



Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños

written by Diana Cohn

illustrated by Amy Córdova Boone

About the Book

Genre: Biography

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Reading Level: Grade 2-4

Interest Level: 2-4

Guided Reading Level: O

Spanish Guided Reading Level: O

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:

4.7/05

Lexile™ Measure: N/A

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Art (Sculpture, Wood Carving), Childhood Experiences and Memories, Imagination and Creativity, Dreams and Aspirations, Families, Fathers, Imagination, Mexico, Oaxacan, Inspiration, Overcoming Obstacles, Persistence and Grit, Native American/Indigenous Interest, Latino/Hispanic/Mexican Interest

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/dream-carver-el-tallador-de-suenos

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

SYNOPSIS

Between their work growing blue corn and green alfalfa, Manuel and his father carve small wooden animals to sell at the fiestas in Oaxaca, Mexico. Manuel's imagination overflows with goats as pink as blossoming bougainvillea, purple cats with corn-yellow spots, and many more completely unique animals.

When he tells his father how he longs to sculpt creatures in this new style, his father only scowls, telling Manuel to stick to their traditional way. But Manuel practices on his own, trying over and over until he's finally able to carve wood into the lively animals he sees in his mind. Finally, he brings his creations to the fiestas, where he finds out that being true to himself is a great thing!

Entre su trabajo cosechando maíz azul y alfalfa verde, Manuel y su padre tallan animalitos de madera para vender en las fiestas de Oaxaca, México. Pero Manuel sueña con dar vida a animales más grandes y coloridos. Su imaginación se desborda con cabras tan rosas como las buganvillas en flor, gatos morados con manchas color de maíz amarillo y muchos más animales tan únicos que nunca antes habían sido creados.

Cuando le dice a su padre que anhela esculpir criaturas en este nuevo estilo, su padre solo frunce el ceño. Él quiere seguir tallando como siempre lo ha hecho. Pero Manuel practica solo, esforzándose y esforzándose, hasta que logra hacer que la madera luzca como los animales alegres que ve en su mente. Al fin, trae sus creaciones a las fiestas, ¡y se da cuenta que ser fiel a sí mismo es algo maravilloso!

BACKGROUND

Abridgment of Oaxacan Woodcarving *The Magic in the Trees* by Shepard Barbash from the Backmatter of *Dream Carver/El tallador de sueños*

Dry and mountainous, Oaxaca (pronounced wa-HAH-ka) is one of Mexico's largest and poorest states, yet its folk-art tradition is among the richest. Stretching out from the capital city, which is also called Oaxaca, the Oaxaca valley nurtures an astonishing diversity of crafts: pottery, fireworks, jewelry, cloth, baskets, candles—and wood carving. Oaxacan have carved children's toys and religious masks for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years. The style that dominates today, however, can be traced back to a single man, Manuel Jiménez.

It was Jiménez who first used the wood that all the carvers now use, copalillo. It was Jiménez who moved beyond the popular tradition of miniature toy making. And it was Jiménez who established the international market for all carvers who came after him. It wasn't easy. For thirty-five years, Jiménez was among the poorest in a very poor village (Arrazola). As a boy, Jiménez herded goats and made models of his flocks in clay. As a young man, he would go barefoot into the hills to forage for weeds and grasshoppers. Even in a successful carver's family, no one is idle: fathers and sons carve; mothers and daughters paint; smaller children and elders sand. And, they have farmwork. Remarkably, the carving boom has not done much to upset the region's farming tradition. Most carvers, no matter how successful, continue to grow their own food and herd their own animals as their fathers and grandfathers did before them.

Abreviación de Tallado en Oaxaca *La magia de árboles* por Shepard Barbash

El estado de Oaxaca, seco y montañoso, es uno de los más grandes y pobres de México, pero con una de las más ricas tradiciones de arte popular. Desde la capital del estado, también llamada Oaxaca, el valle oaxaqueño nutre una increíble diversidad de artesanías: alfarería, pirotecnia, joyería, tejido, canastas, fabricación de velas y tallado en madera. Los oaxaqueños llevan cientos o tal vez miles de años tallando juguetes para niños y mascarar religiosas. Sin embargo, el estilo que predomina hoy en día se debe única y exclusivamente a un hombre: Manuel Jiménez.

Jiménez fue el primero en usar la madera que todos los talladores emplean ahora: el copalillo. Jiménez también fue quien quiso ir más allá de la tradición popular de la fabricación de juguetes en miniatura. Y fue él quien abrió el mercado internacional para todos los que siguieron sus pasos. No fue tarea fácil. Durante treinta y cinco años, Jiménez se encontraba entre los habitantes más pobres de un pueblo de por sí muy pobre: Arrazola. De niño, Jiménez arrebaba cabras y modelaba las cabras de su rebaño en arcilla. De joven recorría los montes, descalzo, en busca de hierbas y chapulines. Incluso en las familias más exitosas de talladores, todo el mundo tiene que trabajar: padre e hijos tallan; madre e hijas pintan; niños chiquitos y abuelitos lijan. Todo esto, sin contar con las labores rancheras o granjeras. Esto es algo que destacar, ya que el éxito del tallado en madera no ha impactado negativamente la tradición agricultora de la región. Sin importar su grado de éxito, la mayoría de los talladores en madera siguen cuidando de sus milpas y animales, tal y como sus padres y abuelos hicieron antes.

Adapted from *Opuestos Teacher's Guide: Oaxacan Woodcarving Tradition*

While it has roots in indigenous Zapotec culture, modern Oaxacan woodcarving is a relatively new folk art form, developed in the last 60 years. Creating and selling these carvings as a family business has had an enormous economic impact for the artists. Today, there are three main Oaxacan villages where woodcarving is practiced, with certain families leading the industry in each village. Each family, or in some cases, individual artist, has its own unique style. Carvings are often animals, but can also include imaginary creatures (alebrijes), humans, saints, nativity scenes, angels, mermaids, skeletons and more. Oaxacan woodcarvings use the wood from the copal tree, which is soft to carve and very smooth when sanded. Artists carve the wood with pocket knives, machetes, or kitchen knives. Then they sand the carving and paint it. Oftentimes members of a family each have different jobs, working together to carve, sand and paint. Mass-produced carvings are often sold as inexpensive souvenirs, while carvings by notable artists are considered valuable collectibles. The art pieces featured in *Opuestos* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/opuestos>) have been acquired by the Field Museum of Chicago as part of their Permanent, MesoAmerican Collection. For more information on the Field Museum, see www.fieldmuseum.org/. To learn more about the MesoAmerican Collection at the Field Museum, visit www.fieldmuseum.org/departments/cultures-of-mesoamerica-and-central-america.

Alebrijes

Alebrijes are animals that are both real and fantastic, made from the imagination and nightmares of the designing artist. Oaxacan woodcarving also has roots in indigenous Zapotec culture. The Oaxacan papier mâché sculptures were first created by Pedro Linares in the 1930s. Each Alebrije is unique and no two are alike. They all feature different patterns, dots, shapes, flowers, flames, horns, antlers, wings, fins and along with many other combinations. To learn more about Alebrijes, considering consulting www.nps.gov/cham/learn/historyculture/oaxacan-art.htm.

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

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

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

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

- Take a look at the front and back covers. Take a picture walk. Ask students to make a prediction. Do you think this book will be fiction or nonfiction? What makes you think so?
- This story is about being true to yourself and following your passions. What does it mean to be true to yourself? What does it mean to follow your dreams and passions?
- Who is Manuel Jiménez Ramírez? Why was he important to the woodcarving community?
- Ask students to think about their family and what family means to them. How is family important to you? How do you interact with your family members? How do you help them?
- Was there ever a time when you stood up for something that you believed in, even if others disagreed with you? How did it feel? What did you do?

- Where is Oaxaca located? What do you know about Oaxaca? Find Oaxaca on a map or globe and identify the country and continent.
- Ask students why it's important to acknowledge traditions and cultures that are different from their own. What do prior knowledge do students have about Oaxacan woodcarving history? Why is it essential to learn about different cultures in the United States and around the world, even if you do not identify with that particular culture or tradition?
- Why is bilingualism important? If you are bilingual (or speak more than two languages), what does it mean to you? If you are not bilingual, why do you think those languages are significant to that person?

You may want to have students journal their responses to these questions or pose the final question as a KWL discussion and chart so that you can refer back to it throughout and after the reading of the book to further their thinking on the topic(s).

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book, *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*. Ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- **Book Walk:** Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, author's dedication, and Author's Note at the end. Display the book and analyze the cover. What do students notice in the illustration?
- **Read Author's Biography:** Read about Diana Cohn. What do you think the process is like to write a book for young readers? What do you think the process is like to illustrate a book for young readers? Why do you think she wrote this book for young readers?
- Encourage students to stop and jot in their reading notebooks during the reading when they: learn new information, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or see new words.
- Have students write feeling(s) in their notebook during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote that feeling down and have them write a journal entry about it. Have students complete one journal entry per each reading session.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- who Manuel Jiménez Ramírez is
- how Manuel changed the way Oaxacan woodcarving is done
- why it is important to follow your dreams
- why imagination and creativity are important
- what Oaxacan woodcarvings are

- where Oaxaca is located and why are the fiestas important for Manuel and his family

Encourage students to consider why the author, Dianah Cohn would want to share this story with young people.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

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

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

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

Encourage a variety of developmentally-appropriate strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: Look at a photo or picture that represents the word, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, explain the meaning of a word to a partner, act out the meaning of a word, explain how the meaning of one word is the similar and different to another word.

Note: The list below pulls keywords from the authors' and illustrators' biographies and author's note in addition to the English alphabet book text.

Content Specific

alfalfa, escandaloso/rackety, diminutos/tiny, atiborra/feasts, liebres/jackrabbits, polvorosa/dusty, buganvilia/bougainvillea, nopal/cactus, cebollas/onions, motitas/spots, tallar/carve, tonerías/foolishness, rama/tree branch, quetzal, iridiscente/iridescent, lija/sands, pincel/paintbrush, despega/peels, selva/rainforest, ardilla/squirrel, gacela/gazelle, deep/profundo, cuervo/raven, temer/fear, templo/church, abejas/honeybees

Academic

acurrucado/nestled, cultiva/grows, revuelcan/rolls, atraviesan/dart, tumbados/rest, imaginación/imagination, reptando/creeping, deslizándose/crawling, deslumbrante/dazzling, majestuso/mighty, torpe/clumsy

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

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

Literal Comprehension

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

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

1. Where do Manuel and his family live?
2. What does Manuel's family do for a living?

3. Why does Manuel love the fiestas in Oaxaca? What else does he love?
4. Describe the animals in Manuel's imagination.
5. What is Papa's response when Manuel tells him that he wants to carve the animals in a new way?
6. What happens when Manuel tries to carve the animals from his dream? How does Manuel feel about this?
7. How many tries does it take Manuel to get his woodcarvings right?
8. What does Manuel do when he doesn't know what to carve?
9. What happens at the Day of the Dead fiesta?
10. What does Papa say to Manuel at the end of the story?
11. What descriptive words or phrases does the author use to describe the woodcarvings?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

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

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

1. What does the *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* mean to you after reading? Why do you think the author chose this particular title? What would be another fitting title? Why?
2. What do you notice about the illustrations? How do the illustrations help the reader further understand the story?
3. Why do you think author Diana Cohn presents this story with Spanish and English together? Why do you think she chose to present the Spanish text before the English text? What does this mean to you as a reader?
4. What does family mean to you after reading this story? How does family play a role in Manuel's life?
5. Why do you think Manuel's father was skeptical at first of Manuel's artistic dreams? How does Manuel's father want to protect Manuel even if he doesn't agree with the direction Manuel wants to pursue?
6. How does Manuel feel about his father not approving of his dreams? How does Papa change from the beginning of the story to the end? What does this tell you about Papa?
7. What changes Manuel's father's perspective on Manuel as an artist?
8. What lesson do you learn after reading this story? What do you learn about Manuel?
9. How does place and community shape, or influence, Manuel's life, experience, and art?
10. Why do you think it is important to fight for what you believe in? What does *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* teach us about following your dreams?
11. Do you think Manuel's father is a good father? Why or why not?
12. How did *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* teach you about using your imagination and

appreciating the world around you? How can you use what you learned about creativity in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* in your own life?

13. How do colors and nature play a role in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*? Explain your reasoning.
14. What does this story teach about the power of imagination? What does this story teach about where artists draw inspiration from?
15. Why is it important to read the abridgment in the Backmatter after the story? What can you learn from the abridgment that you didn't get from reading the main story?

Reader's Response

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

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. Suggest that students respond in independent or collaborative writing, artwork, or oral discussion. You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think the author's message to the reader is? Think about possible motivations behind Diana Cohn's intention to write the book. What do you think she wanted to tell young readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What is your role in your own family?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world or on the news? Why did *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* make you think of that?

Multilingual Teaching Activities

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

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Learners and multilingual learners. The book language used may differ from children's oral language. Comparing any differences will help children read and understand the story. Words can hold different meanings in other types of Spanish around the world.

1. Assign ML students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.

3. Review each chapter and chapter title. Have students summarize what is happening in the chapter, first orally, then in writing. Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about one of the characters in the book. Have them discuss what characteristics they admire about the person they chose.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose Multilingual Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.
6. The book is both in English and in Spanish, with Spanish on one side and English on the other. Have students read both texts and compare both. Have students highlight any unknown words in the text, and then record them separately. Have students look up their definitions and share their knowledge about these words, if applicable.
7. Have students identify true cognates throughout the book. Students can begin with one to two pages and gradually increase to a chapter(s) where students highlight true cognates and determine the meaning to the word if they do not already know it. This can also be a great opportunity to also discuss false cognates with students. If time allows, have students reflect on the cognates that they found. Did they know the word in English? Did they know the word in Spanish? If it was an unknown word in English, did the identification of the Spanish cognate help them define the word? Consult ¡Colorin Colorado! for more ideas on how to use cognates in the classroom with MLs: <https://www.colorincolorado.org/using-cognates-ells>.
8. Consider consulting <https://www.multilinguallearningtoolkit.org/> for more ideas on how to support Multilingual Learners.

ACTIVIDADES EN ESPAÑOL PARA APOYO EN PROGRAMAS BILINGÜES Y DE INMERSION DUAL

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

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

For the CCSS in Spanish, please check out <https://commoncore-espanol.sdcoc.net/CCSS-en-Espanol/SLA-Literacy>

1. Estas estrategias se pueden usar en la clase de español o en la clase de inmersión dual igual cómo el resto de la guía de actividades.
2. Asigne el libro *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* a sus estudiantes. Coloque dos estudiantes juntos para leer el libro en voz alta. Compare las palabras en inglés y en español. ¿Cómo se comparan las palabras? Los estudiantes pueden practicar las palabras que tengan dificultad en pronunciar. Estudiantes pueden tener un cuaderno con las palabras difíciles para hacer referencia en el futuro.

3. Durante el tiempo de lectura, haga preguntas de comprensión a los estudiantes en inglés y en español para medir el nivel de comprensión en los dos idiomas. Preguntas pueden incluir: ¿de qué se trata el cuento? ¿Conectaste con uno de los personajes en el cuento? ¿Por qué sí o no? ¿Qué parte te gusta más en el cuento?
4. Elija palabras de vocabulario. Los libros ilustrados bilingües son una excelente manera para que sus estudiantes aprendan nuevas palabras de vocabulario porque el idioma se presenta en contexto. Mire a través del libro y asigne las palabras de vocabulario a las ilustraciones del libro. Si es posible, haga fotocopias de las páginas. Estudiantes pueden usar subrayadores en un color para inglés y un color para español para las palabras nuevas. También, puede recordar las palabras en un póster para referencia. Reflexione con sus estudiantes sobre cual palabras ya sabían y cuales palabras aprendieron.
5. En casa los estudiantes pueden pre-leer el libro con sus familias y puede sugerir que lean el libro juntos. Esto ayuda a practicar en leer y en el aprendizaje del vocabulario de los dos idiomas, inglés y español.
6. El uso de cognados puede ser útil en libros bilingües, en español y en inglés. En esta actividad estudiantes pueden buscar cognados en el libro. Los estudiantes pueden trabajar en parejas para identificar y formar una lista si las palabras son cognados verdaderos o falsos. Al final de la actividad es importante distinguir cómo clase la lista de los cognados verdaderos o falsos.

Estas actividades solo son sugerencias. Puede encontrar más recursos para apoyar las clases de inmersión dual y bilingües. Puede leer mas en (<https://blog.leeandlow.com/2013/11/04/using-dual-language-and-bilingual-books-in-third-and-fourth-grade/>).

Social and Emotional Learning

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Have students chart Manuel's emotions over the course of the story. How does he feel when he's interacting with his dad? How about when he is carving? Use the illustrations as a visual reference and way to tap into students' visual literacy skills.
2. What Social and Emotional Learning skills does the Manuel exhibit over the course of the book? How does he show problem solving? How does he recognize and manage his emotions? Was it important for him to demonstrate those skills?
3. What is a life lesson you learned from a teacher, friend, or family member? What was it? How did it impact you? How can you pass on your knowledge to someone else?
4. Encourage students to think about Social and Emotional Learning skills they have used

to achieve something that they are passionate about. How does it relate to how Manuel accomplished his dreams?

5. Which illustration in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* do you think best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it is. How does the artist portray that emotion?
6. Choose an emotion such as happiness, fear, hope, sadness, and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

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

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

English/Language Arts and Foundational Skills

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

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

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

- **Encourage students to imagine an interview with the author.** Students can design interview questions to ask the author, Diana Cohn, of *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* as if they were on a talk show, news show, or radio show. What do students want to learn more about in terms of the writing process?
- **In an essay, poem, or other written form, have students share about a special memory they share with family or friends.** Think about what made that moment memorable. Describe that moment in your life and why that memory is special to you.
- **Conduct a descriptive language study with students.** Have students go on a descriptive language scavenger hunt in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*. Refer to Reading Rocket's "Figurative Language Resource Page" as a tool for students to use during their search (http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson79/figresource.pdf). Create a chart with different rows for figurative language terms (i.e. simile, metaphor, vivid details) and students can fill it in with specific examples from *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*. Afterwards, students can experiment using figurative language in their own poetry inspired by the book.
- **In an essay, poem, or other written format, have students share something about their family that's important to them.** Woodcarving is a family affair in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*. Are their crafts or traditions that have been passed to students? Why or how are these traditions meaningful to their family? If time allows, students can create a visual presentation to share with the class.
- **Encourage students to learn more about Diana Cohn's work through an author study.** Diana Cohn has several other books published by Lee & Low, listed below. After

reading some or all the stories, ask students to compare the writing style across the books, along with *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*. What do students notice about how Diana Cohn writes? What are some of the techniques she uses? Why do you think some of Diana Cohn's books are bilingual Spanish/English, and how does this add to the story or affect students' reading experiences?

- *The Bee Tree* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-bee-tree>)
- *Crane Boy* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/crane-boy>)
- *¡Sí, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/si-se-puede-yes-we-can>)
- **After finishing the book, encourage students to read the Abridgment of Oaxacan Woodcarving: The Magic in the Trees in the Backmatter at the end of the book.** Students can write a reaction to what they read and how it impacted their interpretation of the story. What new information did they learn? Why is the backmatter critical to understanding *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*? How does backmatter in books help readers understand more about the history presented in the main story?

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1-3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4-6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7-9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10) (Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10) (Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Provide students with a map of Mexico.** Have students locate Oaxaca and the village of Arrazola in Mexico. Provide students with a world map and have them take note of where Manuel's village of Arrazola is in comparison to the city of Oaxaca. Have students mark those locations on their map. After marking their map, students can reflect on how the village and Oaxaca play a role in the development in Manuel's woodcarving. In addition to consulting the map of Mexico, students can consult this map for more information on Oaxaca www.oaxacamio.com/magictownsoaxaca.htm
- **Identify the different foods that are used in *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*.** Students can then research the possible ways to eat or prepare the different food items that they identify. Are these foods traditional to Oaxaca? Students can present their findings in a visual presentation to the class. For further research on the Oaxacan cuisine, consider consulting www.eater.com/22929351/what-is-oaxacan-food-cuisine-mexican to learn more
- **Research the importance of the Copal tree in Oaxacan woodcarving.** Why is this tree crucial to woodcarving? What are other uses for this tree? Where can this tree be found? Have students present their findings in a visual presentation. Consider consulting https://uknowledge.uky.edu/world_mexico_alebrijes_brochure.pdf to learn more about the Copal Tree.
- **Conduct a study on Manuel Jimenez Ramirez.** How did Manuel Jiménez Ramirez change woodcarving history? What is Manuel known for? How did he distinguish himself from other carvers? How does his family continue his legacy? Have students look up different woodcarvings created by Manuel and his family. Students can present their findings in a visual presentation. Students can begin their research consulting the following links (<https://www.>

fofa.us/woodcarving/2) and (https://uknowledge.uky.edu/world_mexico_alebrijes/)

- **Have students learn more about Oaxacan woodcarving.** Where did this start? Who was the first famous carver? Were there other carvers around the time that Manuel first started? Where were the other carvers located? How was their carvings similar to Manuel's? How were they different? Consult the following resources to learn more about the history of Oaxacan woodcarving <https://oaxacanwoodcarving.com/pages/historical-art-of-oaxacan-woodcarving>, *Vamonos* Teacher's Guide by Cynthia Weill (https://www.leeandlow.com/books/vamonos/teachers_guide), *Opuestos* Teacher's Guide (https://www.leeandlow.com/books/opuestos/teachers_guide).

Art

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1-3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4-6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7-9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10) (Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10) (Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Have students reimagine the cover to *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*.** What would they change? What would they keep? If time allows, have students illustrate the new book cover.
- **Have students illustrate a feeling one of the characters experienced in the story.** What do they want to convey? What kinds of materials do they want to use? Have students share their pieces with a partner, small group, or whole class.
- **Consider having students come up with questions to interview the illustrator Amy Córdova Boone.** What is his process behind creating the illustrations? What medium did he use to create the illustrations? Why? What was it like to work on *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*?
- **Encourage students to select the illustration from *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños* that resonated with them the most.** Have each student write a reflection about the illustration. What stood out to them? How did it make the student feel? What did it make them think about?
- **Have students illustrate a location or place that is important to them and their family.** Students can create an artistic representation of this location, using materials in their classroom or whatever is readily available. Encourage students to think about what they want to convey artistically about the location. What kinds of materials do they want to use? Why did they choose that way to illustrate the location? How did this activity affect how they feel about and their appreciation for the location? Students may share their artwork with the whole class
- **Have students imagine their own woodcarving.** Students can sketch out their woodcarving first and if time and resources allow, students can create their own woodcarving out of modeling clay or playdough. Have students write down their responses to the following questions. Why did they chose this certain animal? Why did they chose these certain colors? What was their inspiration behind creating this carving? Create a gallery walk of each students' creation.

Home-School Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9) (Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10) (Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Have students research their family history.** For lesson ideas, check out the “Family Ties and Fabric Tales” lesson plan from Learning for Justice. (www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/general/165_TT_Family_Ties_Fabric_Tales_Data_Sheet_6-12.pdf). Students can later present to their findings to the class.
- **Have students bring home a copy of *Dream Carver / El tallador de sueños*.** Ask students to read with adults at home. Encourage conversation and discussion after reading. What did they like about reading a bilingual book? What did they learn from the story?
- **Ask students to describe an activity or pastime they do with their families.** It can be anything from an annual family tradition to a weekly hike. Encourage students to write, sketch, or photograph what meaningful time with their families is to them and how it has evolved since they were children.
- **Have students create paper Alebrijes at home with their family.** Consider adapting this lesson from the Timothy S. Y. Lam Museum of Anthropology to send home with students <https://lammuseum.wfu.edu/2020/10/mexico-create-a-colorful-alebrije/>. Students can later share their family Alebrijes with the class.
- **Have students interview a parent, a guardian, or an adult mentor about their experiences fighting for something that they believe in.** How did the person react to and handle the situation when they were faced with obstacles? What advice does the person have for someone trying to take up a cause and stand up for justice today?



Ordering Information

General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/dream-carver-el-tallador-de-suenos

By Phone: 212-779-4400 ext. 25

By Fax: 212-683-1894

By Mail:

Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue,
New York, NY 10016

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Diana Cohn has worked on environmental, economic, and global justice issues as a teacher, a media activist, and an advisor, program officer, and executive director in philanthropic institutions. She is the award-winning author of seven children's books, including *¡Si Se Puede! / Yes We Can! Janitor Strike in L.A.*, *The Bee Tree*, and *Crane Boy*, all published by Cinco Puntos Press/Lee & Low. She lives with her husband on a houseboat in northern California.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Amy Córdova Boone is a fine artist who has illustrated multiple children's books and written some of her own. Córdova Boone also works as Art Director of an arts-based cross-curriculum elementary school. Originally from Wisconsin, Córdova Boone now lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. You can see more of her work at amycordova.com

REVIEWS

"A fitting tribute to the energy and power of an artist's distinctive vision." – *Publishers Weekly*

"Shows how imagination can become a compelling force for change... A good introduction to a uniquely Mexican art form." – *School Library Journal*

"Cordova's bright, acrylic illustrations on gessoed ground lovingly portray Mateo, his family, his village, and the amazing wooden animals, splashed with polka dots and intricate designs." – *Kirkus Reviews*

ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

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