got to Rocky Point, we built our tent and cooked hot dogs. After dinner, we sat around the fire that we made and told La Llorona stories.

Around ten o'clock at night we were beginning to get scared. So our parents said "It's time to go to bed!" Reggie and I went to sleep in our tent. But in the middle of the night, Reggie woke up to use the bathroom. He asked me to go with him. But I was sleepy and I told him "Go by your self." "I don't know where the bathroom is" complained Reggie. "In the back" I told him. "Fine then don't show me where the bathroom is. Brrrrrrr, man it's cold out here," said Reggie as he left the tent.

"Finally, I found the bathroom" hissed Reggie. As Reggie was walking back to the tent he thought he heard a voice. So Reggie whispered, "Who is out there?" I came out of the tent and asked Reggie "what's going on?" "Jose, you are going to think this is weird but I thought I saw a lady dressed in white calling out to me from the ocean!" said Reggie.

I told Reggie that he was just seeing things because we had been telling La Llorona stories before we went to sleep. But just as we were walking back to the tent, we both heard a beautiful woman's voice crying for help. Reggie panicked and whispered "let's get out of here before she gets us both." But I convinced Reggie to stay and see what happens next. As we waited, a beautiful lady came closer to us with her arms wide open.

"We are not your children. So please leave us alone." We said.

But the lady kept coming closer and closer. She tried to take Reggie into her arms as Reggie struggled to get away. So I told her, "Leave my friend alone." The lady realized that we were not her children and she put Reggie down. She started to cry. I asked her "Why are you crying?" The lady told us that her name was Maria. And that a long time ago in Mexico, she had two children and a beautiful husband that played the guitar. And then she said, "If you boys have a little time, I would like to tell you the real story of my sad, sad life. This is our story of what happened when we met La Llorona on a cold night on the beach at Rocky Point."

La Llorona Stories

LA LLORONA

Raquel Galvez

There was this woman named María, she was so fortunate that she thought she was "it" (very important). She had two children with a millionaire (very rich man) that adored her and she did not know why day by day he stopped loving her. Day by day more often than not he would not come home, two months, until María found out he was lying, with a beautiful and elegant and rich woman. Every night he would not come home. He would stay with the other one, sometimes he would not go home for months, and one day María followed him and in front of the other one she told him that she was angry (sick and tired). And he left her and she got very angry and when he would go, he would only show love to his children. And one day that María was walking with her children by the riverbank and they met the rancher and the children yelled, "Daddy! Daddy!" And the rancher stretched his arm at his children and he left with the girl. María threw them in the river and when she realized she stretched her arms but they were already gone. María ran until she died and she was buried in white. At night she appears saying, "Aaaiii my children, aaaiii my children!" At first the people thought that it was the wind. But then they heard words and the village people looked out their windows and saw a woman dressed in white walking and then they saw that it was María and they named her "La Llorona" from then on. **SOME SAY THEY HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED BY LA LLORONA AND OTHERS THAT THEY HAVE BEEN GRABBED.**

LA LLORONA

Raquel Galvez

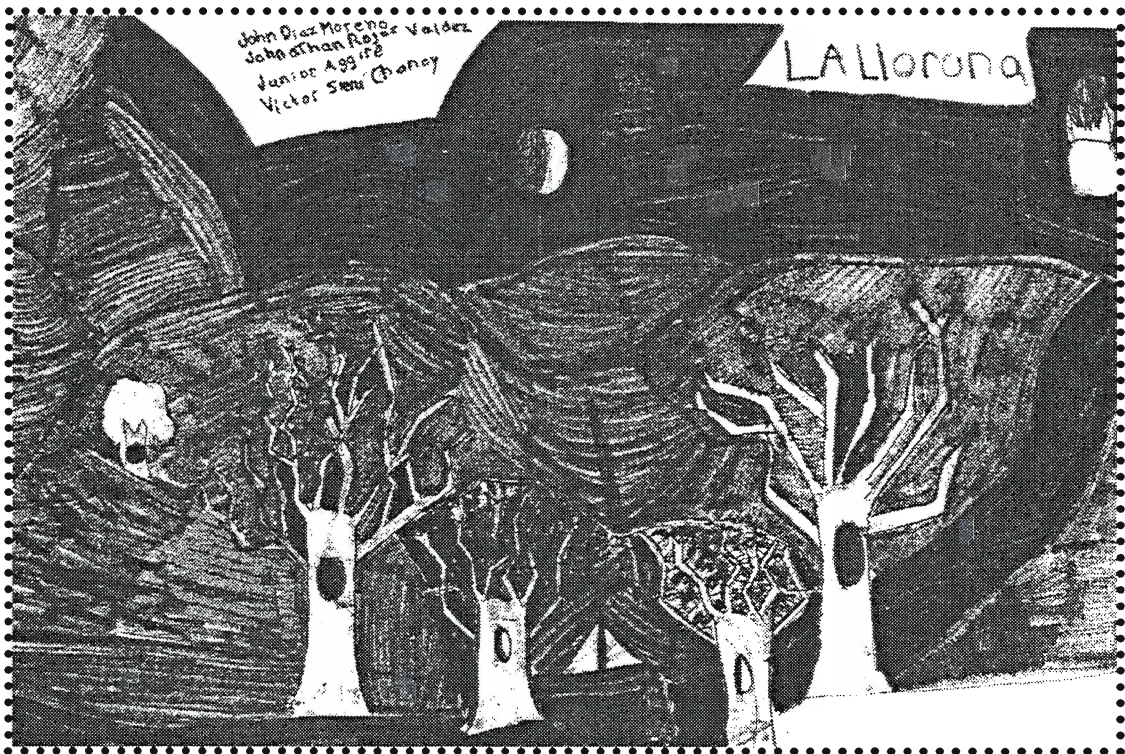
Había una mujer llamada María era tan afortunada que se creía mucho. Teóia dos hijos con un hombre millonario que la adoraba y ella no sabia porque día tras día le quitaba el amor. Día, tras día faltaba mas a casa dos meses, hasta que María supo que le mentla con una mujer muy bonita y muy elegante y rica. Todas las noches no hiba a casa. Se quedaba con la otra, a veces estaba meses sin ir a casa y un día María lo perseguí y enfrente de la otra le dijo que ya se había enfadado. Dejo a María y ella se enojo mucho y siempre que hiba nomis les demostraba amor a sus hijos. Y un día María andaba paseando con sus hijos a la orilla del río y se encontraron al ranchero los hijos gritaron pap, papa! el ranchero les estiro el brazo a sus hijos y se fue con la muchacha. María los aventó al río y cuando se dio cuenta les estiro los brazos pero ya se hablan ido. María corrió hasta que murió y la enterraron de blanco. En la noche se apareció diciendo! aaaiiii mis hijos, aaaiiii mis hijos! Primero la gente pensó que era el viento. Pero luego oyeron palabras y la gente del pueblo se asomaron a la ventana y vieron a una mujer vestida de blanco paseando y luego vieron que era María y le pusieron "La Llorona" desde ese momento. **DICEN ALGUNOS QUE HAN SIDO PERSEGUIDOS POR LA LLORONA Y OTROS DICEN QUE HAN SIDO AGARRADOS.**

WHEN I SAW LA LLORONA

by Victor Gonzalez

One day I went to the Santa Cruz River and I saw a lady. She came and said, "You are my child!!" I ran to my house. I got scared. She chased me and. I ran as fast as I could. When I got to my house, I went to bed. The next morning, on my window, I saw a painted picture of a skull face. So, when I took a shower, on the bathroom window there were letters. It said, "I will get you!" So I put on my clothes and quickly ran to the table. After dinner I checked the mail and there was a letter for me. It had my name and address on it. I opened it and it said, "I will get you!!!" I rubbed my eyes and the words were gone. Instead, it now said, "You have won the drawing in the contest, you won \$10,000 dollars." I was happy, but yet it seemed strange. Well, I guess I learned that kids should never go to the Santa Cruz River at night or else LA LLORONA will haunt them next.

The End



Drawing by John Moreno, Johnathan Valdez, Junior Aggire, and Victor Chaney

La Llorona Stories

LA LLORONA

by Richie Chacon and Albert Miranda

One day Richie and Albert were walking by the river. When it got dark we saw a beautiful woman by the river. She had fire eyes. She was getting closer. We were running by the river. La Llorona just about got Eddie because he fell down. La Llorona got Eddie and threw him into the river. Eddie swam out of the river. We helped Eddie stand up. Then we went home. Four months later we saw the beautiful woman again. We jumped into the water. When we got out of the water she was gone. Never go outside when it's dark because La Llorona might get you.

LA LLORONA

by Eddie Lopez

My sister and I came home from my tia's house, and we felt something. Then we looked back and we saw La Llorona. We ran as fast as we could but she got ahead of us fast. And we finally outran her and finally came home. We fell asleep. The next day my sister and I were swimming, and we saw her over the jacuzzi and we dived down in the water. When we came up she was gone. Two days later we saw her again. We ran and ran. We saw her crash into a wall and we never saw her again.



Collage by Michael Shade

Coyote Stories

The following is an interview Ms. Marlene Grijalva, a first year third grade teacher who collaborated on this project. In an interview with Ms. Goswami, Ms. Grijalva shares the process of inquiry that she engaged in with her students to study Coyote stories and rewrite their own versions.

Trickster Coyote is a favorite character in the folklore of many Native American tribes. Coyote's tricks generally backfire on him when the animals he's scheming to eat turn the tables, making Coyote the victim of his own cleverness.

Ms. Grijalva My students became very interested in the Coyote stories. There were many coyote stories for them to read, compare and understand. There was also lots of critical thinking involved in studying the different tricks that were used by Coyote and the various solutions offered in the Coyote stories.

We also used a graphic organizer, the story matrix, to pull out and analyze the characters, the plot, the nature of the tricks, the solutions, etc. The students really took off with the story matrices.

Ms. Goswami Can you tell me a little bit more about the purpose for using the story matrix?

Ms. Grijalva The story matrix really helped students to comprehend the Coyote stories. They also used it as a tool to look in detail at aspects of the story. For example, they had to figure out the underlying trickery. They looked closely at just how Coyote stories begin and where the story travels and how a story ends. They have become extremely comfortable with using the story matrix to analyze stories and now they use it with other genres as well.

Ms. Goswami What other things did you do as a class in preparation for writing the Coyote stories?

Ms. Grijalva We visited and revisited the process of how to tell a good story. For example, we practiced how to develop a good beginning, interesting characters, and how to make a story travel or flow to someplace and how to write a satisfying ending.

Character Analysis		
What character looks like	What character does	How character acts
Short hair.	He tells a	He is happy
Black hair story to his	all the time	
Short	grandfather.	He is with
Black eyes.	He acts his about of	
Red scarf	grandfather	energy.
on his head to reach it	He is	
Red lips	but he did acts like	
Small nose	He gets in a bad	
Black eye a race	but He acts	
brows Small he loses	1 reasonable	
noses	He goes up	He act
	mountain and proud	
	down He	
	teaches his	
	nose	

Also, the students in my class have a natural talent for visual arts. The Coyote stories lend themselves to artwork. So the students all wanted to draw all the animals that the Coyote has relationships with. This opportunity for drawing animal characters also kept the students interested in studying and writing Coyote stories.

Ms. Goswami So would you say that even though your students have worked very hard on these Coyote stories, they have enjoyed the process?

Ms. Grijalva Yes they have. It has been a struggle for some students to write a story. So some have decided to write poetry. They have had success with poetry. Now more students want to write poetry about the Coyote.

Title	Setting	Characters	Beginning	Middle	End	Problem	Solution
Coyote and the Quail	In the tall grass and in a hole and in a desert	Coyote Quail	The star birds used to make fun of Quail. For one thing Quail can't fly neither can roadrunner but he can kill rattlesnakes.	Coyote was taking his nap and the Quails pulled off his hair of his tail. Coyote woke up and he did not notice his tail.	The Quails went to hide Coyote digged the Quails up and all of them said I did not pull your hair off.	That the Quail want to pay Coyote back.	They payed Coyote back by pulling his hair off of his

Story matrix of Coyote and the Quail, by Isamar Gonzales



Physical Traits	Personality Traits	Character Traits
She has red cheeks	She's scared because the coyote came and looked hungry	She follows the man because she wants to know where his young
Her eyes are usually closed	She's happy because she's with the man	She merges the man
She has long hair	She's nice to everyone	She has twins
She has black hair	She is a hard worker	She turns into a Antelope because she was in a trap
She is not that tall		

Character analysis by Alejandra Esquivias

COYOTE AND LITTLE TURTLE

by Isamar Gonzalez

One hot sunny day a coyote and his pups were hungry and they didn't have any food. Coyote and his pups saw all the turtles going swimming and there was a little turtle that couldn't catch up with the others. He got lost and decided to go home. Coyote and his pups ran to a bush. Coyote said "Wait here, don't move." Coyote jumped out of the bush and tried to grab Little Turtle by the head but Little Turtle put his head and legs in his shell. Coyote grabbed Little Turtle and threw him. Little Turtle said, "Not the water!" Coyote thought he would drown but Little Turtle peeked his head out of his shell and splashed in the water. Little Turtle swam and swam and finally he caught up with the other turtles. Since that day on coyote never messed around with little turtles again.



Drawing by George David Martin, Xavier Cantu, Marisela Escalante, Ricky Garcia, and Armando Valencia

COYOTE AND THE TURTLE

by Alex Manuel

One hot day, Coyote said, "Hmm! I wonder if there is a turtle around here? Turtles are so slow that I could catch one and eat it." So one day a turtle walked by Coyote. Turtle said to himself, "Oh! No I don't like coyotes. They are mean to me." Turtle saw coyote's brown eyes and big teeth. Coyote was making a plan to catch turtle. Turtle said, "So Coyote wants to catch me! I'll make a plan too."

Meanwhile, Coyote got all the things he needed to catch turtle. Coyote said, "So I have diamonds, food and water, every thing that I need to catch turtle." Oh! No here comes turtle. I better hide quick" thought Coyote.

"Hmmm," said Turtle. "I wonder if Coyote is here?" Coyote laughed, "Ha Ha, Hee Hee, here comes Turtle. I'm going to get him now." So Coyote dropped the pumpkin pie with the bomb in it and waited for it to explode and kill Turtle. But nothing happened because Coyote in his hurry forgot to put the bomb inside the pie. Turtle ate the whole pie and kept on walking.

Coyote was frustrated. But he had another plan. Coyote put some poisoned water by turtle and waited for him to drink the water and die. But once again, nothing happened. Coyote forgot to put the poison in the water.

Coyote had one more plan left. He dropped some diamonds where Turtle was walking. He waited for Turtle to eat the diamonds and die because diamonds can cut into a turtle's stomach. Meanwhile, Turtle figured out what Coyote was up to. He only pretended to eat the diamonds and then kept walking.

Coyote was surprised. He said to himself "Why isn't Turtle dead yet!" He went down to where Turtle was walking and asked, "How are you feeling Turtle?" Turtle said, "You know I just ate some delicious diamonds that somebody left here. And I feel like a million bucks. I still have a few left. Would you like to try some?" Coyote in his foolishness believed Turtle and ate the diamonds for real. As soon as he swallowed, the diamonds cut his whole body into two pieces. And so that was the end of Coyote. But some say that he is still alive and roaming the desert in search of Turtle.

COYOTE AND DESERT TORTOISE

by *Bianka Solis*

One scary and stormy night there lived a coyote by a shady bush, and a desert tortoise, who lived by a prickly pear. So when it was morning, Coyote and tortoise were hungry. Coyote wanted to eat a desert tortoise for breakfast. And Tortoise wanted to eat a berry from a prickly pear. Coyote went looking for a desert tortoise. Coyote saw desert tortoise eating berries. Then Coyote pretended to eat berries with Tortoise. Coyote tried to eat Tortoise but Tortoise went to another patch of prickly pear. When Desert Tortoise was done eating he went home. Coyote followed Desert Tortoise home, sneaking behind bushes. Coyote said, "Not so fast, little tortoise, I am going to eat you for breakfast." When Desert Tortoise heard coyote say that he was going to eat him, he moved as fast as he could to his home. Desert Tortoise found a rock the size of him and he painted it the color of himself and the designs on his shell. Desert Tortoise put the fake tortoise by a patch of prickly pear. Coyote saw the fake tortoise and Coyote snuck up and bit the fake tortoise and all of Coyote's teeth fell out.

Since that day Coyote runs the other direction when he sees a desert tortoise.



Drawing by Ricky Garcia

Coyote Stories

COYOTE AND ROADRUNNER

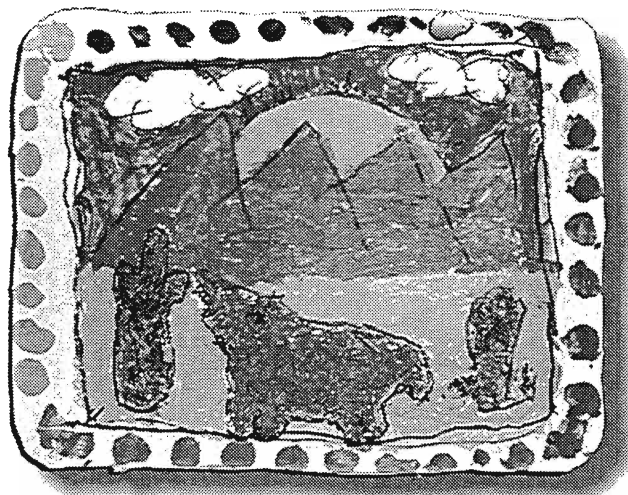
by Rolando Garcia

One scary night there lived a coyote and a roadrunner. They lived in a desert where there were a lot of scary noises. Coyote is the meanest. He has really sharp shinny teeth. He tricks lots of animals, especially the Roadrunner. He has a furry tail. He eats a lot of snakes, roadrunners and rabbits. When Coyote eats roadrunners, he eats the bones too. Until there is nothing left to eat. One day Coyote was hunting in the desert and he saw a roadrunner by some cactus. Coyote jumped up and tried to get Roadrunner. Roadrunner ran and coyote fell in the cactus and Coyote did not try to catch any roadrunners ever again.

COYOTE AND HIS POEM

by Estavan Cruz

Curious for everything
Old Coyote trickster
You're mean Coyote
Old new coyote
Tricks all animals
Eats all animals.



Collage by Victoria Orantez

COYOTE AND RABBIT

by Nicole Decamp

One day a rabbit saw a coyote. "I will pull your toes out and eat them" said the coyote "After I pull your toes out I am going to pull your ears out and put peanut butter and jelly on them and eat them." said coyote. The coyote tried to eat the rabbit but the rabbit started to fight. A bird saw that the rabbit got caught in a net. The rabbit was sad, the bird came and let the net go. The rabbit ran home. So, coyote once again was left alone tired and hungry.

THE ANIMAL POEMS

by Xavier Cantu

Bats hear you in the dark.

Coyote sees you in the dark.

Better hit the trail cottontail.

I thought a fearless creature was following me. I kept on walking and I turned around and saw a tail. I said, "So" and kept on walking. I turned again and I saw a tail and a long nose. It was a fearless creature. It was a coyote staring at me with mean yellow eyes.



Drawing by Isamar Gonzalez

COYOTE AND HIS POEM

by Larissa Matus

Cute and cuddly as a pup.

Old trickster.

You're a mean coyote.

Old fat coyote.

Trickster.

Eat your food coyote.

Coyote Stories

COYOTE AND THE CRAZY BLUEJAY

by Michael Shade

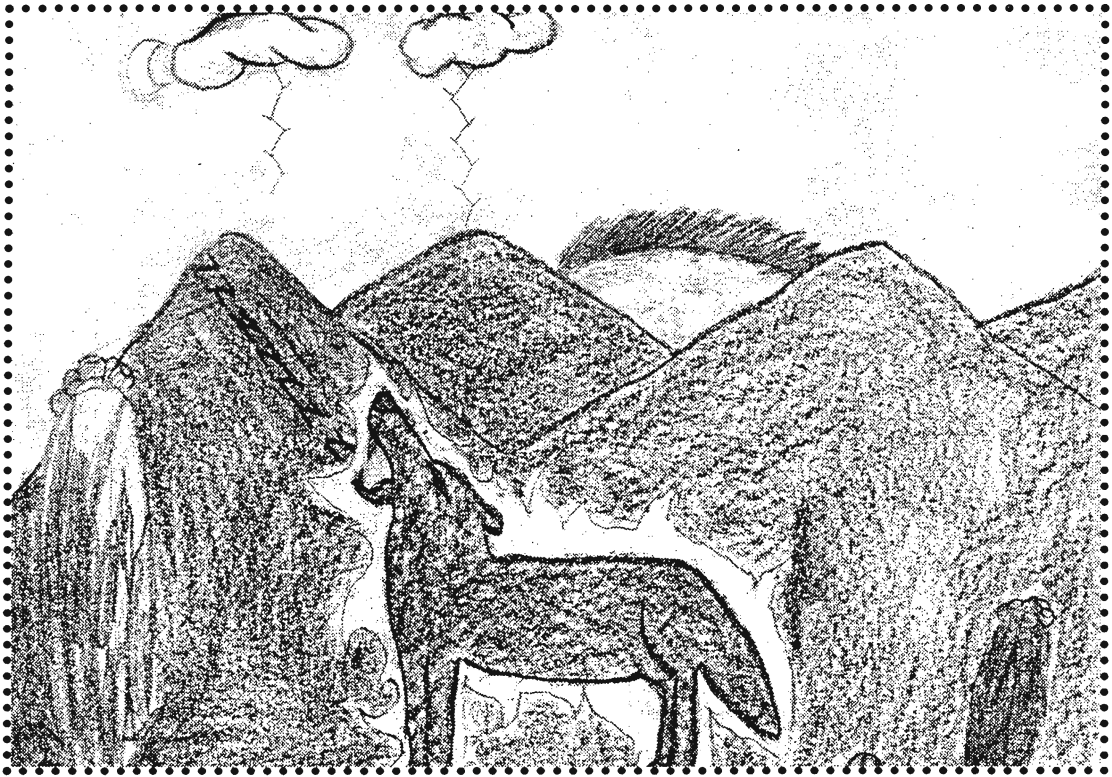
One Saturday a Coyote went to a disco party. When he was dancing he said, "Awoooooooooawoooooooo!" Then when it was over, he was so tired he passed out. Then came Bluejay walking quietly to Coyote. Bluejay opened his beak and bit Coyote right on the tail. Coyote said, "Awooooooche!" Then Bluejay ran as fast as he could. Coyote got too tired and stopped chasing Bluejay. Bluejay turned around and made a face and said, "Na, na-nana na." Then Coyote said, "That's it! I m going to run after you and bite you!" Then Bluejay flew up and got a big red rag and tied it on his feet and said, "Toro turtle!" Coyote ran and missed him. Bluejay said again, "Toro turtle!" but Bluejay was in front of a tree. Coyote ran as fast as he could. Then Bluejay moved and Coyote ran into the tree. Bluejay said, "Never mess with me!" So Coyote never messed with Bluejay again.

The End

COYOTE AND MOUSE

by Victoria Orantez

One day Coyote was going to get water and a mouse said, "Big bushy tail!" and made coyote laugh. He laughed, "Hee-hee-hee-ho-ho-ho-ha-ha-ha-ha." Coyote was laughing so much that he spilt the water. And he thought it was a ghost having fun with him. The mouse kept the coyote laughing and the mouse said, "Big bushy tail" and coyote laughed again, "Hee-hee-hee-ho-ho-ho-ha-ha-ha-ha." Coyote turned around and the mouse ran to his hole. Then Coyote ran to his home and his wife said, "Where is the water to give to the babies?" The wife said, "You have to go around the mountain to get water for us." That way the mouse could not make him laugh again and he could bring water home for his family. So from that day on Coyote always had to go around the mountain to get water.



Drawing by David Martinez

COYOTE AND RABBIT

by Ismael Alvarez

On a hot, hot day Coyote was starving and he saw a rabbit running. Coyote ran after rabbit. Rabbit got away from coyote. Coyote was walking around the Desert. When he went to drink water, he saw rabbit. He sneaked up on rabbit. Coyote jumped out on rabbit and rabbit ran away. Coyote was so tired and weak he couldn't walk that much to the water and he fell on the ground.

Coyote had to make a plan to catch Rabbit. He painted a rock orange so it looked like a carrot. Coyote thought to himself "I can make rabbit come to me." Rabbit bit into the carrot and broke his teeth and he got mad at coyote. They got in a fight and Rabbit bit Coyote with his big rabbit teeth. Coyote got mad and bit Rabbit back. But he decided not to eat Rabbit.

Coyote lived happily and met a girl Coyote and they had little pups. They are small and cute pups. From that day on when coyote and rabbit meet they no longer fight. They live together happily.

Coyote Stories

COYOTE AND THE TEASING RABBIT

K.J. Saaby

One dark stormy night there was a coyote and a rabbit. Rabbit started to tease Coyote. Rabbit told Coyote, "You are toooooooooooooo slow to catch me!" Coyote got mad and he started to chase Rabbit. It started to rain. Rabbit ran home. Coyote said, "I will get you next time!" So Coyote ran home. The next day, Coyote went looking for Rabbit but he couldn't find him. While Coyote was walking around, he found a big rock, he ran up on top of the rock so he could see farther and find Rabbit. Coyote fell off and broke his leg. Rabbit came hopping by and he saw Coyote lying on the ground. Rabbit was scared he was going to leave but he turned around to look at Coyote. Rabbit saw that his leg was broken and he said, "I will make you a deal." But Coyote said, "No I won't make a deal with you, I will find someone else to help me." So Rabbit hopped off. Coyote was crawling around, trying to find someone to help him. Coyote saw mouse working hard, Coyote asked, "Would you please help me?" Why should I help a skinny coyote like you?" asked mouse. Coyote showed his sharp teeth. Then mouse fixed coyote's leg. Coyote said, "thank you for fixing my leg." Coyote ran off to look for rabbit. He saw the same big rock, but Coyote said, "I am not going on that rock again!" Coyote thought he saw Rabbit. So he took off after him. But, it wasn't rabbit it was a rock. It started to get dark so Coyote was going home. On the way home Coyote saw rabbit. So Coyote fell down. Rabbit came over and said, "I think he is dead!" Then Coyote jumped up and killed rabbit and finally had something to eat.

The End

COYOTE AND ROADRUNNER

by Rebecca Arvizu

One hot day there was a Coyote and he was so hungry that he could eat a bug. Then he saw a Roadrunner going back and forth, back and forth. Coyote ran after Roadrunner trying to catch up. After a while Coyote said to the Roadrunner come to my house. "But Roadrunner did not trust Coyote. Roadrunner thought Coyote was going to eat him. Later Roadrunner went to Coyote's house and Coyote said "Come in." Roadrunner asked, "What do you want? for lunch?" Roadrunner said, "I want you Coyote" but Coyote said, "Let's play a game, I will bite you then you will bite me." "Ok," said Roadrunner.

COYOTE AND RABBIT

by Ricky Garcia

One stormy night Coyote and his friend Rabbit were in the desert. They were scared because it was windy and raining. So they went into Rabbit's hole. Coyote said, "Let's wait until it stops raining." It rained until the morning so Coyote and Rabbit fell asleep. Coyote was a girl and she had pups. They were small pups. The pups' names were Ricky, Armando, and Xavier. Rabbit saw a carrot and a piece of meat. So Coyote and Rabbit went to eat lunch.

In the afternoon, Coyote saw a snake by his pond. Coyote went to fight the snake by the pond. Coyote and the snake got in a fight. Coyote got bit by the snake. Coyote got mad and killed the snake and ate him. Rabbit was surprised because he didn't know that Coyote killed snakes. Rabbit helped Coyote get up because he got bit. Coyote said, "I am ok." So Rabbit helped Coyote all the way home. Rabbit went to get water for Coyote. Rabbit met a snake. They became friends and Coyote got mad because he hates snakes. And he likes to eat them, so he killed Rabbit's friend, who was a snake. Coyote painted a rock and asked Rabbit, "Is that a carrot?" Rabbit ran to the rock and bit into it and broke his teeth. Coyote was laughing all the way home. Coyote and Rabbit got old and died. Coyote's pups grew up happy and from that day on, Coyotes kill snakes.

COYOTE AND ROADRUNNER

by Karla Rendon

One scary, rainy night there was a coyote that never liked roadrunners. One day Coyote saw a roadrunner and Coyote said "I am going to trick that roadrunner by playing with him and I will try to eat him or break his bones." Coyote snuck up to the roadrunner and he tried to catch the roadrunner but it ran away. Coyote was frustrated, by the way. I have lots of time to go find that roadrunner. Coyote went looking for Roadrunner day and night in the desert but he did not find him. One morning Coyote woke up and saw that roadrunner. He told the roadrunner to come to her but the roadrunner said, "NO!" Coyote finally caught the roadrunner and swallowed him up and then the roadrunner poked his beak as hard as he could and Coyote was now taught a lesson. Roadrunner got out and lived happily ever after and never saw a coyote again. That is where the story ends.

COYOTE AND DIAMONDBACK

by Rosemary Coronado

One scary stormy night, Coyote was shaking his legs and arms because he heard a big loud noise in the desert. He thought he saw freaky stuff like eyes in the trees. It turned out to be birds sitting in the tree taking shelter from the rain. Coyote was so tired from all the scary stuff in the storm that he fell asleep.

But when he was about to go to sleep, he met a snake who is meaner and a better trickster than Coyote. Coyote was shocked. He had never seen a snake like that in the desert before. He had diamonds on his back and he was called a "Diamondback."

The Diamondback was mad because it was raining. Snake didn't like the rain because his hole always got flooded with the rainwater. He was so mad that steam was coming off the Diamondback's head and he looked really mean. Coyote still thought that he was meaner and trickier than Diamondback.

It stopped raining and Coyote woke up. "I wonder where that snake ended up?" said a sleepy Coyote. When he was fully awake, Coyote realized he had slept with a snake. Coyote started screaming "Oh my god! I slept with the mean Diamondback. What is this world coming to? I mean first I see him slithering in the desert. Then I see him laying down by me. I thought he hated me and I hated him too. But we actually slept with each other and didn't kill each other. Oh! My God, what is this world coming to?"

In the morning Coyote is very hungry. He goes out to look for food in the desert and gets lost. But soon he meets up with Diamondback. Coyote confessed, "I lost my way Diamondback." Snake had a trap for Coyote. Snake said, "I can tell you where to go!" Then Coyote said, "Ok." Snake said, "First go straight, then left. Sss here comes thess goodsss parts Ssssssss." Snake went around the hole. Coyote just went straight and then went CRASH!!! He went falling down. Coyote said, "You stupid snake!" Then Snake got really mad. So he put baby snakes in the hole. "I'm scared of Snakes!! Eeeehhh!!!!!" yelled Coyote. Coyote was jumping up and down all around saying, "Yikes, yikes!!!" Snake said, "Takes those words back." "No, just get me out of HERE!" said Coyote. "No" said snake. "First you take those words back." "Ok, ok! Just please get me out of here." So Snake left to get a rope. "Wait, where are you going? You're not going to leave me here?" Pleaded Coyote, "Wait come back here please!" Coyote looked up and saw Snake with a big long rope. "Oh good, thank you, Snake." said Coyote, and from that day on Coyote never called a snake "Stupid" again.

The End

COYOTE AND THE RED-TAIL HAWK

by Armando Valencia

One hot day in the desert, there lived a mean coyote. He didn't like anyone. So, when the animals went to get water or food by his hole he would scare them away and he would eat anything that they left behind. But one day a Red-Tail Hawk flew to the desert. He asked Prairie Dog where to get water and where Coyote's hole was. The Red-Tail Hawk went to the river by Coyote's hole. As Red-Tail Hawk was drinking some water, Coyote jumped out of his hole to catch the hawk. The Red-Tail Hawk wasn't scared of coyote. He just flew up in the air. Coyote was frustrated. He yelled, "come down here so I can eat you" The Red-Tail Hawk left and Coyote went after him. The Red-Tail Hawk made a painting of himself and leaned it on a rock. Coyote thought that it was the Red-Tail Hawk and ran straight to it and bumped his face on the rock. Red-Tail Hawk laughed and said, "I'm over here by the river." Coyote ran to him again. Once again, Red-Tail Hawk flew up and away. Coyote slipped in the river, drowned and floated away.

COYOTE AND ROADRUNNER

by Marisela Escalante

One scary night out in the desert, where Coyote and Roadrunner lived, there were a lot of frightening noises. It was Coyote with his sharp teeth and his big furry tail trying to trick all the animals. The one time when Roadrunner was walking he had a feeling that someone was following him. So he started walking faster and faster. Then he finally saw the Coyote. Roadrunner said to the coyote, "What do you want?" Coyote said, "I've been looking for you." Roadrunner said, "Why?" Coyote said, "Do you see that hole?" Roadrunner said "Yes." Coyote said, "Go in the hole." So he did. There was a door too. Coyote ran and locked him in. Roadrunner was crying for help, but Coyote ran laughing. The Coyote thought of a plan. He thought of putting up a sign saying, "Don't Come In." So no one did for a long time, until one day someone didn't believe the sign and Coyote's mom went in. She heard someone crying and went where Roadrunner was. She found the key and opened the door. She helped him out. Coyote's mom said, "What happened?" Roadrunner said, "Your son Coyote locked me in." Coyote's mom told Roadrunner that Coyote would be grounded and he would learn his lesson. Coyote's mom told Coyote to apologize. So he did and Coyote and Roadrunner became friends.

COYOTE AND LITTLE DESERT TORTOISE

by Nicole DeCamp

One dark and scary night there was a coyote in a grassy field. Coyote saw a little desert tortoise. So, Coyote ran after him. The little desert tortoise walked as fast as he could into his hole. Coyote ran to the hole, He put his paw inside trying to get the little desert tortoise. Coyote tried and tried all night long. The next day, the little desert tortoise poked his head out of his hole. The little desert tortoise didn't see Coyote anywhere. So the little desert tortoise went out to find some grass to eat. When the little desert tortoise was eating, the Coyote snuck up and tried to jump on his back but the little desert tortoise was too small to jump on. So, the little desert tortoise walked over to another patch of grass and Coyote followed him, hiding in the bushes. The little desert tortoise stopped and ate some more grass. Coyote snuck up to the little desert tortoise, and tried to bite the little desert tortoise's head off. But the little desert tortoise put his head and legs inside his shell. Coyote started to play with the little desert tortoise shell. The little desert tortoise poked his head out and said, "What are you doing to my shell?" Coyote said, I'm playing with your shell so I can make you come out!" "I'm never coming out!" said little desert tortoise. So Coyote played with the shell all night.

In the morning the little desert tortoise was by a little water puddle. The little desert tortoise said, "Where am I?" Coyote was drinking some water. While Coyote was drinking some water the little desert tortoise snuck off. Coyote turned around and the little desert tortoise was gone. Coyote looked all over for the little desert tortoise. He could not find him. Coyote ran to Mommy and Daddy tortoise. He could not find him. Coyote said: "Have you seen a little desert tortoise about one inch tall?" Mommy and Daddy tortoise said "No!" Coyote said "Thank you." The Coyote ran off looking for little desert tortoise. Coyote couldn't find him anywhere. At first Coyote thought he saw the little desert tortoise, so Coyote ran as fast as he could. Coyote finally found the little desert tortoise. He was eating grass. Coyote didn't see Mommy and Daddy. Coyote was going to bite the little desert tortoise's head off. Mommy and Daddy said "Little desert tortoise watch out!" Mommy and Daddy tortoise went over to the little desert tortoise. They were very happy to see each other again. Coyote always tried to eat the little tortoise but he could never get the little desert tortoise.

COYOTE

by Gavino Flores

Old mean coyote

Young pup

Only coyote

Tricks everybody

Everybody is scared of coyote

COYOTE AND THE PACK RAT

by Juan Matus

One windy day Coyote woke up from his nap. He saw a pack rat eating cheese. He got so mad that he chased him out of his house. Coyote ran 52 miles a day, until the pack rat took Coyote into the middle of the desert. Coyote's stomach was growling and his mouth was dried up from running 52 miles a day chasing the pack rat. Coyote needed water but there was no sign of water. Coyote soon found a pond. He looked around and he saw he was at the end of the desert. It was getting dark and Coyote was still hungry. Coyote found a dead buffalo. He ran as fast as he could and started eating the buffalo. He wanted water to go with the buffalo but the pond was 1/4 mile away from where the buffalo was. Coyote ran back to the pond. But Coyote didn't know which way to go. He met Pack Rat and Pack Rat said, "I know which way you came from: "Oh! Yeah sure which way then tell me," asked Coyote. "Only if you will be my friend," asked Pack Rat. "OK" said Coyote. Pack Rat was so nice. He gave Coyote some directions. "Thank you," said Coyote. "You're welcome," said Pack Rat. "Let's be best friends and you better not do any more tricks on me or any other animals, OK?" said Pack Rat.

COYOTE AND SNAKE

by George Martinez

One day there was a coyote that was hungry. Coyote saw a snake. Coyote ran to get the snake and Snake saw a coyote running at him. Snake slithered up the tree, but Coyote couldn't get up the tree. Coyote got tired of waiting for Snake to come down. Coyote went back home to get a ladder. When Coyote was gone, Snake got a big long stick and painted it black, red, and yellow. Snake left his home up in the tree, and Coyote came back to the tree. Coyote got the fake snake and he bit it and broke his teeth. From that day on Coyote never messed around with Snake again.

COYOTE AND HIS FRIEND RABBIT

by KJ Saaby

One nice day there lived a coyote. He was lonely. Coyote didn't have any friends. Coyote was sad. The next day Coyote saw a rabbit. Rabbit was lonely too. Coyote went over to Rabbit and said, "Do you want to be friends?" Rabbit said, "Yes I do." "Let's go and play with the other coyotes and rabbits." "OK," said Rabbit. They played all day. They had fun with everyone. The Rabbit and Coyote went home. They said to each other, "I will see you tomorrow."

The End

Hitevi Story

Herminia Valenzuela told the following traditional story about a Yoeme healer, or “Hitevi,” to her third grade class. This is Ms. Valenzuela’s version, followed by samples of her students’ retelling of the tale.

Hitevi the Healer

A Yoeme told Story by Herminia Valenzuela

Si vinguatuko, a long time ago, there lived in Rio Yaqui, Mexico, an old man who was the father of twelve children. When child number thirteen was born, no one wanted to be the godfather for the new baby. They said, “We Yoeme always baptize in sets of three, so if I baptize this child, then he will want to have baby number fourteen, and baby number fifteen.”

The father got mad and he said, “I will go to the nearest crossroads and the first man that I meet will be the nino for my baby.” So the father waited and waited at the crossroads. The first man who came along had a red cape and funny little horns on his head. He looked mean. The father said, “Will you be the godfather for my little son?”

The man replied, “Yes, I will”

The old father asked, “What is your name?”

The other man answered, “My name is the Devil.”

The father said, “Oh no, you can’t be the godfather of my baby, you are evil!” The Devil got angry and whirled away in a remolino, a dust devil.

So the father of the baby waited and waited some more. Finally, a man dressed all in black, and with a black hat pulled down over his eyes, came by. This second man was so skinny that his bones showed and his fingers were white and bony. The father asked him, “Will you be the godfather to my 13th baby?”

The man in black replied, “Of course, I will be proud to be the nino for your baby.”

The father asked, “What is your name?”

The man in black answered, “My name is Mukia [death], at your service.

The old father said, “Of course you will make a good godfather for my baby. You are fair to all. You take the poor and the rich, the tall and the short, the fat and the skinny. You will make a good nino [shortened version of the Spanish word for godfather, padrino].

Mukia told the baby’s father, “I will treat your son well, and I will teach him many powerful things. You will name my godson Hitevi, the Healer. When my godson is nine years old, I will come back for him, to take him into the mountains to teach him.”

The family was very happy, and they celebrated the little baby's baptism with great joy. Then, on the boy's ninth birthday, a black shadow suddenly fell across the doorway. "What is this?" the family asked. Everybody was amazed when the black shadow transformed itself into the Mukia.

"I have come for my godchild," said Mukia, "to take him with me."

The family was very sad and they begged Mukia to please let the boy live with them a little longer. But Mukia lifted his arm, whirled it around, and in a fast spinning motion, both Mukia and Hitevi were gone.

Mukia took little Hitevi into the sacred mountains. There, Hitevi saw a very special cave, which held many candles. There were tall, strongly burning candles, medium-sized candles, and very small candles with the flame flickering weakly. Mukia said to Hitevi, "These are the spirits and lives of all the people in the world. If you take good care of all these candles, people will live a long time. People who have long, tall candles, it means that they will live a long time. People with medium candles are halfway through their lives. And, people with very short candles, it means that it is the end of their lives, and time to die."

Then Mukia showed Hitevi all the medicinal plants that could be used to cure any illness on earth. Mukia picked up a very special plant, and said, "This is a sacred plant, and will save anyone's life if you give it to them. However, the only one who can decide whom to give this plant to is myself. I will stand at the head of the sick one's bed if he is to live, and you will then give him the plant to get well. "However, if I stand at the foot of the sick one's bed, then he must die. Do not give him this plant."

Hitevi promised to obey and do the right thing. Then Mukia taught him many things about curing with the medicinal plants. Many times Hitevi was given permission to cure dying people with the special plant. Sometimes, however, he was not allowed to give that special plant because it was time for that person to die. Hitevi became famous for miles around, for his power to cure the sick, and for his humble personality. He was offered a lot of money for his service, but he never accepted any money. He cured because he loved and cared for all people.

One day, when Hitevi had grown up into a handsome, strong young man, he was called to a rich man's house. Hitevi could see that the rich man was dying because he saw Mukia standing at the foot of the rich man's bed. A young, sixteen year-old girl was sitting by the man's side, crying for her father.

The rich man said, "I have a lot of money and gold, and land and cattle, but no sons to carry on. If you cure me, I will give you my land, my money, my gold, and my cattle. I will also give you my young daughter to marry."

Hitevi was not interested in the money or land or cattle. But he took one look at the pretty young girl and he fell in love. He had to marry this girl! But how could he do this, when Mukia was standing at the foot of the bed and the young girl's father had to die? Quickly, Hitevi turned the rich man's bed around, so that now

Hitevi Story

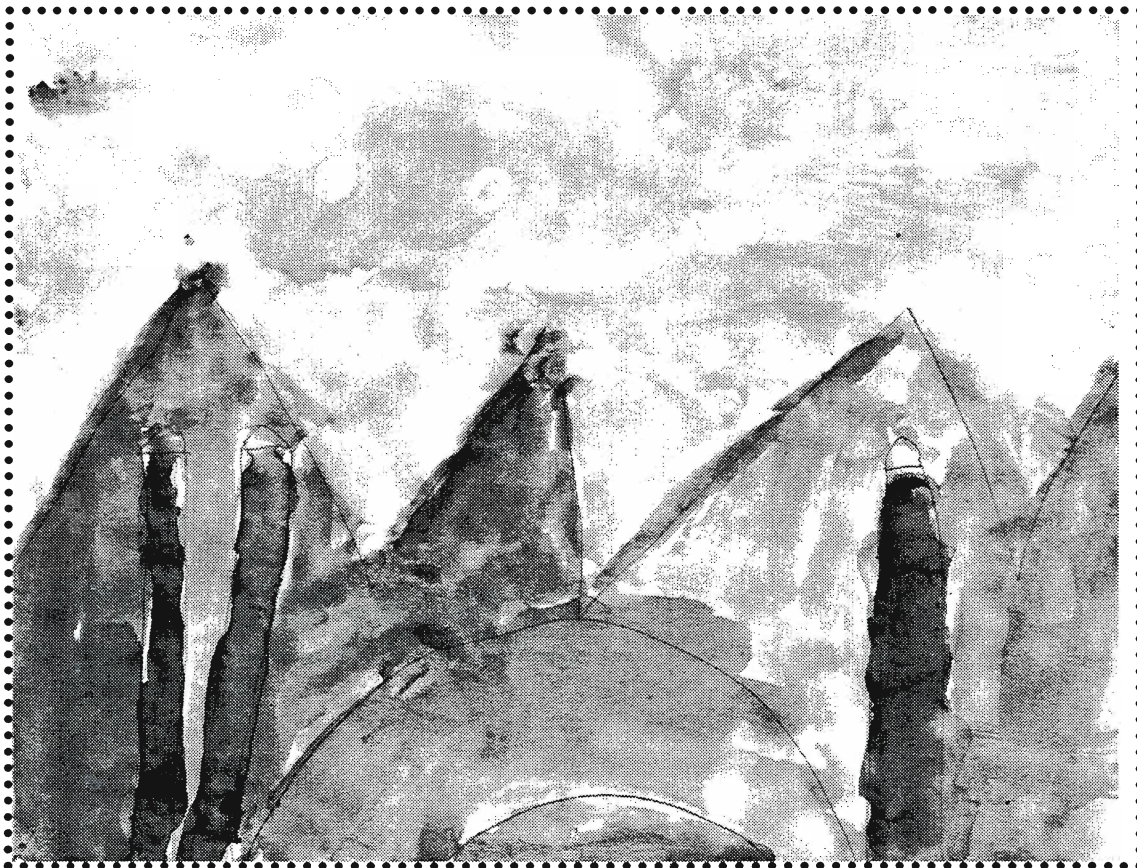
Mukia was standing at the head of the dying man's bed. Hitevi gave the special plant to the rich man, and he lived. Mukia was very mad, and he whirled away to the cave in anger.

Hitevi and the young girl got married. They had a beautiful wedding with the *Pahko'olam*, deer dancer, and lots of food like *wakavaki*, pozole, and tortillas. Suddenly there was a big black shadow over the doorway. What was this? It was Mukia, and he said, "I have come for my godson. He disobeyed me and must be punished."

So Mukia whirled Hitevi back to the sacred mountain. He said to Hitevi, "You disobeyed me. Even though you are my own godson, I must punish you."

Hitevi said, "Please, godfather, before you punish me, let me see my own candle in the cave of candles."

So Mukia showed Hitevi his candle. It was tall and burning very strongly. Then Mukia blew it out.



Painting by Sarah Hernandez

This is an interview with Ms. Hermenia Valenzuela, a third grade teacher and an accomplished Yoeme story teller and author. In this interview Ms. Valenzuela shares how she involved her students in the tradition of storytelling and in the writing of Yoeme stories.

Ms. Goswami: Ms. Valenzuela, your students have retold a Yoeme story that you told them. And they have also written some renditions that represent their interpretations of the same Yoeme story. I was hoping that you would share with us about your process of working with the students with the story telling tradition.

Ms. Valenzuela In the beginning of the year, I did a lot of oral story telling so that my students would be exposed to quality literature. Then students also told stories from their traditions such as European-American, Mexican-American, Tohono O'odham and Yoeme. So the students got the full flavor of the story-telling language. We don't water down our stories. If children understand the stories that's good. But even if they don't, these stories are told many more times. So as they get older, they begin to know all there is to know in these stories.

My students also did lots of art as another way of telling stories. They did weekly writing of stories concentrating on building a good beginning, middle and end. We also focused on using the six traits. We especially worked on developing voice.

Ms. Goswami Is there anything else that you would like to share about the process of studying storytelling?

Ms. Valenzuela Yes! Besides listening to stories and writing them, students also reflected and responded to each other's stories and shared ideas for improving their stories. In the beginning I noticed that the students were somewhat competitive and critical of one another. But with time they became much more compassionate and helpful to one another. Now they really listen to each other's stories and provide helpful ideas.

Ms. Goswami Would you please share how you and your students prepared for your contribution to this publication?

Ms. Valenzuela I told a Yoeme story about a healer—a Hitevi, from a book that I published called "Yoeme." This story takes place in Mexico, in one of the villages of the Yoeme tribe.

Ms. Goswami After you told the students the powerful story of Hitevi, what was their reaction?

Ms. Valenzuela When I talked to the students, I asked, "How do you feel about this story? What do you think about this story? What impressed you the most?" I was

Hitevi Story

surprised that instead of sticking with the traditional oral story, they started relating the messages of this story to their own lives. We ended up having a long discussion about death coming too soon and the fact that some of my students' older brothers and sisters admire what is going on with gangs and think of becoming part of that scene. So the students were making observations that if we don't take care of ourselves, choose to carry guns, threaten people etc., then we might put out our candlelight prematurely. Students also expressed concern for family members who drank too much. So they reacted in a very personal way. And it took some energy to bring them back to the story itself.

Ms. Goswami Your students did make some very powerful and relevant connections to this story. Once you were able to get them to talk about the story itself, what did they have to say?

Ms. Valenzuela Some of the students said that it isn't fair for Mukia to be the one who knows who is entitled to a long life and who is not. They also felt that it wasn't fair that Mukia had the power to suddenly snuff out somebody's life. Actually the kids were of two minds. Some said that a rule was broken and there are consequences for that. Others asked, "Couldn't Mukia have given Hitevi a second chance. He has the power. Why couldn't he do something else?" "Well," I said, "When you get into a car accident, is there a second chance?" Then the students decide that there are situations where there isn't a second chance. Most of my students also felt that they all had tall candles and they talked about how they might take care of their lives so that their flames keep burning bright.

After our long discussion, I asked the students to draw a picture of a part of the story that impressed them most. What I discovered is that they were very impressed with the candles in the cave. It caught their attention because it was about life and reality.

At the end, students decided that Mukia is fair in that he comes to us all. But meanwhile, we could take care of our health to keep the candle strong. I asked, "What if someone's candle light is flickering?" Students shared a few ideas. One was that we could pray for that person. Another was that we could treat that person better during the short time he has left.

Students observed that Mukia has visited all their families. But they didn't feel threatened by that.

Ms. Goswami Did the students share this story with their families?

Ms. Valenzuela Yes! In fact one of their homework assignment was to retell the Hitevi story to family members and then have a discussion about it.

Ms. Goswami Were you able to find out about the family reactions?

Ms. Valenzuela Yes! The following morning students wrote in their journals about their homework assignment. One student wrote that when he himself retold the story, it hit him that that is what happens in real life and he cried. Another boy wrote that when he told the Hitevi story to his family, the mother said "That's a scary story!" And the little boy told her, "It's not scary, Mom. It happens to all of us. You have to be ready when it happens."

And that made that family discuss the fact that their grandmother is very old and frail and may not have long to live. They talked about what they could do for Nana at the end of her life. The mother also said to the boy "There is a lot that I have not arranged in my life because I don't think about death."

In other families, this homework assignment was seen as entertaining. But they were glad that they could discuss about death with their children. So in some families, the adults shared with their children for the first time about family members who were quite sick.

Ms. Goswami Did you have any negative or apprehensive responses from any of the families since the story is about a topic that many of us are reluctant to talk about, especially with children?

Ms. Valenzuela No! I expected to receive some. But all the kids came back with positive responses.



Painting by Lucio Alvarez

Hitevi Student Retellings

MUKIA

by Aaron Martinez

Mukia was a godfather to the little baby. The real father was happy. It was nine years later, and Mukia came back to get his godson. The Hitevi went with Mukia. He showed the Hitevi the flowers. One was special. Mukia said, "This is special. When I stand at the head of the bed, give it to the dying person."

Hitevi became a healer, and fell in love. The girl's father was dying and Mukia was not standing at the head of the bed. But Hitevi turned the bed around and gave the flower to the father. Hitevi and the girl got married, because the father was well and happy.

Mukia came back to get his godson. Mukia went to his cave and the Hitevi said, "Let me see my candle." They went to see it.

Mukia said, "That is your candle."

Hitevi said, "Wow!" but Mukia blew the candle out.



Drawing by Yvonne Gracia

THE STORY OF MUKIA AND THE HITEVI

Retold by Lily Gamboa, Grade 3

There was a little boy who was the 13th baby. No one wanted to baptize the old man's 13th baby, so he found someone to baptize the baby.

The guy who baptized the baby was Mukia. He is "Death." He told the dad that he was going to take the boy when he was 9 years old. When the Mukia came back for the little boy, the father was saying, "No, you can't take him yet. Leave him for a while."

Mukia just spinned, and the boy was gone with Mukia. They went to Mukia's cave. There were some plants that were medicine. Mukia said, "When people are dying, just give them the medicine."

There was a pretty lady that the boy wanted to marry, but the dad was dying. The old dad said, "If you help me I will give you my daughter to marry her."

The boy said, "O.K." But Mukia was at the rich man's foot of the bed, and if he is on the foot of the bed, that means don't give him some medicine."

Mukia was on the feet side of the bed, so it was the old man's time to die.

Then the boy turned the bed around and gave the old man the medicine. The old father got better, so the boy and the girl got married.

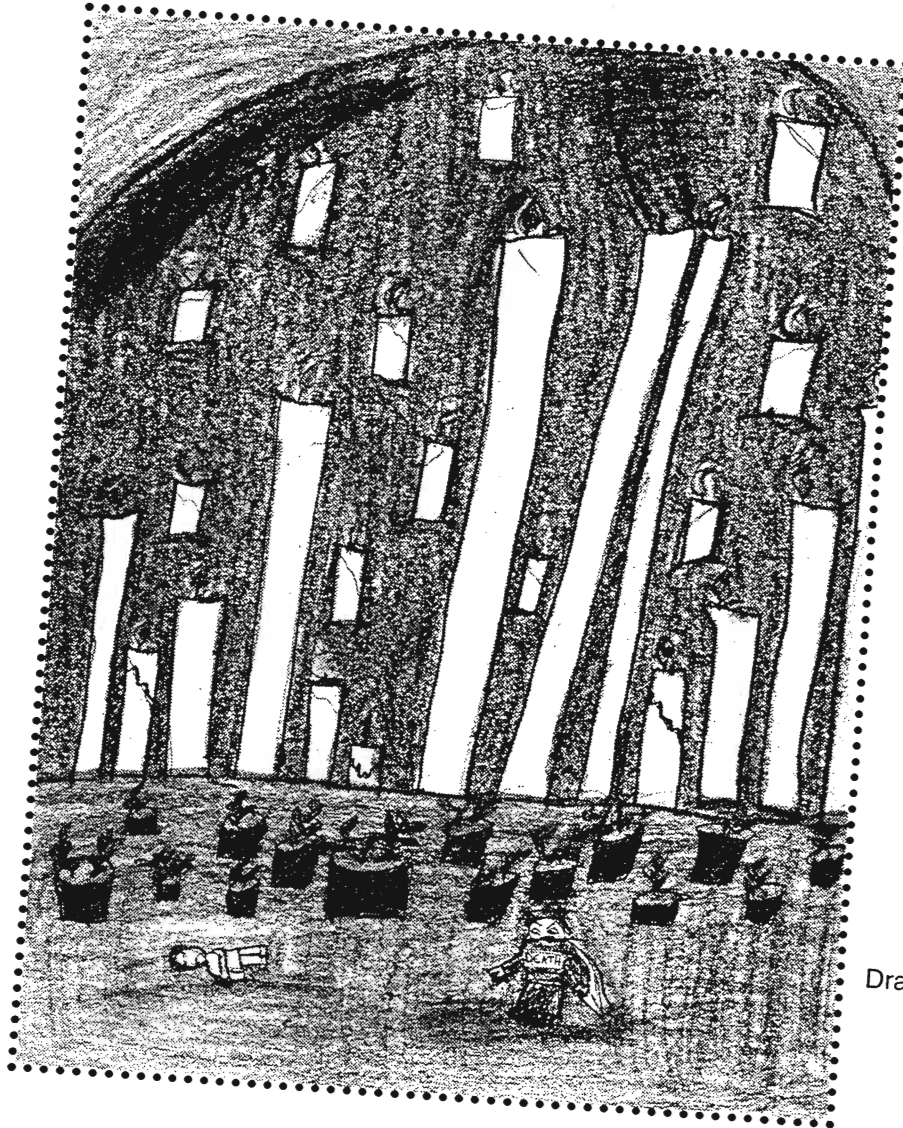
Then Mukia came for his godson, and the boy said to the Mukia, "Can I see my candle?" So Mukia showed the boy his candle and it was so big. But Mukia blew the candle out and the boy fell down and died.

DEATH AND HIS GODSON

by Hector Palma

One day a man needed a nino for his thirteenth son. He went to the highway and found a nino. His name was Death. When the little boy was nine years old, Death took him to a cave.

Then the boy married a nice girl. They had a party with presents. The young man had turned the father's bed around to give him the medicine. That was wrong. Death took the young man to punish him. Then Death blew out the young man's candle. He fell back and died.



Drawing by Francisco Sol

A MAN CALLED DEATH

by David Valenzuela, Grade 3

Once there was a man called Death and he had a godson, and Death baptized the baby. When the boy was nine, Death came to take him. The mom said, "No!" But the mom still let him go and so he went with his nino to go see a lot of candles in a cave. Death showed him plants that are medicine and the boy became a good doctor. There was an old father who had a girl, but he was dying. Hitevi wanted to marry her. Death had to stand at the head of the bed so he could give the medicine, but death was standing at the feet of the bed. So the Hitevi turned the old man's bed around and he gave him the medicine. Hitevi had not listened, so his nino took him to the cave again. Death blew out the Hitevi's candle and the Hitevi died.

MUKIA

by Yvonne Gracia

One day an old man wanted a nino for his baby. So he went to the crossroads and saw a man dressed in red. The old man asked, "Will you be my baby's nino? What's your name?"

The man answered, "My name is the Devil."

The little old man said, "Never mind, you're evil!" A few minutes later another man popped out of nowhere. He was dressed in all black. The little old man asked him, "Will you be my baby's nino? What's your name?"

The man answered, "MY NAME IS DEATH, AND YES, I WILL BE THE NINO OF YOUR BABY."

"Good, because you take the skinny, fat, old, young, poor, rich, short, and fat.

"Thank you very much." Then the man left in a flash and the old man went home. He finally had a nino for his baby.

When the baby turned nine, Death came back for the boy. He was at the door and said, "I've come for my son."

They asked if they can have him just for a little while longer. But Death just said, "No, I've come for my son." Death grabbed the boy and vanished. All of a sudden they were in a cave. Death told the boy what every plant cures.

Once there was a very, very sick old man, and the Hitevi wanted to give him the medicine so that he doesn't die. The Hitevi saw a beautiful young lady in the corner crying. The old man said, "If you don't let me die I will let you have my daughter." So the Hitevi turned the bed around so that he can give it [medicine] to him. Death got mad because the Hitevi disobeyed him.

When the Hitevi and the girl got married, Death came back for him. And he said, "I've come for my son." They begged for the Hitevi to stay, but Death just grabbed him and took him to the cave with the candles. The Hitevi got surprised when he saw his candle but he wasn't surprised any more after Death blew out his candle; Hitevi fell to the floor.

The End

Hitevi Story

MUKIA AND HIS GODSON

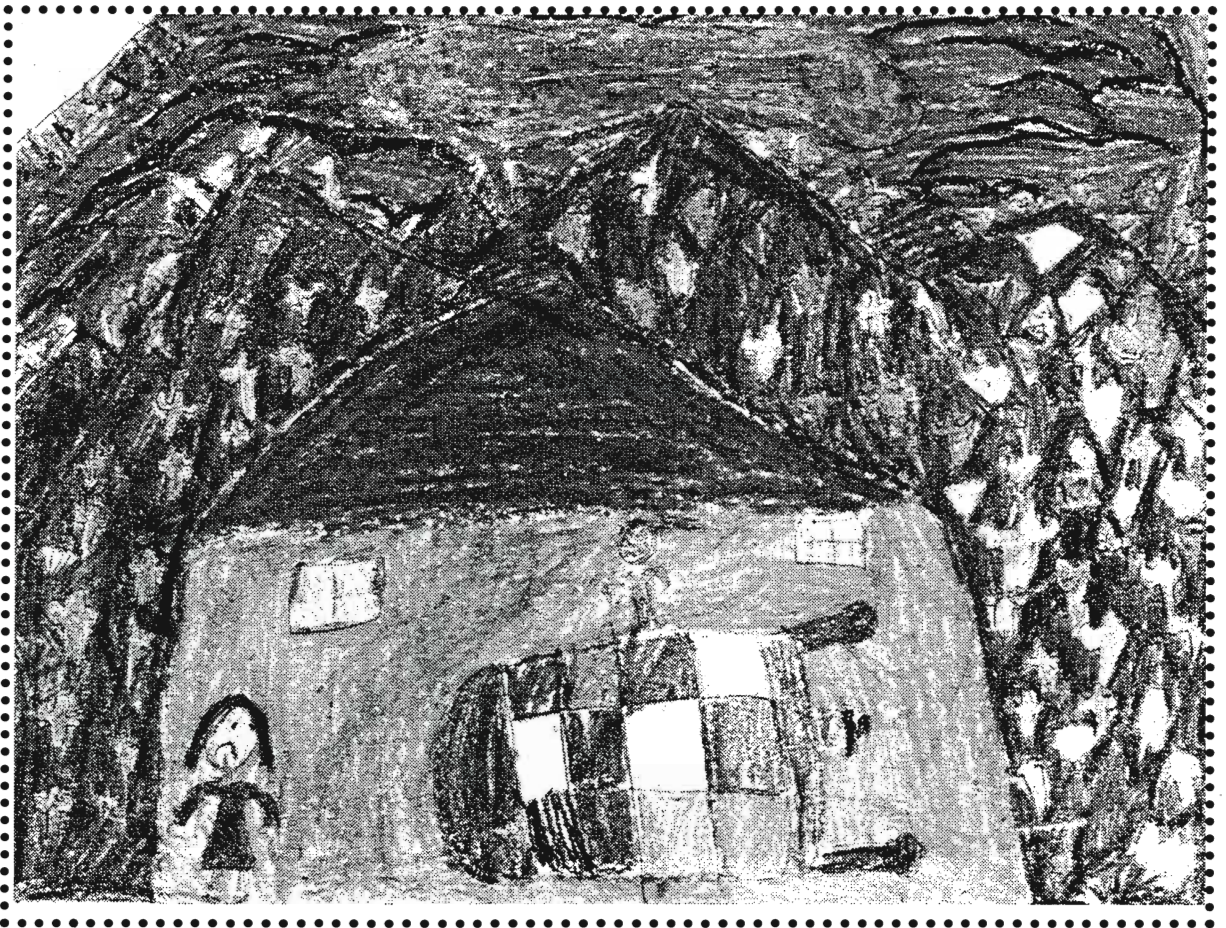
by Noel Burrael, Grade 3

Once there was a man called Death. He had a godson, and Death took him to his cave. The godson was 9 years old. He saw candles—big candles and small candles.

An old man was dying. He had a pretty little young daughter. The Hitevi wanted to marry her, but her old father was supposed to die because Mukia was at the foot of the bed. Hitevi turned the bed around so Death was at the feet, to cure him. Death got mad and blew out Hitevi's candle, because Hitevi cured the man when he was not supposed to cure him. Nobody could find Hitevi. Then they found him in Death's cave. His wife couldn't stop crying and they buried him.



Collage by Victor Chaney



Painting by Cassandra Alcaras

MUKIA

by Andrea Escamilla, Grade 3

One day there was an old man. He had lots of kids, but his last kid had no one to be his nino. So the man went to look for one.

When the old man got there, he saw a man. He asked him to be the nino. The man said, "I'm Mukia." He said, "Yes, you will be the nino."

So Mukia said, "I will come back in nine years."

Mukia came back to get the little kid. The parents did not want him to go. But Mukia went and got him and left. Mukia showed him the plants that help sick people get better. He showed him the candles that show how long you live. The young boy didn't listen. He used the special medicine wrong.

Mukia blew out the young man's candle. The young man died.

Hitevi Student Interpretations

Lucio Alvarez

One day there was a mother who had thirteen children. The father wanted a Nino for the thirteenth baby, so he went to the crossroad. A man came walking by and the father asked him if he wanted to be a Nino. He said "Yes," and the father asked for his name. He said "El Diablo"

But the father said, "He can't be a Nino because he is evil, mean and hated." So the father saw another man walking by and he asked for his name. It was Mukia, Death, and the father asked Mukia if he wanted to be a Nino. Mukia said, "Yes!" But Mukia also said, "When the boy is nine years old, I am going to take him to my cave to show him some plants to help people who are sick."

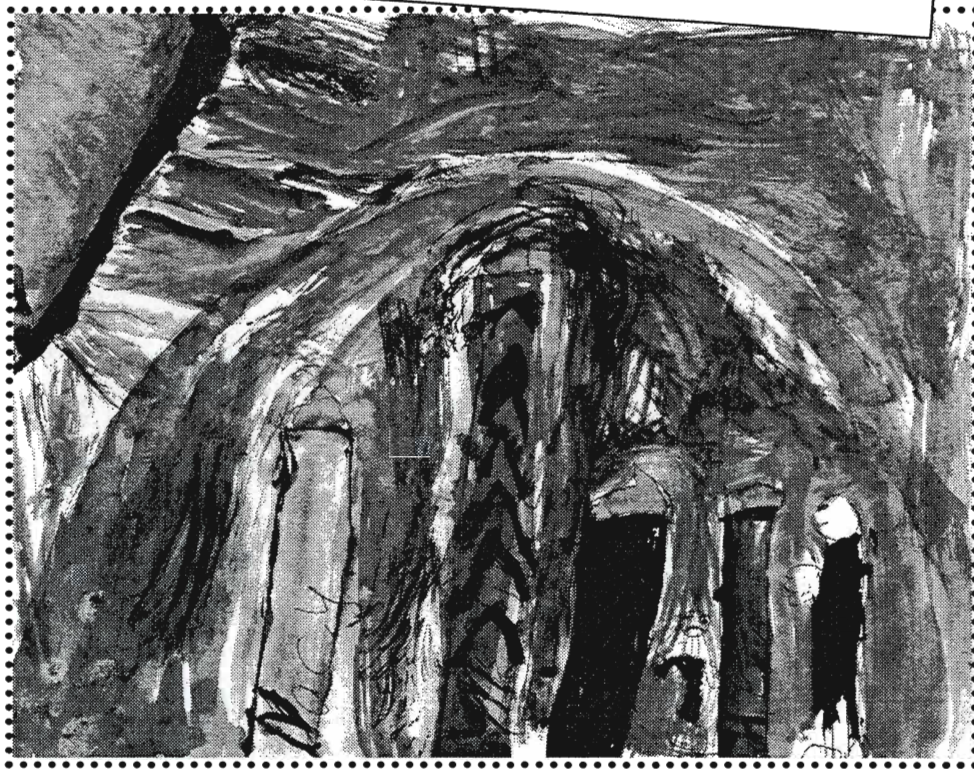
On the boy's ninth birthday, Mukia came and spinned around and they were gone to his cave. Mukia showed all the plants to cure people. Mukia said, "This is for people who are dying. This is a special plant and when I am standing at the head of the bed, give the sick person the plant. If I am at the foot of the bed, it is time for them to die." A long time later, the young man went to cure a farmer and there was his daughter that the healer wanted to marry. The farmer said, "Cure me and I will give you everything I've got, even my daughter."

But Mukia was standing at the foot of the bed, which means the man has to die. So the healer turned the bed around and gave him the plant and Mukia was mad and disappeared. The healer and the girl got married. Mukia came to the wedding and spinned around and Mukia and Hitevi were gone to the cave. The healer told Mukia to take him to the cave with all the candles. So Mukia took him. Mukia got Hitevi's candle and blew it out and the healer died.

Ruby May

My picture reminds me about the story about the healer, Hitevi. It reminds me of when Death blew out the healer's candle and the healer died.

The funniest part of the story is when the Hitevi turned the bed around and gave the rich man the special medicine. Death was mad and that's why he blew out the healer's candle.



Painting by Corinna Lopez

Mia Madrid

My picture is about Mukia and the Healer. Mukia has a cave that is full of candles. The long one is mine. The little one is my nanas because she is dying. The healer is a guy that helps people. One day the healer fell in love with a girl.

The girl's old father was dying. The old father said, "If you help me I will give you all my money in the bank. I will give you my young daughter to marry." So they got married. But Hitevi broke one of the rules to save the father and marry the girl. Mukia blew out Hitevi's candle.

Hitevi Story

Ernesto Gomez

The healer was helping people because they were dying. So he gave the special plants to people so they won't die. The healer wanted to help an old man because he was dying. He wanted to give the special plant to the old man so he won't die. But Death was standing at the feet of the old man's bed. So it was his time to die. The old man said "I will give you my sixteen year old daughter if you help me." The healer turned the bed around so Death, Mukia, was now standing at the head of the bed. The healer went to the cave to see his candle. Death took the Hitevi's candle and blew it out. The Hitevi died. Death was so sad that the healer died. Now Death, or Mukia, was all alone. Death wanted to be nice to the healer. But the healer broke his rule so he had to die. So sad.



Painting by Dora Gastelum

Corinna Lopez

My story is about when Hitevi, or healer, and a young lady got married. Hitevi's godfather was Death, or Mukia. He came and said that he is taking his godson. Then his father said, "No you cannot take him. He barely got married and he wants to stay with his bride. When my son wants to go with you we will call you. Then he will go with you." Mukia said, "Ok. I will go for now. But I'll come back for Hitevi in nine years."

Cassandra Alcarus

My favorite part of the Hitevi story is when the old man tells a man dressed in red if he can be the Nino for his baby. The man says, "Yes."

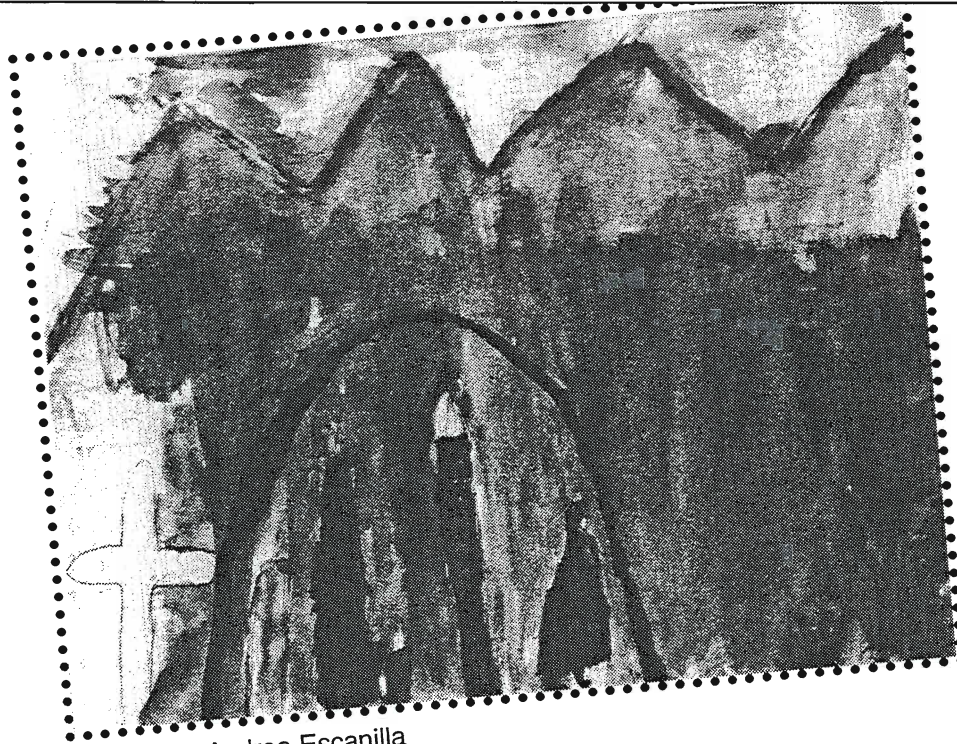
The old man asks him what his name is. The man says his name is The Devil. The old man says, "No I don't want you to be the Nino for my baby. You are mean." The devil gets mad and disappears in the dust devil.

Richard Alvarez

In the mountains of Mexico, there is a cave. There are candles in the cave. Some candles are big and some candles are small. You will live a long life if the candle is big. If the candle is small, your life will end.

The healer takes care of the candles. The healer broke Mukia's (Death's) rule. The healer gave the special medicine to the old man who was dying. The old man was now feeling better. The old man went home because he was hungry.

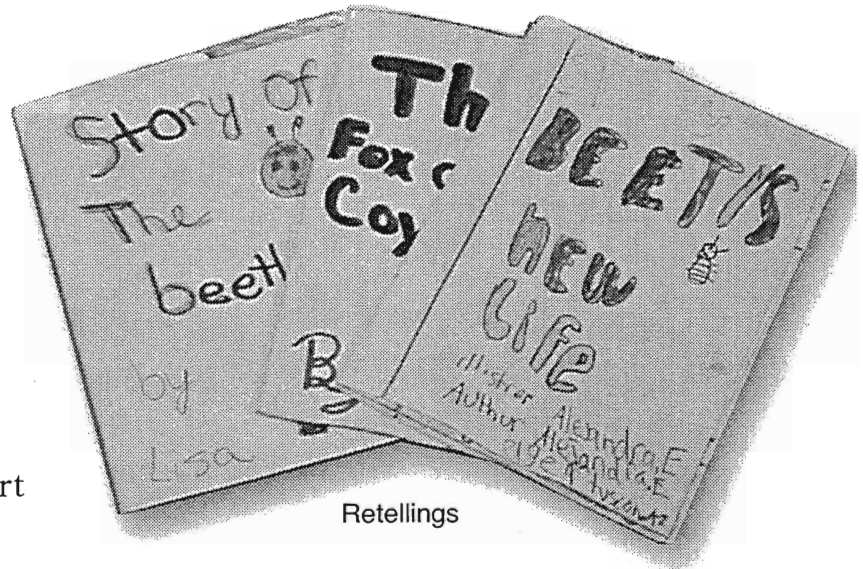
But Mukia felt sad because he had to blow out the healer's candle for breaking his rule.



Painting by Andrea Escanilla

Graphic Organizers


These graphic organizers represent the discussions that were generated and the thinking that was done in developing student understanding of the topic of ethnobotany: relationships between plants, animals and people that live in the Sonoran desert, and about the characters and elements of story that are part of the storytelling tradition.



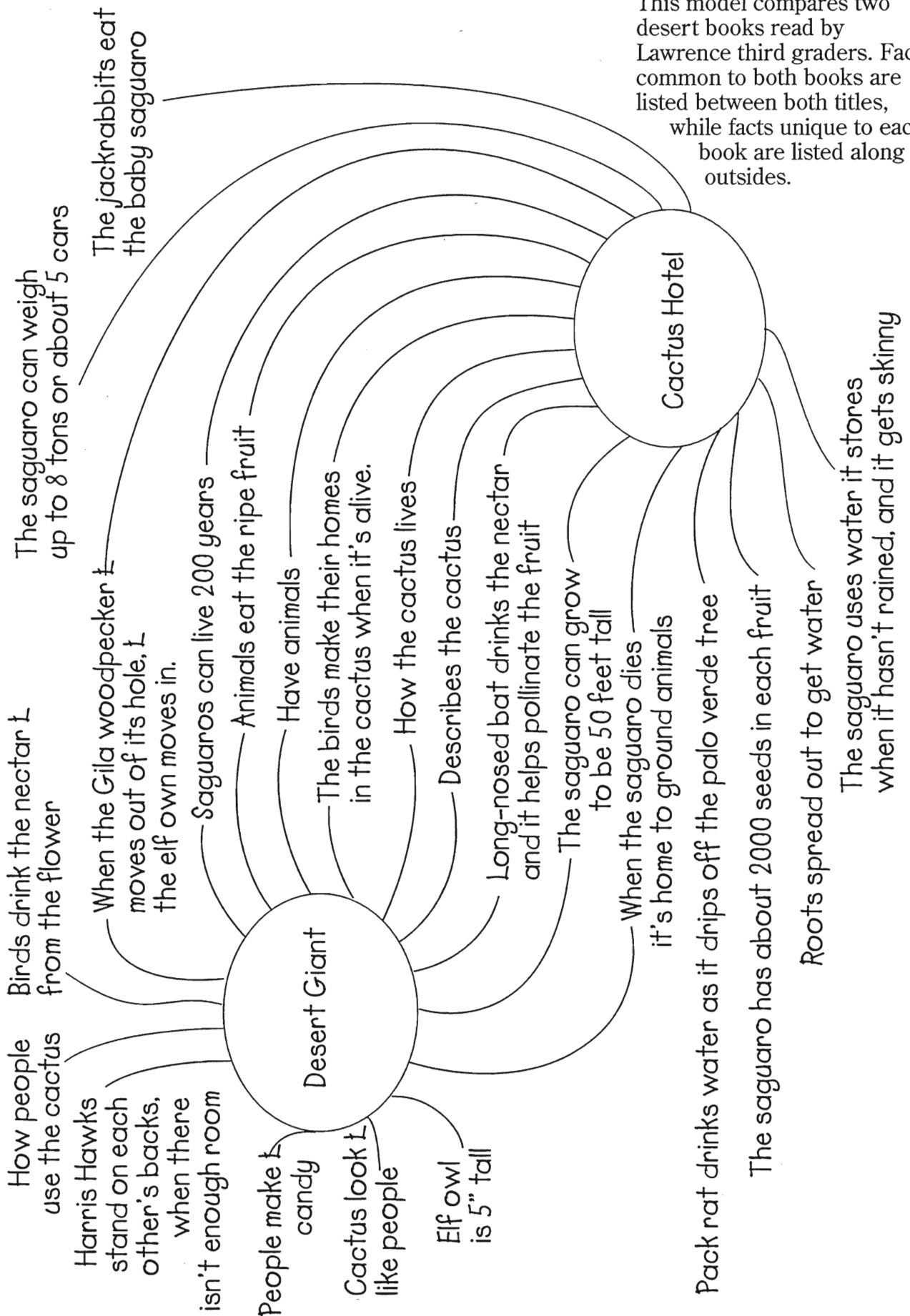
Character Analysis

GIRL

Antelope Woman



<p>She has black hair. She has red cheeks. She has black eye brows. She has long hair. She has straight. She has light brown skin. She has a red dress. She has black eyes.</p>	<p>She is happy when she has her kids. She act sad when she had to leav her family. She act helpful because she help the lady with the water.</p>	<p>She has 2 kids and they are twins. She lived with the man. She has two kids with the man. She was very special.</p>
---	---	--



This model compares two desert books read by Lawrence third graders. Facts common to both books are listed between both titles, while facts unique to each book are listed along the outsides.



Ethnobotany in Action

An Ethnobotany Fieldtrip

Students in Mr. Felipe Molina's Bilingual 5th grade class took a field trip to Patagonia State Park to learn about plants traditionally used by the Yoeme people. Children heard the English, Yoeme, and Spanish names for the plant, learned how to identify them, and learned how they were traditionally used by the Yoeme. After their field trip, the children created artwork representing the plants they studied, and wrote the following pieces about their experience.

The following is an interview with Mr. Molina, a fifth grade teacher, and an author who is well known for his knowledge of Yoeme culture, history and tradition including ethnobotany. In this interview with Ms. Goswami, he talks about the way in which he introduces his students to the philosophy and knowledge of plants and animals that is embedded in Yoeme, Mexican-American and other native cultures of Sonora.

- Ms. Goswami** Mr. Molina, I have heard you saying to your students that in the Yoeme culture one doesn't enter the desert unconsciously. There is preparation involved and a certain relationship with the desert is established before entering the desert. Could you tell us more about this?
- Mr. Molina** What we do is before we go to the desert, let's say to gather some medicinal plants, two weeks in advance or even more, we have to purify ourselves. We have to have positive thoughts, and a positive body. And when you get to the desert, you do a blessing. Just as we did, you talk to the world, say that you are there to respect, save someone, and only get what you need.
- And when we gather plants to heal someone, we only take from the east side of the plant and take only the amount that we need. We then give thanks and leave an offering such as fruit. In this way, we thank the plants and the animals. The animals in return say good-bye to us when we leave. We can hear a bird chirping in a special way, saying good-bye.
- Ms. Goswami** I noticed that you took a lot of care to pass this understanding to your students about establishing a relationship of respect and gratitude with the desert. You also shared your knowledge about the desert plants. Would you like to share about what you wanted the students to know?
- Mr. Molina** I wanted the students to know that plants are used for medicinal use, for housing, tools, for food and ornamentation. I wanted them to become familiar with naming plants in English, Spanish and Yoeme. It is also important for them to know where to find the plants and how to use them.
- Ms. Goswami** Yes! I remember that I learned something new about the use of the barrel cactus.
- Mr. Molina** Yes! With the barrel cactus, you eat the tiny fruit and not the flesh. The seeds are very good for the body. They are crunchy, delicious, and nutritious and a good snack.
- Ms. Goswami** Your description of how to cook the cholla bud was very appetizing. Did the Yoeme cook the cholla buds with chile and tomato traditionally?
- Mr. Molina** Cholla is traditionally a Tohono O'odham food. But now we all eat it. Traditionally, it might have been cooked differently. But with the availability of tomatoes and red chile, it is cooked with these, it's delicious.

Ethnobotany

Ms. Goswami You also mentioned that the jumping cholla was not edible. But the Yoeme use the resin that is produced by this cactus.

Mr. Molina Yes. The jumping cholla produces a resin that is used for making a refreshing drink during Easter. This resin is especially collected in Sonora, Mexico. The apostles and then Jesus is served this drink. Then the rest of the village partakes in the drink that is made from the jumping cholla resin.

Ms. Goswami What does the resin look like?

Mr. Molina The color of the resin is dark and it hangs from the cholla—about three inches. It's taken off with a knife.

Ms. Goswami Thank you for sharing your knowledge of desert plants and their uses with us. What are some final thoughts you would like to share about ethnobotany and what you want the children to know about this tradition.

Mr. Molina What I have learned from my ancestors, my grandparents, especially from my mother's side is that we as a people have a great deal of respect for the desert. We have to enter the desert with a good attitude and good energy. The desert and the tradition of ethnobotany teach you how to respect and also how to appreciate because we need this plant to heal from sickness. We also learn how not to over harvest. There is a saying in our tradition that if you take too much from a plant, the plant will let you know that you have taken more than you needed.

Ms. Goswami Do you think that the students have understood these invaluable concepts of conservation and respect that is embedded in the traditional culture of the Yoeme?

Mr. Molina Many of the students have some of the knowledge. Sometimes they will remind me and ask, "Have you asked permission?" when I gather from a plant. I tell them that I am doing it silently—like mental telepathy. So yes, I feel that they are gaining some knowledge about the plants and how they are used. But they are also developing a relationship of respect and appreciation of plants and animals in the Sonoran desert.



Drawing by Luz Gonzalez

Writings by students in Mr. Molina's
class after the desert walk.

EL DESIERTO EN MEXICO

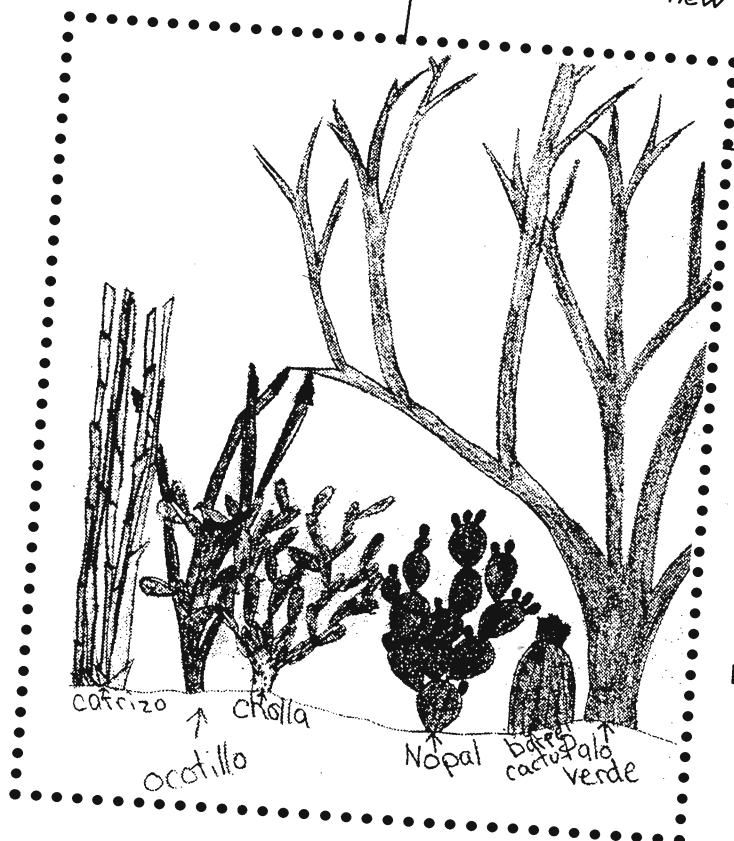
by Miguel Tinoco

Yo en Mexico tengo una casa de Carrizo en la bia del sevi. Nos tomo
one and a half ano y niedio para a ser el serco y la casa. La casa tiene
six bentanas two piertas una en la esquina y otra en la cosina. Tambien
en mexico Los Fariseos usan Carrizo para aser unos shiflos. Se usa 2
pedasos. Chiqitos de carrizo y un pedasido de bomba.

DESERT WALK

When I was over in the desert, I saw a cholla, a barrel
cactus, a palo verde, ocotillo, napal and carrizo. At my Tio's
house in Mexico, he has some ocotillo. He uses them for a
fence so people won't trespass. Carrizo is like bamboo. It looks
like it but its pretty thick. You could eat the seeds of the
barrel cactus. It's nutritious. The nopal, you could eat it with
eggs and chili or just by itself.

I also learned that the palo verde roots wrap around
bacteria and the bacteria gets food from the palo verde. The
bacteria let out nitrogen to the root. The nitrogen goes up the
tree and makes new leaves. The cholla on Holy Week has gum
that hangs from it. You can chew the
gum and make a drink from it.



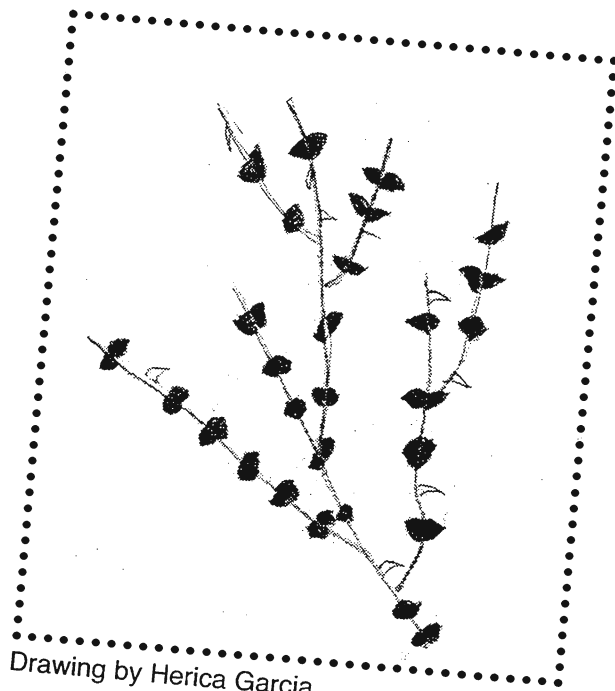
Drawing by Angel Alonzo

Ethnobotany

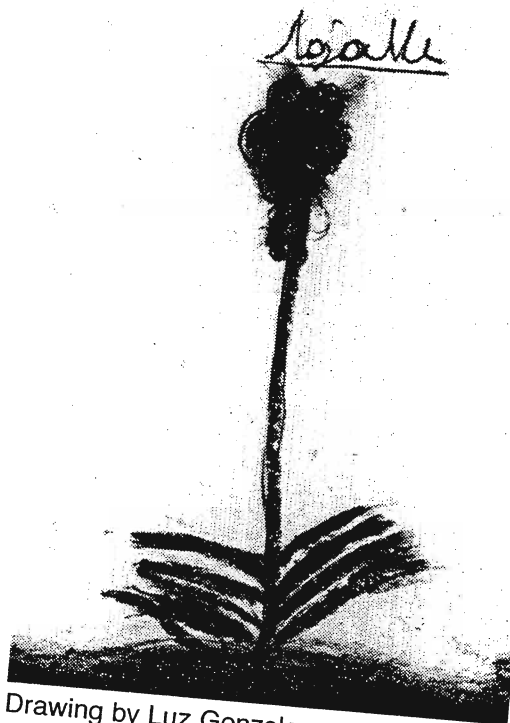
LA BELLOTA

Por Gabriel Soto

La Planta que yo miro más fue la bellota.
En casi todo el camino me fijé más en
todas las bellotas. Me gusta su color y
tambien me gusta su sabor de la bellota.



Drawing by Herica Garcia



Drawing by Luz Gonzales

THE MESQUITE

by Herica Garcia

The tree that I really like was the
mesquite, because it has leaves that
are so pretty. It has some medicine
that you could use for tea. You don't
want to eat it without some water.

THE JUNIPER

by Francisca Duarte

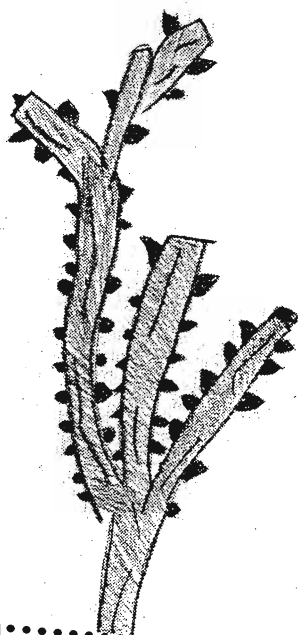
My favorite plant was the juniper because it's round and it
has a very funny shape and because it has red dots. Well, and
also because when you put it in fire, it smells good.

THE MESQUITE AND THE CREOSOTE

by Yuriana Morga

One of my important plants is the mesquite tree. The mesquite tree is important to me because with the blossoms you could make tea. And with the sap you could use it like it was gum.

The other important plant to me is the creosote because you could use it if you have infection in the feet. What you do is put the creosote in hot water. Then you get it and pour it on your feet.



Willow drawing by Herica Garcia

THE WILLOW

by Casey Jaimez

The plant that I liked was the willow. It was the first that we talked about. The willow has lots of uses for the Yoeme people, for crosses, a ramada, and also to make baskets. The willow is very flexible.

THE JUNIPER

by Sarai Portillo

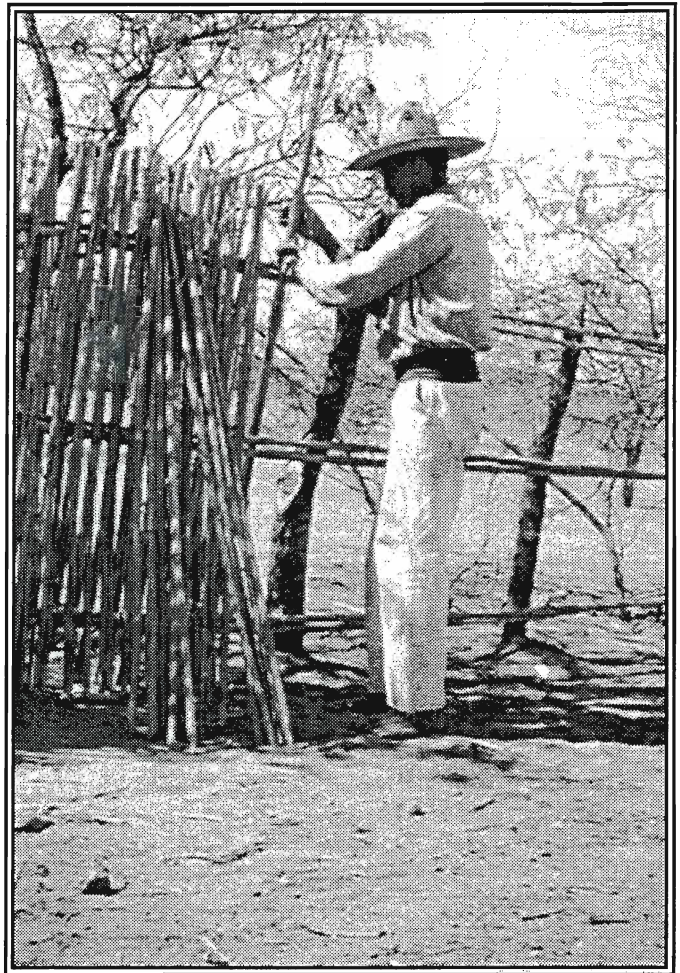
I really liked the fieldtrip. It was fun. What I liked about the fieldtrip was when we went to go see the plants. The plants were nice. I learned stuff about them. I also liked when we were going on the van. I saw a lot of plants and mountains. It looked cool when we were up the mountain and you could see all the plants on the bottom. The mountains look like a painting. And I liked it when Luz and Claudia and I were picking up little shells. The colors were pretty.

I liked all the plants. The plant that I liked was the juniper. I think it is interesting because it doesn't grow here in Tucson. What I learned about the juniper is when you burn the wood from the juniper it smells sweet. There are plants on the mountains that don't grow here.

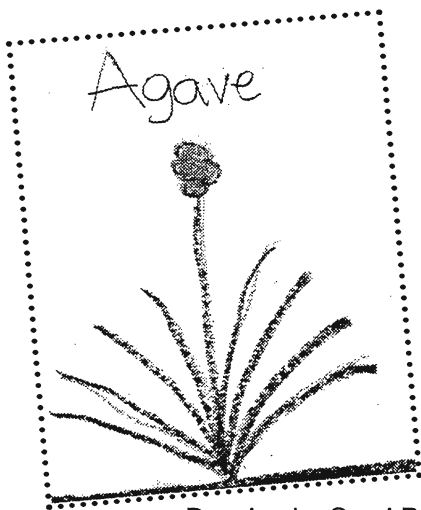
Ethnobotany

Yvana Marga

When we were on the desert walk, we saw a lot of plants, like saguaros, chollas and lots of other plants. When we were together, our group stopped and rested under a tree. Under the palo verde tree, we made a little Ramada. A man who lived in the edge of the desert told us that he had carrizo in his backyard. Then Miguel said that his house in Mexico was made of carrizo and the fences too.



Mangwe making a new fence of carrizo at his house in Potam, Mexico. Arizona State Museum. (M-7 #34) University of Arizona.



Drawing by Sarai Portillo

Angel Alonzo
What I liked about the desert walk is seeing the plants. I think the desert is cool.

DESERT WALK

Sarai Portillo

When we went to the desert walk, we saw a lot of plants. The plants that we saw were barrel cactus, prickly pear, ocotillo, cholla and tall cane. And we saw two birds on a nest. I learned that the seeds from the barrel cactus are good for you. The barrel cactus leans down to the South. The prickly pear, you can eat it. It's good. Tall cane is used to do a lot of stuff. You can make houses, fences, flutes and more stuff. The other kind of cholla has something that grows on the bottom. It's used to make drinks. It only grows on Easter time. And we made a little ramada made out of sticks. I had fun learning about different plants. It's interesting.

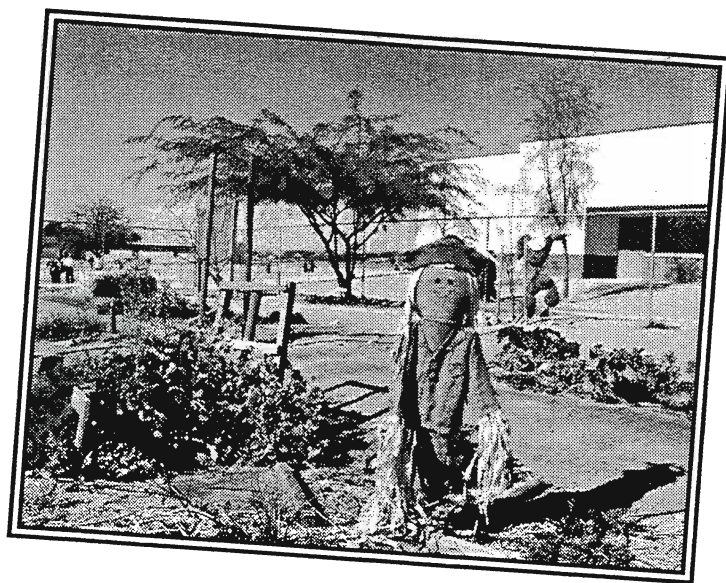
The Lawrence Garden

Reflections by Jeffrey Lopez, 5th grade

The garden is relaxing. No one ever fights there. I love how beautiful it looks. It makes me feel comforting. I really like gardening and to see things grow. It is good to smell flowers. I like it a lot. I think Leza tries to give everyone a comforting welcome. I love to eat vegetables. It seems pretty cool to plant. I even like to plant at my house. It seems cool to have a garden at my school. I am proud to say I have a garden at my school!!!!

Ms. Buenamea's Famous Wakavaki Recipe

This spring, under the direction of Ms. Mary Jane Buenamea, we boiled up a big batch of *Wakavaki*, a traditional Yoeme stew similar to the Spanish "Cocido." We served the soup to Lawrence staff as a thank you for their hard work. The *Wakavaki* was made mostly from our own garden vegetables and was a big hit! Many of you asked for the recipe, so here it is:



Pascua Yaqui Garden at Lawrence.
Leza Carter, gardener and teacher

Ingredients

1 large pot roast	Green onions
1 large cabbage	Cilantro
1 lb. Carrots	Pepper
8 ears of fresh corn	Lemon
2 bags (or 6 cans) garbanzo beans	Garlic or garlic salt
8 zucchini	Salt to taste
6-8 potatoes	

Directions

Trim meat and cut into cubes. Cook in boiling water. Make sure you skim the foam off the top as the meat cooks. Chop vegetables. After awhile, add the harder vegetables (potatoes, carrots, corn). Let cook for a while and then add remaining ingredients and spices. Cook until the meat and vegetables are soft but not mushy. Garnish with cilantro. Enjoy! Serves 15-20 people.

Reprinted with permission from "In the Garden". A newsletter of the Pascua Yaqui Garden program at Lawrence. Volume 1, Issue 1, May 13, 2002; Leza Carter, editor.



Oral Histories: Ethnobotany

YOEME ORAL HISTORY

Lawrence Intermediate School, March 13, 2002

The following section consists of excerpts from an ethnobotany panel interview that took place at Lawrence in March, 2002. Third, fourth, and fifth grade students asked questions about gardening, medicinal plants, and family traditions in an effort to understand how culture influences our plant choices and uses. Questions also focused on storytelling and the passing down of knowledge from generation to generation. Panel members representing a cultural cross-section of the Lawrence school population included Victoria Hawk (Mestis-Iroquois), Felipe Molina (Yoeme), Ted Ramirez (Mexican-American), and Herminia Valenzuela (Yoeme).

Some readers may be unfamiliar with the word "Yoeme." Known in the past as the Yaqui, some members of this Native American tribe prefer their traditional name for themselves, the Yoeme.

Warning: *Do not eat or apply the medicinal plant remedies described in this chapter without first consulting a physician or medical expert of your choice. Exact amounts and instructions for preparation have not been provided: some individuals could have serious allergic reactions to particular plant substances.*

Do you go to a doctor when you are sick?

Now I go to a doctor. When I was a little girl, there were no doctors. We lived in a little Yoeme village, so we went to the curandero, and the curandero would give us medicine from the desert. And now sometimes we're sick and we don't want to go to the doctor—if my husband has a fever, I slice potatoes and I put it on his forehead and on his chest and the potatoes will take away his fever. (And we don't eat the potatoes after!)

Herminia Valenzuela

Are the plants you brought tonight native to Sonora? Where do they grow?

One of the plants that I brought to show the people here is the creosote. In Yoeme we call it **kovahao**, and in Spanish it's herendio. And we use this for our blessing. If you are very tired, we use this to bless ourselves, it's like purifying yourself so you can get healthy again. And I told the students in the classroom that when it rains it smells beautifully. You all live in the desert, and when it rains you can smell it. And Yoeme people use it also for making little houses when there's a big ceremony going on. They use it for walls. And it can also be put on the top of the ramada. And then again, many people know it to help with problems with your feet, it helps to cool down your feet. You have to know how much to use.

Felipe Molina

Who taught you or where did you learn about these plants?

We learned a lot, a lot from my grandmother and grandfather. They grew up in Sonora, Mexico, and my grandparents knew all this from their grandparents and great grandparents, and they pass on this knowledge through oral tradition. We didn't write anything down until I probably got into eighth grade, and then I started writing everything down. So right now I do a lot of writing and taking down information, like for the desert broom. It is also used for shelters and could be used to clean around your houses, like a broom. And then also from the Tohono O'odham we learned to use the cholla buds to eat. Very delicious with red chili, onions, tomatoes and garlic.

Felipe Molina

Did your family have a garden and what did you grow there?

Yes, we have always had a garden. And in it were a lot of flowers, like calendulas, and ranunculous, snapdragons, johnny jump-ups—one of my favorites—pansies. A lot of times the gardens were bordered with . . . like at my nana's house, ocotillo fence. Naturally we always had different types of nopal, you know, the ones from Sonora and the ones further south. And every now and then some really weird ones would come in, I don't know what they were. They were some sort of nopal. In my garden, my wife is the gardener and it's something that she really enjoys doing. I think the color and the atmosphere

Ethnobotany

that it creates for me is what's special about it. I do a lot of the labor in the garden, I don't do much else besides that, but my wife really has a great, great eye for it. But my first exposure to it came from my nana's garden.

Ted Ramirez

Where did people get the herbs or plants to use?

I grew up next to a curandera [healer], or hitevi, and she would get the plants from the desert. She would have to go to a place where there weren't a lot of houses or cars, and when she got the plants she had to ask permission from the plant world. She couldn't just grab a plant and take it home and use it. She had

to ask permission and the plant world had to allow her. Then she could get the plants.

She would ask the mesquite tree to give her those little yellow flowers that blossom on the mesquite, and then she would go home and soak the mesquite flowers in water. Then she would put the drops in our eyes, just like eye drops today. But she never went to the store to buy it. So she did go out into the desert where it was clean and natural and she did ask permission, always.

Herminia Valenzuela

There are several names for creosote. I call it greasewood, that's the way I learned it from the Apaches. The Apaches use the greasewood for almost everything and anything. If you bruise yourself you boil the greasewood and make a very, very, very strong tea and you put a towel in it and you wrap it around your bruise. If you have congestion, you also use greasewood tea, you go and pick the greasewood in a very

sacred manner—you ask. And it all depends on what you want to use the plant for, what side of the tree you pick the medicine from. And usually you leave an offering of tobacco or something like that and you offer it to the mother earth. The first time I had that greasewood tea, that was quite an experience. I love it now, but it's very, very, very bitter. You do acquire a taste for it. If you believe that it's going to help you and you pray with it, the medicine won't taste so bad, and it will be good for you.

Victoria Hawk

Well, I always thought one of the best medicines in the world is just plain old water. I think that's something that especially desert people have to drink a lot of. Sometimes if you're running around all day long and you didn't drink any water, by the end of the day you even get a little bit dizzy from it. So it's always really good to drink a lot of water, especially when you're young. You know, they say you should drink like eight glasses a day. That's like trying to fill up to about your knee. You know, think of it that way. Try to fill up to about your knee and you'll be doin' all right every day. If you're down around the ankle, then you better drink a little more water. Okay?

Ted Ramirez

rabbit brush	dye	yellow
rosemary	tea	loose stomach
potatoes	headache	
creosote	tea	stinky feet
cinnamon	tea	sore throat
chamomile	tea	to help sleep
citrus blossom	tea	headache
sugar water	scared	
warm milk with toasted corn meal	cold	
rosemary flowers tea	oose stomach for babies	
yucca	soap	
cliff rose	dye	(leaves and stem)
aloe	cuts and burns	
juniper	dye	brown
dock	dye	red
wild onion	dye	gold. green
walnut	dye	brown

Was storytelling a part of your family tradition?

I know it was mine, yeah. There were a lot of good storytellers in my family. One of the best ones I'd ever met was my father-in-law. He's a man that was born in Mexico and who moved to Ajo, Arizona so his father could work in the mine. His name is Nino, but he goes by "Nino the Great." That will give you a little idea about what kind of storyteller he is. The thing I learned from him, as well as other storytellers, is they pay attention to the little things. And to what other people might think is not altogether very interesting or kind of commonplace, to them is a great adventure! You know, whether you're just tying your shoe or walkin' down the street or listening to a bird sing in a tree or whatever it is, it becomes something of great detail to the storyteller. And they start to pay attention to all the little things that are going on, all the different sounds, the colors, who's involved, what you're thinking, what you feel, the time of year, the time of day—trying to communicate what is going on at that particular moment. And then like every good storyteller, as time goes on the story gets better and better and better. And that's an important thing to remember with storytelling, it's not always the literal truth that you're trying to express. It's an essence of the truth sometimes that you're trying to express. And sometimes the story kind of builds because of that. But to answer your question, yes, there were a lot of storytellers in my family.

Ted Ramirez

I would like to add a little something. In case you hadn't noticed, Mr. Ramirez did storytelling outside on the patio, but he didn't do it by talking. How did he do it? Singing. He sang the story at the top of his lungs and he told us a couple of beautiful stories through his music. So storytelling can be talking, it can be singing, it can be dancing.

In my family storytelling was very important because we grew up in a ranchito and there was no electricity, no running water, no TV, no stereo. Imagine life without a stereo. Instead, from the time that I was about as small as this little Manuel over here, we had storytelling as our only entertainment and fun. And it was wonderful because all the older people had time for us, since there was nothing for us little kids to do except play outside in the daytime. They came out with storytelling at night for us to keep us busy and out of trouble. And I think it worked.

Herminia Valenzuela

Do you have one favorite family story you would like to share?

There is one story that I really like from one of the elders that I met not too long ago, back in the seventies. He said that one day there was a deer hunter and his little daughter, and one morning when they woke up there was no water in the olla. We call ollas *va'achia* in Yoeme. The father says, "Daughter, can you go get some water, we ran out of water?"

The daughter said, "Yes father, I'll go." So she took the big olla, the big pot, and went to the river about a mile away. When she went walking to the river she saw some people working in the cornfield, picking their corn. In Yoeme we say *koita* for picking corn; *avai* is fresh corn, and *vachi* is dry corn. So she was very

Ethnobotany

happy to see that early in the morning she got her water and she was walking back and she said, "I'm going to get a corn." She got some corn and put it in her olla. The corn was sitting on the top, and she put the olla on her head and started walking. So the corn was jumping around in the water, bobbing. As soon as the corn left the field, the corn in the field started singing, "Where are you going in the beautiful flower water? Where are you going in the beautiful enchanted flower water?" This is the corn that was in the fields.

The corn in the pot, in the olla, was saying, "I'm going to the beautiful place, over to the east, and I'm going to be over there with the enchanted people in the beautiful enchanted water." So I really like that story. It's a song, it's a story, and it helps us to respect the plants and the animals that are here on this earth. The water, like Mr. Ramirez was saying, is very precious to us. And so it teaches a lot of things and you learn a lot of things from the culture, from the language, and also singing. You can sing and also dance that song. Felipe Molina

What language did you hear this story in?

The story I just related to you was in Yoeme language, and when other people wanted to hear it, I would do it in English for them. But it was traditionally in Yoeme, which is Yaqui. Felipe Molina

Did your family share stories about where your grandpas and great grandpas came from?

Yes they did a lot. And I thought really everybody did that when I was a child. It wasn't until later that I found really that doesn't happen a lot. But I knew my grandfathers' names, you know, about eight or ten back. I knew all my grandmothers' and grandfathers' names. I knew most of the kids' names. I knew where they lived. I knew all kinds of things about them, so to me they were like real people. I never met my grandfather, he died two years before I was born. I had all four of my grandmothers, but I didn't have my grandfathers. But I knew everything about them and it was something that I think was a very nice thing to have. What it did is it made the place that I lived and the places that I went to seem very familiar to me. And I used to like that. You know, I would go places where relatives of mine had lived before and even though they may have passed away before I was even born or some of them even before my father was born, there was still a connection there, which really is kind of nice. It gave you a nice feeling. But I was kind of surprised to find that everybody didn't know that. In fact, some of my friends, they didn't even know who their great grandfather was. So if you don't know, it's a good thing to ask. Ask your mom and dad, ask your uncles as much as you can about your family because it's pretty interesting what you'll find out in pretty short order. Ted Ramirez

When I was a little girl, we kids used to play with this covered wagon which always sat in the backyard of our long piece of property. We discovered that this wagon was the very wagon that Grandma Juana had traveled to Tucson from Sonora, Rio Yaqui, in Mexico.

We had heard many stories about the Yoeme people in our villages in Mexico who had to fight for the right to live on their own land in Rio Yaqui, and who had to struggle to survive. Many families chose to exodus to the United States up north (to the “cold country”) in order to survive. So Juana as a young girl, was brought over to America in a covered wagon, suffering many adventures along the way.

Well, our use of this covered wagon was a reenactment of Grandma Juana’s long trip to freedom. We kids used to play at being the passengers or the horses, depending on our mood that particular day. Some of us would load ourselves and our belongings into the old wagon with its wooden wheels, and the unlucky ones would have to be horses to pull us around the big backyard. We passengers would make loud war sounds and squeal whenever we thought the “horses” were going to overturn the wagon. The “horses” would strain their little muscles pulling that heavy old wagon around, until they would make us get down and take our turn being horses. The fun would usually end when Grandma Juana got tired of our squealing like horses, yelling, and arguing about who was going to be passengers next.

Herminia Valenzuela

Is it hard to find plants you’re looking for?

Sometimes it’s hard to find. In Yoeme tradition, we only look for the plants during the full moon. I don’t mean like in the nighttime, but when the moon is full, that’s the right time to look for the plants. And what we do is we have to purify ourselves before we go out to the desert so that we won’t have a hard time to find the plant. And like Ms. Hawk was saying, we have to bring an offering. We ask permission before going to the desert and then ask permission of the plant that we want to use part of the plant. That’s the traditional way to do it. So when you’re going out you have to ask the elders where is this plant growing and most likely they’ll tell you, and you go to the source. You go right over to that place and then you will find it and then leave your offerings there. And then you take it back and you prepare it for the medicine that it’s going to be.

Felipe Molina

What are the names of some of the rare plants, and are there some that are perennial?

I have one in mind right now. It’s very important in our culture. In Yoeme it’s called *kau vattai*, and in English it’s rumex. And it grows a lot in the Marana area just about twenty miles from here, along the river, along the canals. But it’s good for babies when they’re getting their teeth. They use that to relieve the pain. And the elders from Mexico, when we go to visit them, they always say, “Did you bring some *kau vattai*, did you bring some of the rumex—the dock?”

And we say, “Oh yeah, we have some.” They’re so tiny, like little potatoes. And you have to dig like a foot and a half into the ground to dig them out, and clean them, and then you can cut up them like potatoes, slice them. Then dry them and take them down to wherever it’s needed. Right now the leaves are coming out, it’s ready around April, May—then it’s time to gather those plants.

Felipe Molina

Ethnobotany

What languages were spoken in your home when you were young?

Many of us in Yoeme villages, we spoke Yoeme only. I grew up only speaking in Yoeme. In our area there were many Anglos around our neighborhood, so I started to speak some English. And then, when we went to Tucson, there was a lot of Spanish, so we learned Spanish. So there were three languages in our home and when we were growing up, up to six, seven years of age, we were monolingual in Yoeme and then we moved to English and then Spanish.

Felipe Molina

It's the same for myself. Mr. Molina and I had almost the same kind of childhood growing up. We only spoke Yoeme on the ranchito where I grew up until I was seven years old. Then we moved to town so I could go to school like other kids, and they taught me English in the schools. And then I learned Spanish and I didn't know Spanish too well and I used to make a lot of mistakes. And my mom would say, if you can't speak Spanish right, don't speak it. I had to learn to speak it right so she wouldn't scold. We had three languages. And then I went to the University and learned Russian. So you can learn as many languages as you want.

Herminia Valenzuela

One last thing I wanted to add to this question—when I was in first grade I had a real great friend, his name was John Jones. He moved one semester, and over the intercom, the secretary was saying John Jones moved. And, you know, I was learning English so I said, oh my goodness, what happened to John Jones? So I went home feeling very sad and I told my grandma my friend John Jones died. She said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "Well, over the intercom it said he *moved*." And in Yoeme we say "mukuk" so I thought it meant he had died. So I was very sad and my grandma said, "Oh no, don't feel sad, I think you misunderstood what the, uh, the intercom or the secretary was telling you." So I came back to school and I kept asking her, and she said, "Oh no, he just moved." And so then I was learning English.

Felipe Molina

When is the best time to harvest the plants for medicinal use and why?

I think I can help you with that a little bit. During the full moon is when we go and gather then plants. Also when it's available, like the rumex, the *kau vattai*, it's in spring. And then you can dry it for later use and also take it to different villages and then they can use it for their babies. Also for fevers, it's used for fevers.

Felipe Molina

What kind of plants do you use?

We use many, many plants. In my classroom we are going to study carrizo, which is *vaaka*. In Yoeme tradition it's used a lot for ceremonies, for making things at the house, tools, you know, for housing. In fact, if you go to the gardens you're going to see the carrizo and the *vaaka* on top of the ramada. It's used for the roof. A lot of medicinal plants and a lot of ornamental plants are used in our culture.

Felipe Molina

What foods did you grow in your gardens, and what were your favorites?

Corn, because you can make tortillas with it, corn chips, eat it right off the cob. It's just a great food, that was my favorite. Ted Ramirez

We had greens like lamb quarters, chuali in Spanish and *kapa* in Yoeme. Very good, delicious lamb quarters. Right now they're about so high and you get the young tender leaves, wash them, rinse them and stir-fry with garlic, tomatoes and onions. Then you could eat it with corn tortillas. Very delicious. And also the wild mustard or the mustard itself and spinach. I'm getting hungry just talking about it. Felipe Molina

We also had nopalitos. Nopalitos are real good in the tuna. And then something, I don't know if you guys do it, but we used to do it all the time when we were kids. We used to take the sap from the mesquite tree, the chukata, and take that and eat that. That was pretty good, a little harder than gum. Once you worked it for a while it'd become a little more pliable but it was a little bit hard.

Ted Ramirez

Was there a flavor?

Yeah, it wasn't extremely sweet or anything like that. But it wasn't bitter. It had kind of a hard texture and maybe a little bit of a mesquite kind of taste to it, you know. We used to do it as a joke because when my mother would get mad at us she would say, "Go make chukata," which meant like be quiet and go away. So we'd go and get some, you know, being the good boys that we were.

Ted Ramirez

How did you help in the garden and how did you prepare plants to cook?

I remember my grandmother, when she used to prepare the soil, she would bless and then talk to the soil and the seeds. And then when, when it was growing then she would take care of them like little babies, the little plants as they're growing. We would help her clean, water, and prepare the plants for cooking. Like Mr. Ramirez, my grandmother also planted a lot of flowers. Every other house was just flowers and other areas were vegetables. Felipe Molina

Did little girls help in the garden?

I think we little girls were cute and dainty and we were not allowed to get too dirty. Our job was to keep the pig out of the garden. Her name was Queenie, and she was about the size of a small VW. She was very hard to keep out of the garden, but we did it. One day we closed the garden and went cotton picking, our daily job. Queenie couldn't get into the garden, so she got at our laundry on the line, and she ate my new pink dress. Herminia Valenzuela

Do you have any stories to share about helping out in the garden?

I didn't help out. I did it all! I prepared the earth, planted the seeds. I had a fabulous cornfield and I miss it. Not only did I grow corn, but we also did squash and beans. Those are the three sacred foods of the Iroquois people, which I'm a descendant of. But cornfields are really very special, the corn gives you many things, like corn pollen, and it has other uses. Gardens are good for you in a lot of ways. Victoria Hawk

Ethnobotany

What plants would you like us to grow in our school garden?

In our class we're studying about the ruda, which is rue. It's very good for fevers, headaches and earaches. So that could be something you can plant, rue, r-u-e, and in Spanish it's ruda, r-u-d-a. In Yoeme, we use the same word, r-u-u-t-a, "roota." In fact we don't have a "D," so we say *ruta* and that's what we use a lot in our homes. Felipe Molina

One thing I'd like to see, and I'm busy teaching so I don't get much time to go into the garden—maybe it's already there—is the buffalo gourd. The buffalo gourd is fantastic for two things. Number one, you make a shampoo out of it, and it's like Prell, that beautiful green shampoo, and it keeps your hair black so you don't get lots of white hair. And the other thing is, and I, I shouldn't say this, but the other thing is that it's good for, parents listen, it's good for killing the little piojos, so if you have the coyote gourd shampoo at home and you wash your kids' hair with that, they'll have jet black hair, even blondes. No, I'm just kidding. They'll have beautiful healthy hair and clean hair. And we always used that when we were little kids and my mom used to love to tell me how I owed my life to her because I was always the squeakiest cleanest kid in school, thanks to buffalo gourd. This is a commercial. Herminia Valenzuela

In fact, the buffalo gourd is also used for laundry. I remember when we were growing up they used to cut the gourd in half and throw it into a big tub of water and boil it. You put your clothes in there and stir the clothes. That's the traditional way of cleaning the laundry that you had at home. Felipe Molina

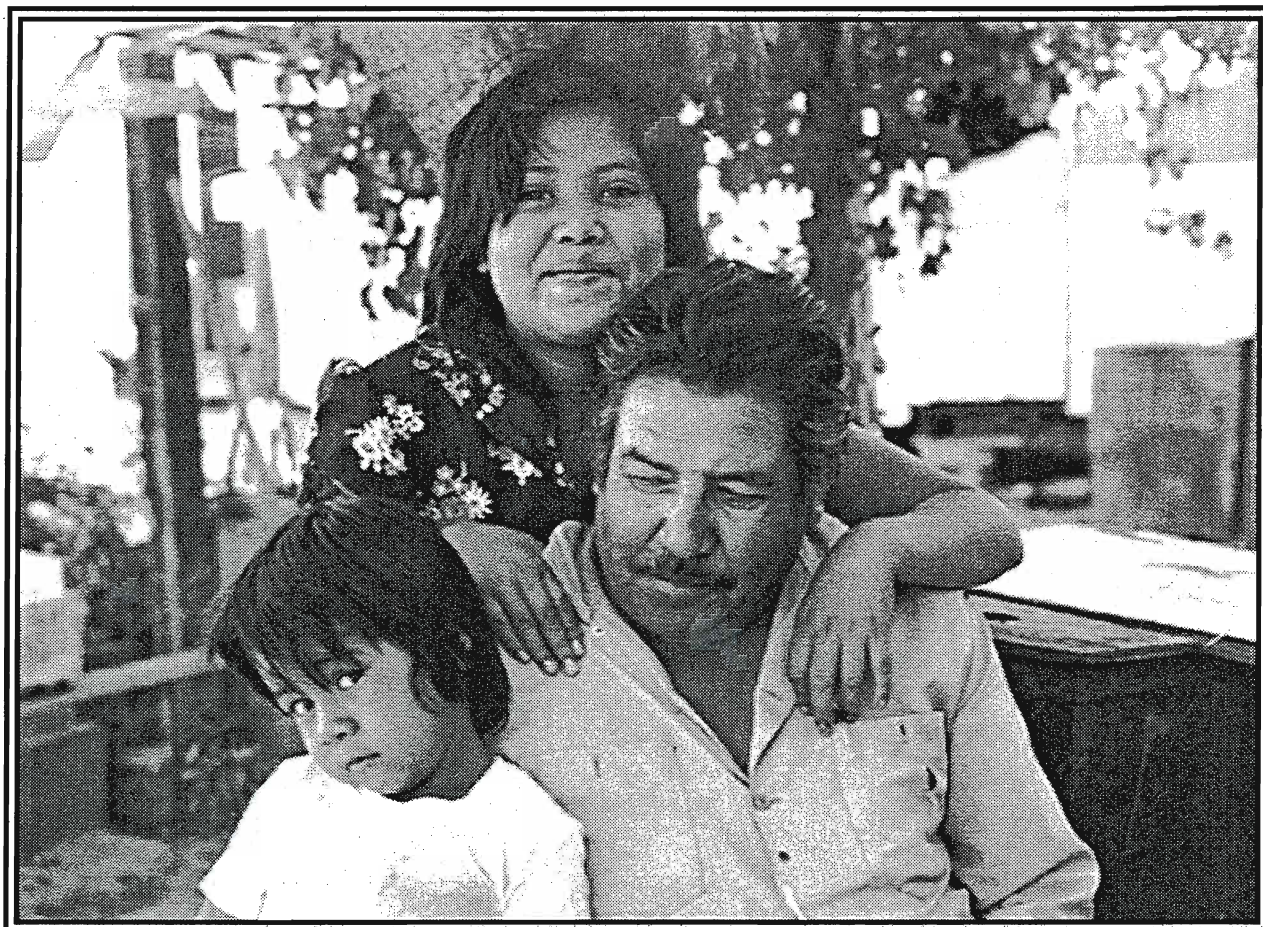
I'd like to see the yucca plant in the garden. It's used a lot by the Navajos and Apaches for shampoo and a skin cleanser. And the yucca plant is also used a lot in ceremonies, especially the Beauty Way Ceremony. Victoria Hawk

There are a lot of native herbs that are pretty nice. Sage is a good one to have. It grows pretty well. And manzanilla is another one that's pretty good. It's very medicinal, it tastes good too. And I really like the yerba buena, we always had that, it's a very good one. Ted Ramirez

Are you planning to write a book about the herbs and what we've been discussing tonight?

These oral history interviews and panel discussions are for the students of Lawrence so they'll be able to write their own books on the subject. One of the things that we realize is there aren't any children's books about the botany tradition of our cultures. Our plan is to use what we've learned from the interviews today as research material so that they can write what they have learned in their own words for other children to read. Our panelist, Mr. Felipe, writes about Yoeme culture and ethnobotany. Gopa Goswami

Yes, right now I have a manuscript I've written with my friend, Dr. Felger. We've put together all the plants from Sonora all the way to Arizona, in the Phoenix area. It will be in Yoeme and English, and it will teach how to use those certain plants. Hopefully it can be published soon. We can use that information for our students here. Felipe Molina



Frank Ochoa with daughter and grandson, Old Pascua, June 15, 1976 Arizona State Museum. (neg. 43605) University of Arizona.

Oral History: Family and Community Culture

This section includes excerpts from a Family and Community Culture oral history panel interview which took place at Lawrence on March 13, 2002. Third, fourth, and fifth grade students asked questions about family history, traditions, and neighborhood to get a sense of where our families come from, our cultural similarities and differences, and what we value. The interviewees, all Lawrence staff members with diverse cultural backgrounds, included Barbara Njock (African-American), Mary Jane Buenamea (Yoeme), Maria Cupis (Yoeme), Narcisco Bule (Yoeme), and Ramona Juarez (Mexican-American).

Family and Community Culture

Is your family originally from Tucson?

My family is not from Tucson. I came to Tucson when I was about fourteen years old. I was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. My family came from Tennessee and Oklahoma. We came to Tucson because of my mother's health, she had asthma. We got on the Greyhound bus, and we didn't know anyone in Tucson. It was very funny at that time, when we came people were very friendly in Tucson. We got off the bus at the bus station and we said to the taxi driver, do you know this lady? Oh yes, we know where she lives. We didn't need an address or anything. They took us right there to the lady's house.

Barbara Njock

My parents came from Sonora, Mexico. Both of them came from Guaymas. I was born here in Tucson, along with all my siblings.

Mary Jane Buenamea

My grandparents came from Mexico, but my parents were born here. My grandfather walked over here. It took him three months, and he was established here first. He started working here. After he had settled down here in Tucson he went for his family.

Maria Cupis

My family, we all come from Rio Yaqui, Sonora, in the rural Yaqui land. I came here when I was thirty-five years old. I came to Arizona because I was invited to a wedding. At that time, I didn't know where Tucson was.

Narcisco Bule

My family is not originally from Tucson. I'm from El Paso, Texas.

Mona Juarez

Did your family have special celebrations?



Always we celebrate the Easter ceremony, a very special time in our family.

Maria Cupis

For us it's two Mexican-American holidays, the first is Las Posadas. And birthdays, we always celebrated birthdays.

Mona Juarez

Our special celebration was getting to be sixteen. We were considered an adult at that time. And so there were special parties that were given for you and special proof that was given to you. And when I went to Africa I found that the girls have the same types of celebrations but they do it at twelve, when they're introduced to society.

Barbara Njock

Maria Murrietta making tortillas, Old Pascua. Arizona State Museum.
(Neg. 43617, Helga Teiwes, photographer) University of Arizona.

Family and Community Culture

Like Maria Cupis said, our celebrations are Easter, the annual Easter celebration. We still have other celebrations like All Souls Day, but we lost some traditions that were celebrated, you know. Mostly all the saints' days were celebrated when I was little, like San Juan and San Antonio. Mary Jane Buenamea

What memories do you cherish?

I cherish the memories that I have of growing up and being with my mom and my dad and my family. And the things we did as a family. Those are the things that I cherish the most. Mona Juarez

I would say the same thing. Being with your family. My sister and I often talk about our childhood and it is always so much fun. She remembers things quite different from myself, so I think we have selective memory. Barbara Njock

I remember my days growing up. They used to be very cheerful, as I was little. I grew up mostly in farming towns, you know, my parents were seasonal farm workers and we just traveled to different parts of Arizona and I used to cherish those moments. Mary Jane Buenamea

My memories, I was a fisherman in Mexico and I always enjoy being a fisherman. And I worked in the mountains, working on dividing the Yaqui land and the Mexican land. Narcisco Bule

What are your favorite memories of your family?

Favorite memories are going on Sundays to spend time and money. We had a quarter each and there were four of us. We used to go to a candy store and buy a penny candy, so we had like four kids buying a hundred candies and it used to drive the man crazy because we wanted everything in the store. And then going home and making sandwiches and sitting down to watch the television. Those were all my favorites. Mona Juarez

Well I think my favorite memory was Christmas. I've always loved Christmas and I still love Christmas. And it was a time when all of the family got together and we ate traditional foods. And you think of traditional food as turkey and dressing and we didn't have turkey and dressing. We had pig tails, pig feet, and various types of greens. When I went to Africa, the African people have the very same types of traditions, the whole extended family comes and they bring out fish—no turkey—fish, pigs feet, cow feet, put into different types of greens. Very similar traditions that have held up over the years. Barbara Njock

Were they baked?

Oh no, you always have to boil the feet of whatever animal first to get it tender. And then you add your vegetables into it. Barbara Njock

My favorite memories are the lost traditions we used to have as Yoemes. I had an elder uncle who got to live to be a hundred and twenty years, and he always taught us a lot of different traditions. And I cherish the memories when my sisters and I always used to be at my mom's house on Sundays, and we all used to eat together. Mary Jane Buenamea

Family and Community Culture

My favorite memories are from when I went to school in Mexico. They're not like here, the schools here have everything in the school. Over there in Mexico when you go to school, if you're lucky you're going to eat in the morning. And you cannot buy your own books. I went barefoot to school at that time. The school was Francisco Kino. And right now everything's real easy here in Arizona.

Narcisco Bule

Where did you shop for food, clothes, furniture and other things?

In one of the cities, because in the community where I lived, they only sold food. Not furniture, nothing of those kinds, only in the cities, in Obregon.

Narcisco Bule

I lived in different places as I was growing up. Most farming places had only like a general store. And they would have one main street and that's where we would buy. We had no Kmart's, no other places to choose from.

Mary Jane Buenamea

We planted a lot of foods in the backyard, we had a garden. We had corn, collard greens, mustard greens. We did buy chickens, but we didn't get meat every day. My family felt that meat was not good for you every day, so we got chicken or beef on Sunday and we had vegetables with a little seasoning in it.

As far as clothes were concerned, I think the oldest brother or sister got the clothes when they were new and they were kind of passed down, they called them hand-me-downs and we considered ourselves to be quite lucky to have those clothes. We got the new outfit for Christmas and the new outfit for Easter.

Barbara Njock

For my clothes, my mom used to buy from a lady, she used to come with a shopping bag of homemade dresses, that's where I got my clothes.

Maria Cupis

If you were writing a history of your family, what are four events you would include?

The birth of our nieces, our nephew, celebrations that we had. Main events, like losing somebody.

Mona Juarez

I'd have to start with my grandparents, them migrating, because you know that my ancestors were slaves. And I'd have to start with them migrating all along the route until they made it from the deep part of the south up into Detroit. Then I would have to go on to them migrating a little more, my parents finding each other and then their marriage. And I would have to talk about my own marriage and me going away to Africa and staying for thirty years and then my return.

Barbara Njock

I would write about my family history from Mexico, their coming over here. And I would write about my childhood, when I was growing up, the different things that I used to enjoy, different places where I used to live. I would also write about some of our traditions that we don't see anymore. And I would write about my family.

Mary Jane Buenamea



Unidentified group. Old Pascua.
Arizona State Museum. (6810)
University of Arizona.

What kind of traditions?

A lot of traditions, like San Juan. On San Juan, when I was a little girl—I'm Juana by the way. My name is Maria Juana, and when I went to school they changed it from Maria Juanita to Mary Jane, and I've kept that name all along. In our Yaqui tradition, on St. John's Day, which is June 24th, our people in Old Pascua used to have a canal right along where you see Century 16, right there, that used to be a canal. And on San Juan, very early in the morning, we would go and dip into the canal. You know, the water was a blessing on that day. We would celebrate me being a Juana, my mom would make a big tub of *wakavaki*, which is a vegetable soup and she would make chili con carne. People would come and serenade, different groups of people would come and sing songs to me, and the way we would repay them was to give them food and other things. And the whole family, my friends, and anybody would come over to celebrate my Saint's day.

Mary Jane Buenamea

Did you learn the history of your neighborhood?

If I had to talk about my neighborhood I would include Mrs. Quincy Douglas. She was kind of the matriarch of the whole neighborhood. She took care of all of the children. She made sure they went to school. If she saw you out playing, she went and she talked to your parents about the benefits of education, and she encouraged the children to go to college.

When I was growing up, no one ever locked their front doors. In fact, no one ever had a key to the front door, and if you wanted to get in trouble with your parents, you locked the front door. And now you have to not only lock your front door, but you have bars on your windows and everything else, so it's not quite as safe as it was when we were growing up.

Barbara Njock

We didn't lock our doors either, and we used to sleep outside at night. As a family, we would enjoy summer evenings, sleeping outside. And now we can't even do that.

Mary Jane Buenamea

Family and Community Culture

What do you remember that makes you happy about the place where you lived when you were little?

I guess memories are what make you happy. Because you remember, that's where home is, where your family is. Where you were secure, where you felt safe. We knew that we can always go back there, and that's the best part, that you can go back someday. Mona Juarez

I think also it's when the family gets together, your brothers and sisters, they all get together and they all tell you, well do you remember when you did this or you did that? And it makes you really happy. You smile about the silly things that you did as a child. Barbara Njock

We used to have real good Christmas get-togethers, and I knew we were going to get presents. We didn't believe in Santa Claus but we pretended. The best part is my parents used to wake us up at midnight, and we'd all get to open our gifts. And I do the same thing, I'm keeping that tradition, because it's fun to wake them up at midnight. Maria Cupis

I have another memory of my dad waking me up Sunday mornings to go fishing with him. I used to go fishing. Instead of going fishing with my brother, he would go fishing with me. Mona Juarez

My happy memory is when my grandpa and my grandma took me to a store and I got everything I wanted. Yeah, because I'm the youngest, the littlest, a baby. And that would make me happy. Narcisco Bule

I would sing when I was a little girl, because I was happy. I felt happy and I would hear my mom singing, and I would sing and just be happy to be sent to do an errand. I very happily would do it. Now we ask someone to do something and it's, "Oh, do I have to?" You know, it's so different. I don't know if it's because I grew up being a happy little girl, or there are so many demands now, I don't know.

When I was a little girl, they used to send me to the store with a dollar and I could buy a lot with a dollar. A Coke bottle was only five cents. And candies were only a penny or two for a penny. And you know those are happy memories. Mary Jane Buenamea

What kind of houses did you have when you were my age?

I can remember the first house, I barely remember it. It was a tin house, like a la mina. It was la mina, and then it became adobe. My dad built an adobe house. Maria Cupis

Our first house had the restroom outside. And when I had to get up in the middle of the night to go the restroom, I used to wake up my sister because I didn't want to go outside to go to the restroom all by myself. But as we moved from there, we went to a house that had the restroom inside. Mona Juarez

Family and Community Culture

I think that we lived in the house that's quite like the houses we have now. They were much smaller and they did have restrooms. But when I would go and visit my grandparents that lived in the south, they'd have outhouses. We didn't go out during the night because there were snakes out, so you had a little thing, they called it a potty or a slop jar and it was under the bed. If you had to wake up during the night, you had to use that little potty and go back to sleep and empty it in the morning.

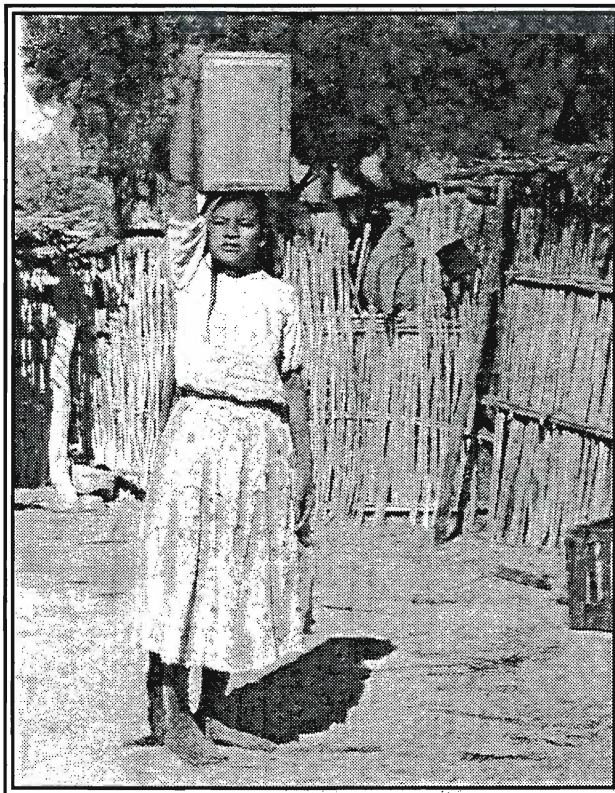
Barbara Njock

When I was a little girl, I lived in a lot of different places. My parents were seasonal farm workers, and sometimes we would live in individual homes made out of lumber. Sometimes it would be large homes called barracks. Several families would live in those homes. But my home in Old Pascua, I lived in an adobe home and I also lived in a wood shack. It was also with a tin roof.

Mary Jane Buenamea

I wanted to mention that when I was in Africa, the people there live in houses that are made out of mud. They make mud brick, just like adobe, with a little straw and put it together. But when they build their houses, it's a community activity. The whole community comes. They make the foundation, they make the bricks, they put it together. And the women cook to give the men food.

Barbara Njock



Josefina Arguellos carrying water, March 16, 1942, Potam, Mexico. Arizona State Museum. (M-8 #4) University of Arizona.

Family and Community Culture

What were the moral values that your generation had to honor or practice?

My dad was always after us never to be rude to people. We always had to shake hands with a person, with our elders, with anybody that would come to our house. That's what we were taught. A lot of respect. Maria Cupis

And we were taught not to start dating until you were in college. You couldn't even hold hands with the boys until you were in college. Mona Juarez

We had to honor thy mother and father. And also any person that was older, you had to have great respect. There was no question that you'd say "no" to any adult. You said "no," all they had to do is go down and tell your parents and you got the spanking of your life. Barbara Njock

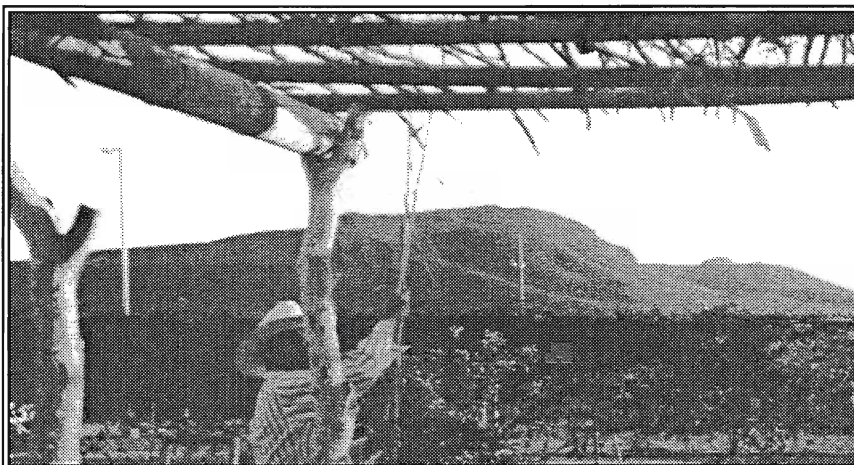
When I was growing up, like Ms. Cupis, we were taught to shake hands and always say good morning to whoever we passed on our way. And my mom always said to go to school and learn, because she never went to school. And that was a big thing for her, for me to get educated. Mary Jane Buenamea

I learned this from my elders, how to respect people. From the children to the elders, because if you do not respect somebody, nobody's going to respect you. And I learned that well. Like right now a lot of people they don't know how to respect. Narcisco Bule

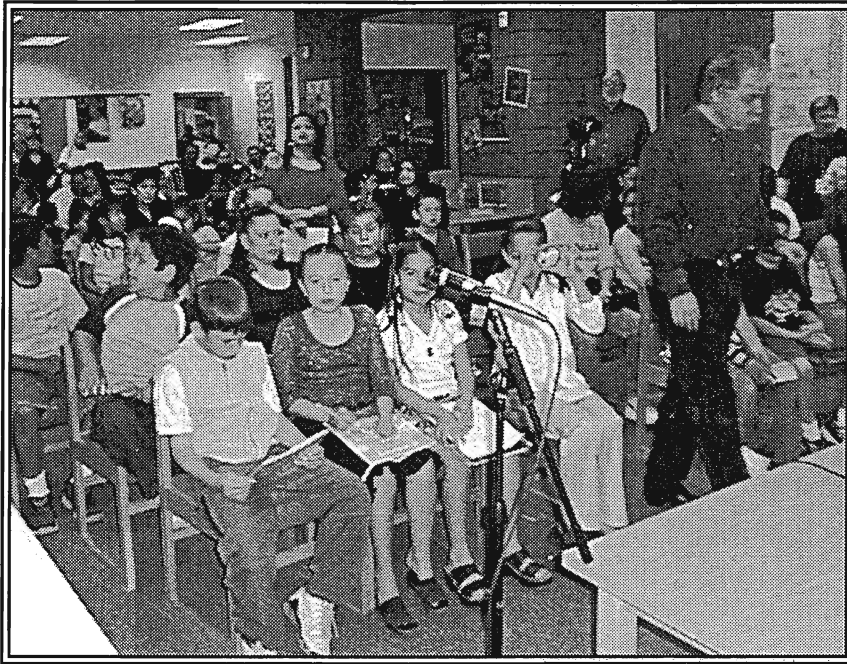
How can we bring back the traditions we have lost?

I guess we have to get elders like me and the panel here to teach the traditions that we have lost. I do feel sad because I think it meant something, and you felt good after you practiced your tradition. And I see that loss, but our generation is so different. My upbringing was so different from now. We didn't have TV, so we used to talk a lot to our elders. We used to sit down in the evenings and tell stories, you know, our elders would tell us stories, because we didn't have radios or TV. And now there's Nintendo, there're computers that are taking away quality time from parents talking to their child. I see that as a difference.

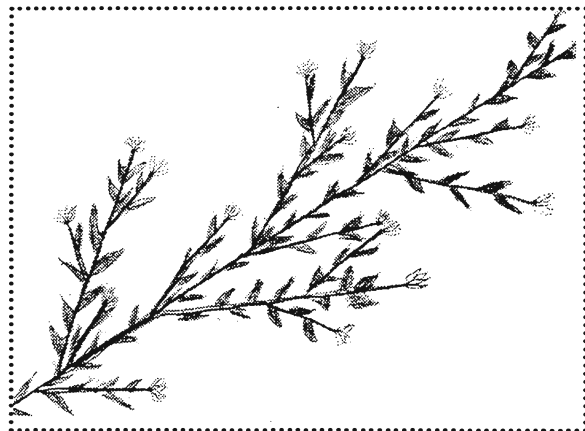
Mary Jane Buenamea



Constructing a ramada out of native materials at the Pascua Yaqui Lawrence School garden - school to community connections.



Lawrence students interviewing ethnobotany experts



Creosote drawing by Lizeth Garcia



DEER DANCE

by Lisa Lucero in Ms. Gribble's class

My cousin is a deer dancer. The deer dancer can be a man or a boy. My cousin says being a deer dancer is hard because you stay up all night and dance and pray. My cousin wanted to be a deer dancer like my great grand father. Now I have other cousins that like to dance.

Mural, New Pascua. Artist, Daniel Leon.
Arizona State Museum (43605, neg. #47645,
Helga Teiwes, photographer.) University of
Arizona.

*"All work is as seed sown, it grows and
spreads and sows itself anew."*

Thomas Carlyle



Modesto and Valentin Villen with Ernestia Amarillas (daughter of Mangwe). Arizona State Museum. (M-7 #2) University of Arizona.

