

MINI CURRICULUM

**READING *is*
RESISTANCE**





ABOUT THIS MINI-CURRICULUM

Hi, I'm Zapoura Newton-Calvert, and I'm the co-founder of Reading Is Resistance and a Teaching Assistant Professor at Portland State University. My organization focuses on justice-focused curriculum creation (Storyseed Curriculum) and a simple social justice reading and conversation practice for all ages of readers. Each mini-curriculum is designed to give you a taste of what we do and how we create opportunities for conversations and action in our communities.



THE ROOTS OF STORYSEED

The [Social Justice Standards](#) from [Learning for Justice](#), founded by the Southern Poverty Law Center, serve as guides for the Storyseed Curriculum work. We also draw from abolitionist, decolonizing, heart/body-centered, and white anti-racist practices. Here is a short list of reads from a few of the many folx and communities who we have and continue to learn from and with:

- Abolitionist Practice: [Abolitionist Teaching Network](#), [Woke Kindergarten](#)
- Decolonization: [Robin Wall Kimmerer](#), [Eve Tuck](#), [Monique Gray Smith](#)
- Heart/Body Practices: [Resmaa Menakem](#), [the Bhodi Project](#), [Dr. Angel Kyodo Williams](#)
- White Anti-Racist Practice: [JORE Project](#), [Chris Crass](#)

I hope you enjoy and reach out with any questions about how to get involved!

With love and in solidarity,

Zapoura Newton-Calvert

Co-founder, Reading Is

Resistance



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**STORYSEED
CURRICULUM**

INTRODUCTION

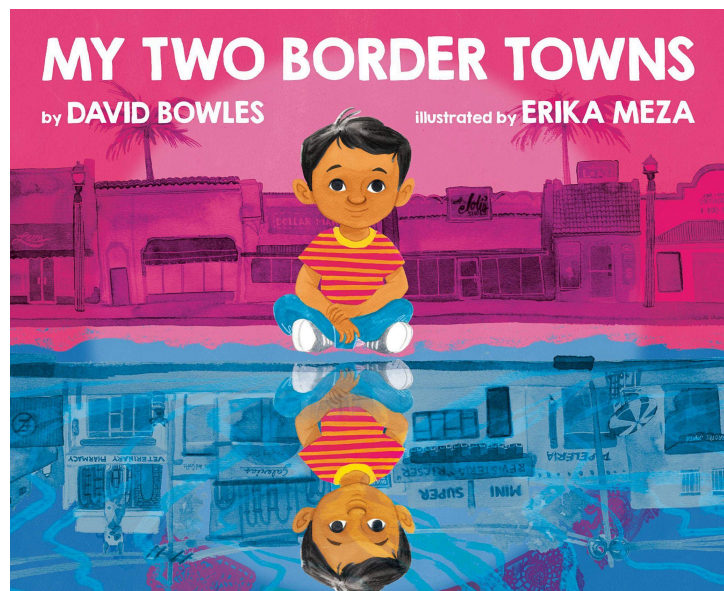
This reading guide was written by Zapoura Newton-Calvert and was designed to accompany author David Bowles and illustrator Erika Meza's picture book *My Two Border Towns*. Reading Is Resistance sees reading as an opportunity to seed deeper learning, conversation, and possibilities for action around racial justice and liberation in our communities.

BOOK THEMES

DIVERSITY, JUSTICE, ACTION,
MIGRATION, IMMIGRATION,
BORDERS, INDIGENEITY, REFUGEE
STATUS

READ ALOUD

[Read Aloud by the Author](#)




BOOK SUMMARY

A young Mexican-American boy and his father take a trip across the U.S. – Mexico border to visit family and to help refugee families who are stuck waiting as they seek asylum in the United States.

The story focuses on similarities between cities and people on both sides of the human-created border and also touches on the Indigenous people who lived there when no border existed. This is a good introduction to conversations on migration, immigration, the border crisis, and how to support people who are seeking refuge.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS¹ FOR MY TWO BORDER TOWNS

 Because this is a mini-curriculum, it only contains a small number of the discussion questions we've designed to accompany this story. For the full curriculum, please go to www.readingisresistance.com. Full curriculum also includes a Resource and Action Guide.

Note: Because this book does not have page numbers, we have indicated pagination with a brief quote from the page or a brief image description.

“EVERY OTHER SATURDAY...”

- What do you usually do on Saturday mornings? **IDENTITY**
- Are there words on this page that are familiar (words you have practiced)? Are there words on this page that are unfamiliar (unpracticed) for you? When you come across unpracticed words, what can you do to make them more familiar? **IDENTITY & DIVERSITY**

“BEFORE I KNOW IT...” “NOW WE’RE TWO COUNTRIES.”

- What is a border’s purpose? Who/what gets to decide where a border is? Who should get to decide? Can a border move? Can a border be taken away? **IMAGINATION, REFLECTION, & JUSTICE**

¹ The Learning for Justice [Social Justice Standards](#) (IDENTITY, DIVERSITY, JUSTICE, and ACTION) used to design the discussion questions for this book are for Grades K-2. This book, however, can be modified and used with a wide range of ages. Each discussion question is labeled with one of the four standards or one of the Reading for Resistance categories of REFLECTION and IMAGINATION. These indicate the primary learning objective that is being met with the question.



“WE DRIVE UP...” – “THIS TOWN’S A TWIN OF THE ONE WHERE I LIVE...”

- What does the boy notice about the town on the Mexican side of the border in comparison to the United States side of the border? What is similar? What is different?
[DIVERSITY](#)

“WE LOAD UP OUR TRUCK...”

- What is a “duty”? [REFLECTION](#)
- What does it mean to have a “duty to care for our gente²”? [REFLECTION](#)
- In your community, do you feel like you have a duty to care for other people, other living things, the environment? Why or why not? [REFLECTION](#)

“THE U.S. SAYS THERE’S NO ROOM...”

- Are there some things that all families need in order to keep safe, warm, and cozy?
[REFLECTION & JUSTICE](#)
- Whose job or duty is it to make sure that all families get what they need? [REFLECTION & JUSTICE](#)

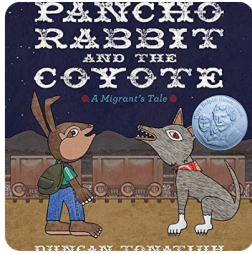
“I WISH ÉLDER...”

- Who should get to decide if a country has room for refugees or not? [REFLECTION & JUSTICE](#)
- How do you think people who are seeking refuge should be welcomed? How would you want to be welcomed if you were leaving an unsafe situation and were looking for safety and a new home? [REFLECTION, JUSTICE, & ACTION](#)

² Our people

READ NEXT

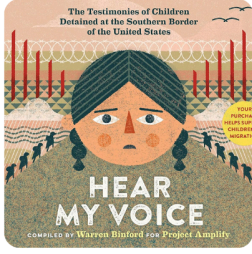
PICTURE BOOKS



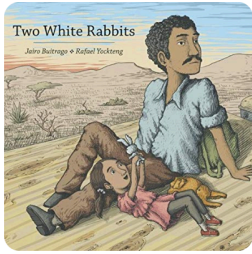
PANCHO RABBIT AND THE COYOTE BY DUNCAN TONATIUH



DREAMERS BY YUYI MORALES

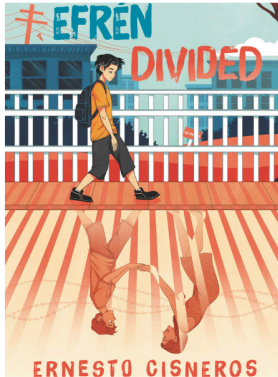


HEAR MY VOICE BY VARIOUS



TWO QUITE RABBITS BY JAIRO BUITRAGO

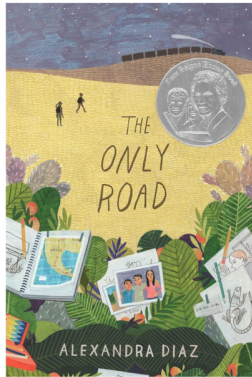
MIDDLE READER BOOKS



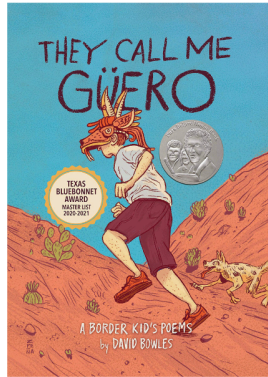
EFREN DIVIDED BY ERNESTO CISNEROS



LAND OF THE CRANES BY AIDA SALAZAR



THE ONLY ROAD BY ALEXANDRA DIAZ



THEY CALL ME GÜERO BY DAVID BOWLES

THANK YOU

We welcome any feedback, notes, and tagging on social media @reading_is_resistance #readingisresistance. Thank you for being part of our learning community. Together we move from reading to action!