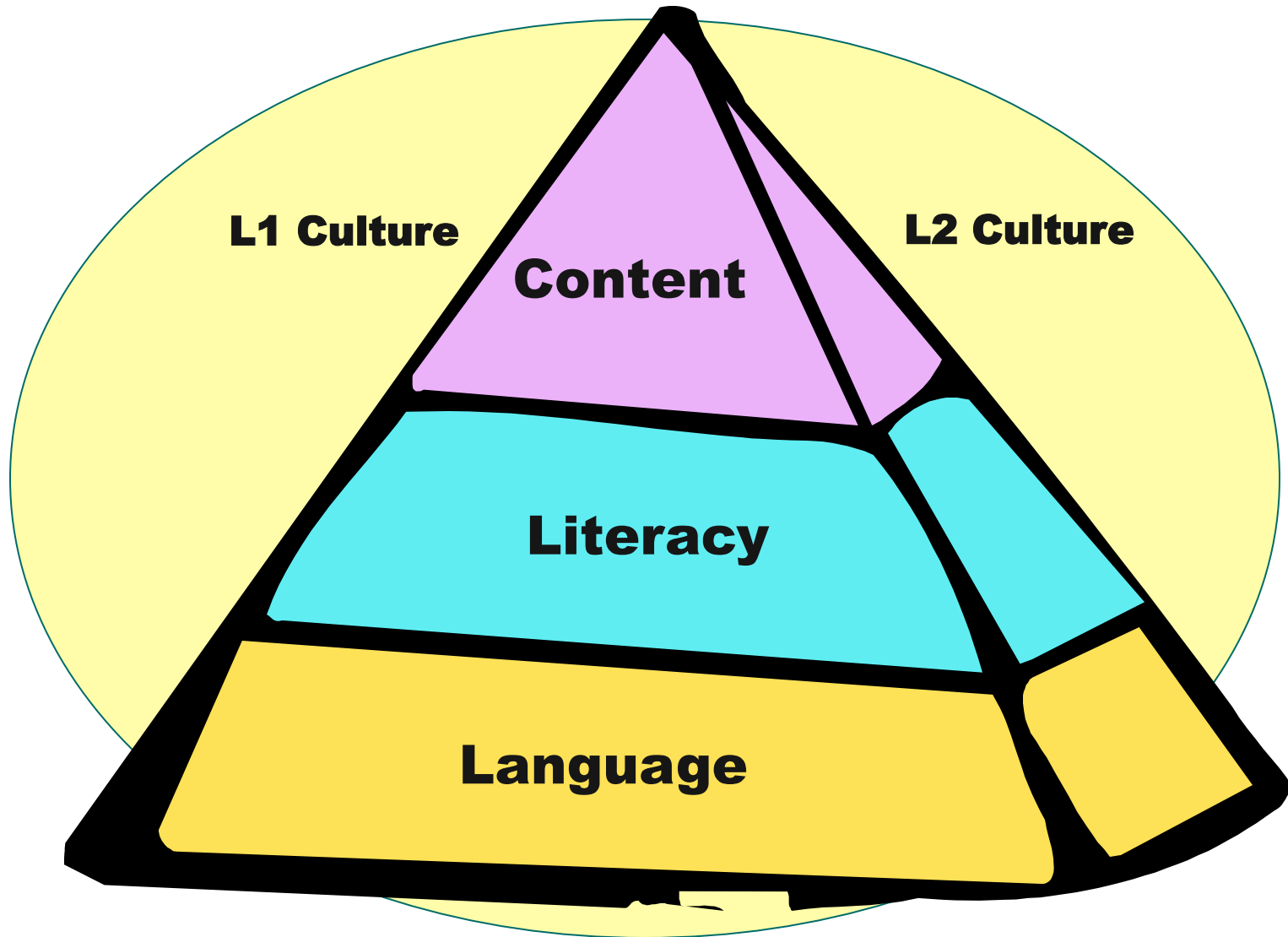


Multicultural Literature

A Vehicle for Teaching
Language, Literacy & Culture

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Academic Needs of L2/ Bilingual Learners



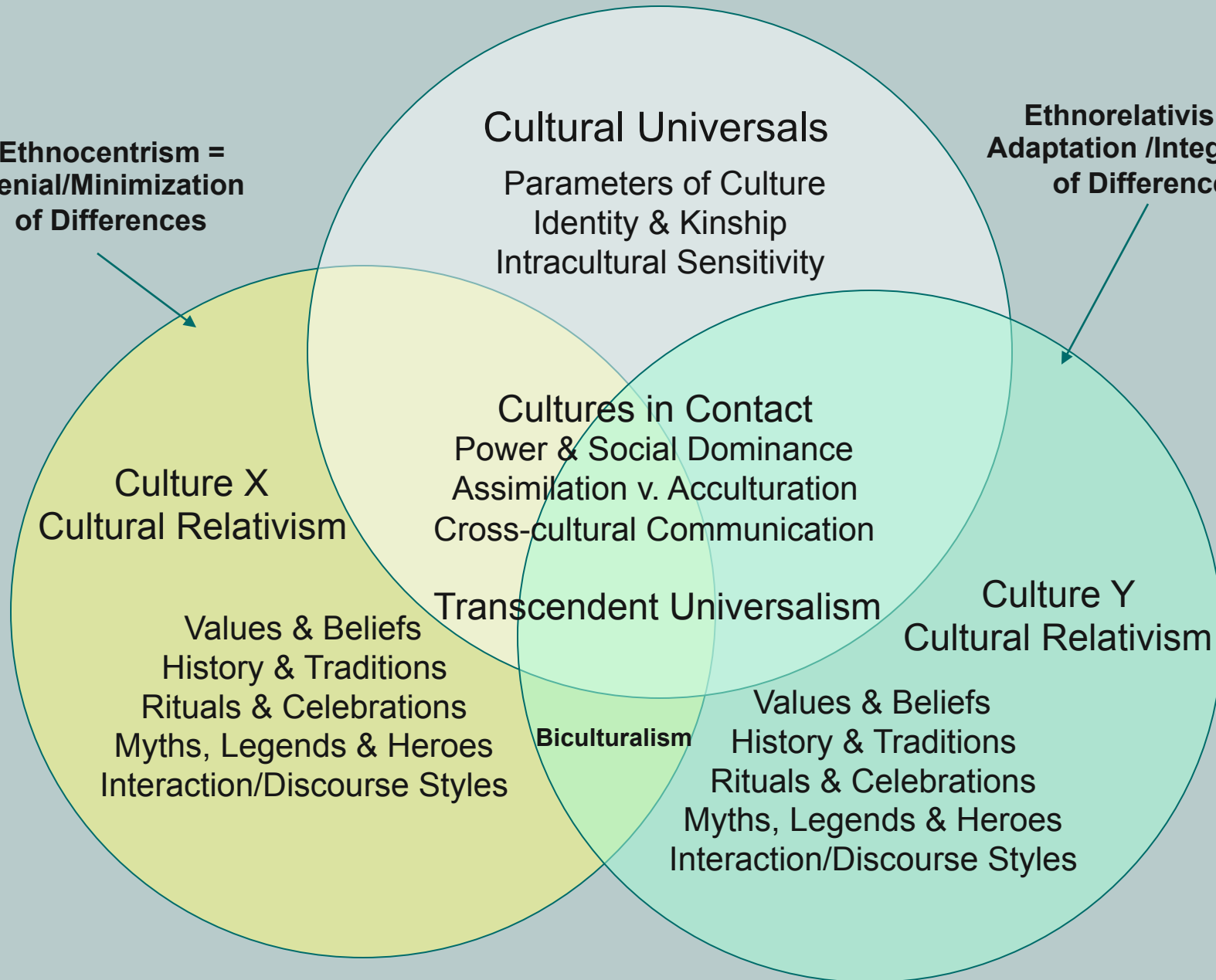
Guiding Principles for DL Education (Howard et al, 2007)

- Curriculum: Strand 2: Principle 1: Standards-based; C. Equal status for both languages; sensitive to the cultural & linguistic backgrounds of students; promotes bilingualism & biliteracy.
- Strand 2: Principle 3: Fully articulated curriculum; builds on linguistic skills in L1 & L2
- ❖ Instruction: Strand 3: Principle 3: Research-based; explicit language instruction & academic content integration; meaningful language use
- ❖ Strand 3: Principle 4: Cultural & linguistic equity; encourages cross-cultural appreciation

Knowledge Base for Multicultural Competency

Ethnocentrism = Denial/Minimization of Differences

Ethnorelativism = Adaptation /Integration of Differences

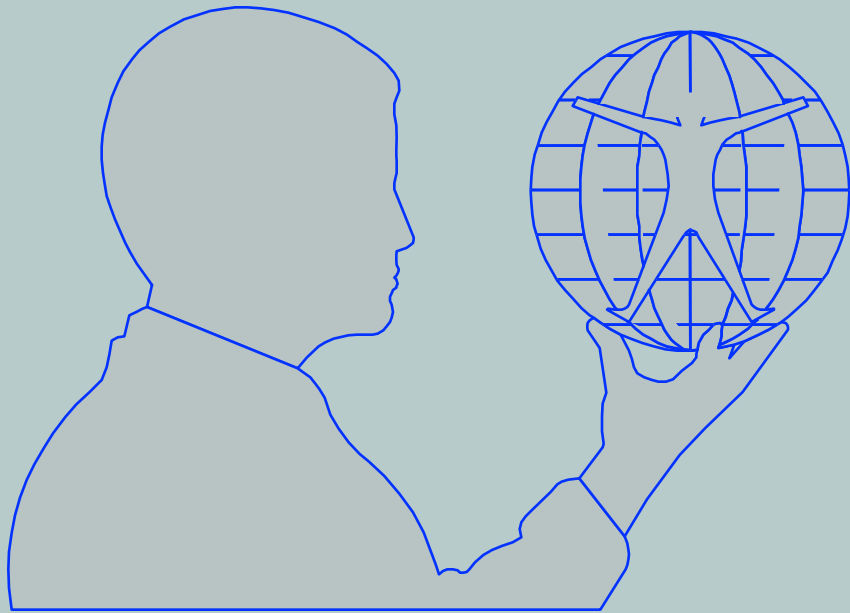


Parameters of Culture (Brooks 1973)

Parameters are:

- 25 elements or dimensions that all cultures have in common
- Compared to musical notes played on different instruments: Middle C is the same note but sounds different when played on a clarinet vs. a piano.
- Describe how cultural knowledge, skills & values are transmitted.

Contrasting Cultural Values

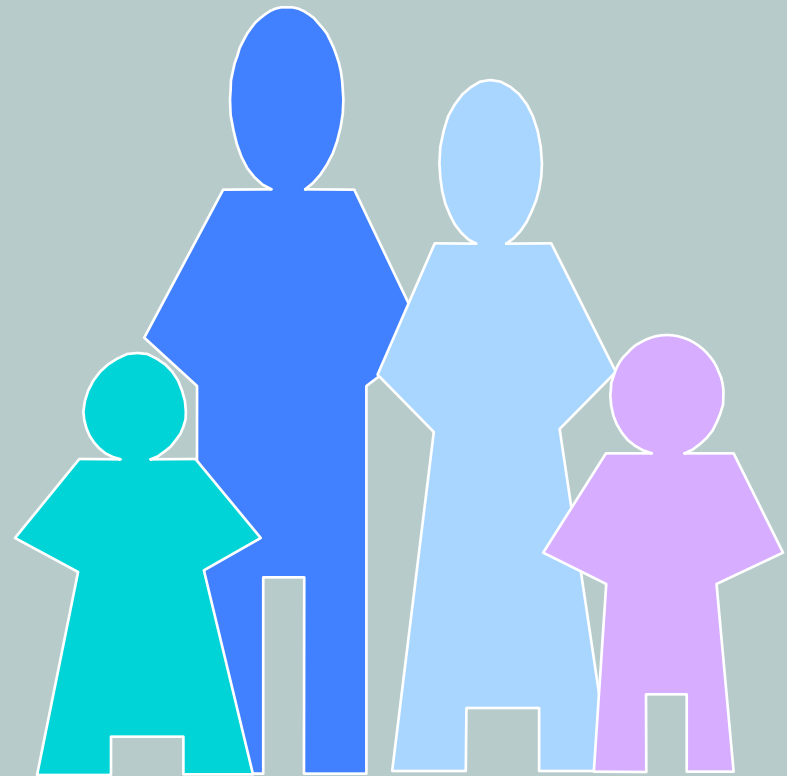


We develop cultural perceptual patterns which:

- Determine which stimuli reach our awareness.
- Determine our judgments of those objects & events.

How Cultural Values Are Formed

- Family & childhood messages
- Folklore of the culture
- Societal pressures: rewards & punishment
- Religious education
- Formal schooling
- Peer groups



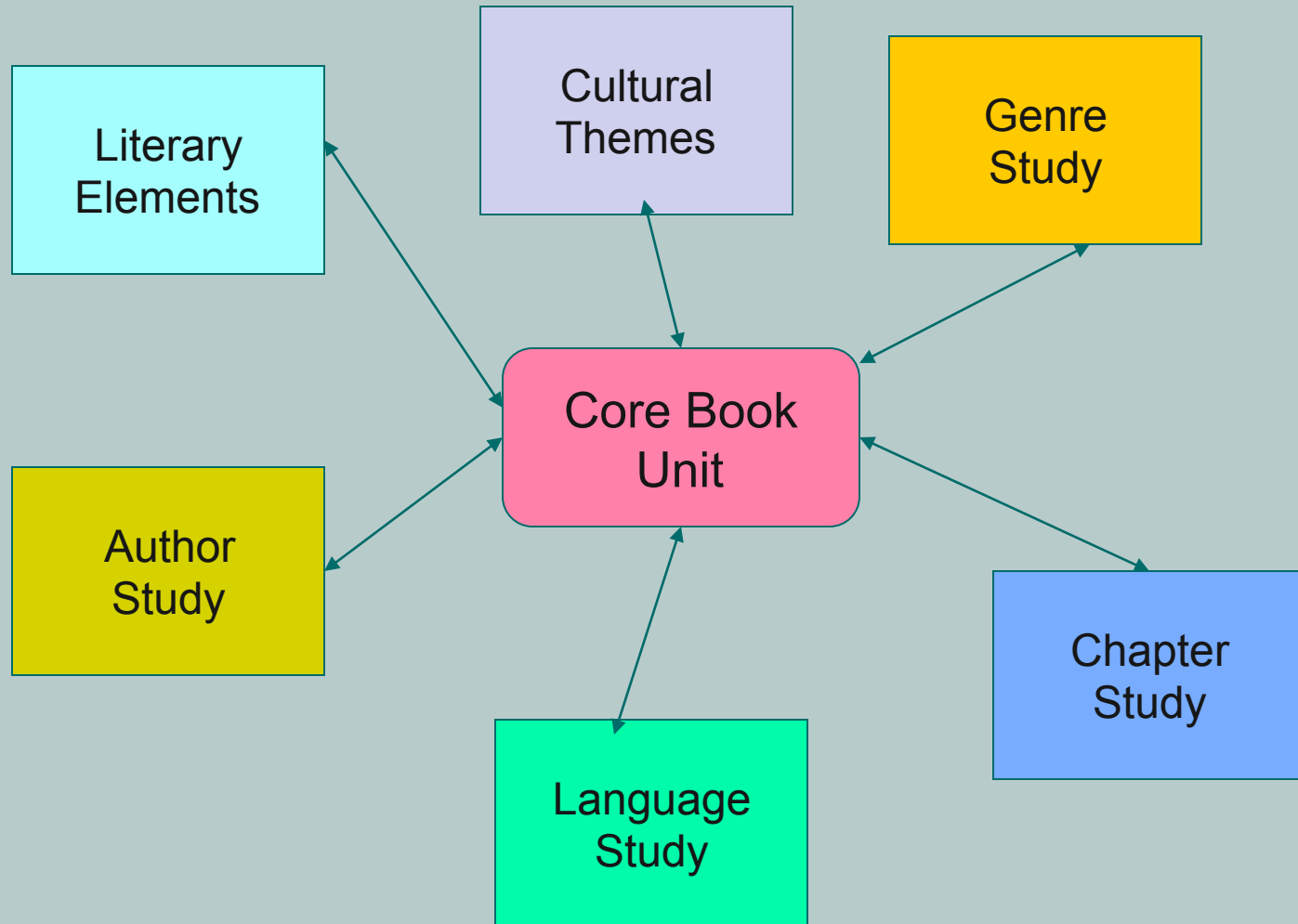
Think-Pair-Share #1

- Select one of the 25 Parameters of Culture to discuss with a partner.
- Share about childhood messages you received about this aspect of your culture such as “does & don’ts” or “shoulds.”
- How do your students in your DL classroom manifest or express this Parameter? Do they demonstrate biculturalism or multiculturalism?

Multicultural Literature

- Reflects the cultural diversity within the community & within the classroom.
- Creates a bridge between students' real-life experiences & academic learning.
- Provides role models & models of competent authors who speak & write in more than one language.
- Gives a “safe space” for discussing cultural differences & conflicts through fictional characters & situations.

DIMENSIONS OF MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE



Think-Pair-Share #2

- Describe to your partner the role that multicultural literature has in a DL program you have observed or in your own childhood.
- Is there sufficient focus on literature in general & multicultural literature in particular? Why or why not? Consider factors such as needed books & materials or time & focus constraints.
- Do you plan to make cultural elements explicit in your teaching of literature? If so, how? If not, why not?

Esperanza Rising

Pam Muñoz Ryan (2000)

The story is about Esperanza, whose father Sixto Ortega is a wealthy rancher & grape grower of *El Rancho de las Rosas* near Aguascalientes. On the eve of her 13th birthday, Esperanza's father is murdered. Her uncles, Tío Luis & Tío Marco use the tragedy as an opportunity to take over the ranch, attempting to coerce Esperanza's mother Ramona into marrying Tío Luis. After a suspicious fire destroys their home, Esperanza & her family escape Tío Luis' evil scheme along with their loyal servants, Alfonso & Hortesia & their son, Miguel. The fictional story parallels her grandmother's life in Mexico before she immigrated to the United States & overcame the hardships of the farm labor camps in California in the 1930's.

Multicultural Elements of Genre Studies-Historical Fiction

- Culture is transmitted through story-telling.
- The historical & cultural context of the story is essential to understanding how characters act & react to events & relationships.
- The moral dilemmas that characters face are often approached & solved through cultural paradigms & culture-specific values & belief systems.

Historical Fiction Genre

- Characters
- Setting
- Time period
- Historical event
- Conflict/Resolution
- Style
- Turning Point
- Tone
- Theme
- Ending



Historical Context (Early 1930's)

- ❖ The Mexican Revolution (Ended 10 years before)
 - Land owners vs. rural poor
 - Power grabs & corruption
- ❖ Transnational migration & the Great Depression
 - Border crossings, “repatriación” (1929-35) & family members left behind in Mexico
 - Labor relations & migrant worker strikes in California
 - Living conditions of migrant workers

Author Study

Pam Muñoz Ryan

- ❖ Notas de la Autora & Afterward Q & A
- ❖ Cuentos de su abuela eran como “... una existencia de cuentos de hada...”
- ❖ Historia ficticia “...es paralela a su vida en algunos aspectos.”
- ❖ “La fiebre del valle” y “la única fiebre que recuerdo es el afecto ardiente por mis orígenes y mis pertinencias.”
- ❖ Temores, lealtades, conflictos, sufrimientos, recuerdos, alegrías

Cultural Themes

Bonding

Bonding: Esperanza's story conveys messages about the importance of belonging-- "the ties that bind" her family to the land and to each other. This cultural theme involves learning about how people from all cultures gain a sense of their common humanity despite differences in class, race and nationality, but also about relationships within a Mexican family and within the immigrant community.

Cross-cultural Understanding

Nota de la Autora, *Esperanza Renace (ER)*,
p. 265, entrevista con un migrante:

“...no guardaban rencor a la gente de Oklahoma ni a otra gente que compitió con ellos por sus empleos en aquella época.”

“Todos éramos muy pobres. Los “okies” y los filipinos también eran pobres. Todos queríamos trabajar y alimentar a nuestras familias. Por eso a muchos de nosotros nos resultaba muy difícil ir a la huelga.”

Cultural Themes

Resilience

Resilience: This parameter of culture addresses how people recover from adversity and how cultures afford sustenance and support during times of grief and tragedy. One of the strong inspirational messages of *Esperanza Rising* is how she is transformed into a more loving and ethical person by adversity than she might have been as the daughter of wealth and privilege growing into young womanhood on *El Rancho de Las Rosas*.



Resilience

“¿Qué más había dicho Abuelita? Que después de vencer muchas montañas y valles estarían juntas de nuevo. Se inclinó sobre su labor, muy concentrada y cuando se le cayó un cabello, lo recogió y lo tejió en la manta. Lloró al pensar en los deseos que quedarían trenzados en la manta para siempre.” (ER, p. 163-4)

Cultural Themes: Ethics & Values

Ethics and Values: Esperanza gains a new sense of right and wrong in human conduct through her experiences with her corrupt uncles and her mother's nobility and courage to start a new life rather than succumb to their deceit and tyranny. She learns the value of family, friends, work and perseverance, as well as a sense of social justice that puts the ideals of the Mexican Revolution into a personal context due to her family's & her own struggles in Mexico and the USA.

Ethics & Values

“Esperanza se dejó elevar hasta el cielo y supo que no caería. Supo que nunca perdería a Papá, ni El Rancho de las Rosas, ni a Abuelita ni a Mamá, pasar lo que pasara. ...tenía su familia, un jardín lleno de rosas, su fe y los recuerdos de aquellos que habían partido antes que ella. ...y eso hacía que se elevara como si tuviera las alas del ave fénix.” (ER, p. 255)

Cultural Themes: Religion



Religion: *Esperanza Rising* is replete with references and symbols of the cultural universals of religion and the role of faith in overcoming hardship. Related directly to Mexican culture, the symbolism of the Virgin of Guadalupe occurs throughout the story to illustrate how religious images and traditions are transported across international borders to provide a sense of connectedness and continuity with religious practices from immigrants' homeland.

Religion

“Por qué rezarás en la iglesia? –preguntó Mamá.”

“Encenderé una vela por la memoria de Papá —dijo --. Rezaré para que Miguel encuentre un trabajo en el ferrocarril. Le pediré a Nuestra Señora que me ayude a cuidar a Lupe y Pepe mientras Isabel está en la escuela. Y rezaré para un dulce de coco con una raya roja encima.”

“Mamá, ¿por qué rezarás tú?”

“Rezaré por ti, Esperanza, para que seas fuerte, pase lo que pase.” (ER, p. 141)

Cultural Themes

Ownership

Ownership: Esperanza loses all of her material possessions except for the doll that her murdered father had given her as a birthday gift, yet learns the value of giving, and giving up, material things to give joy and comfort to others. Esperanza grows from a somewhat selfish and spoiled child of privilege into a caring and generous young woman who reaches out through hardship and a sense of common humanity to those who share her plight and struggles as an immigrant.

La Muñeca



Ownership

Esperanza abrió su maleta para comprobar si la muñeca seguía allí. La agarró y le alisó el vestido. Una niña descalza se acercó corriendo.

“Qué linda, dijo, y extendió la mano para tocar la muñeca. Esperanza la apartó bruscamente...”

Mamá miró a la mamá de la niña.

“Disculpen los malos modales de mi hija.”

Esperanza miró sorprendida a Mamá...

“Cuando desprecias a esta gente, desprecias a Miguel, Hortensia y Alfonso, y me avergüenzas y te avergüenzas a ti misma.” (ER, p. 70)

Cultural Themes: Rewards & Privileges

Rewards and Privileges: Esperanza evolves from clinging to the privilege she gained by virtue of birth and social position into appreciating the value of the rewards and privileges of hard work, sacrifice and closeness to loved ones. The story also carries messages about class and race consciousness in Mexico and the importance of opportunities within a society to overcome these barriers to personal fulfillment and prosperity.

Class Consciousness

“Pero ahora que era una jovencita comprendía que Miguel era el hijo del ama de llaves y ella era la hija del dueño del rancho, y entre ellos corría un profundo río. Esperanza estaba en una orilla y Miguel en la otra, y ese río no podía cruzarse. En un momento de vanidad, Esperanza le dijo todo esto a Miguel. Desde entonces, él le hablaba muy poco... Ya no bromeaban ni se reían ni hablaban de cosas sin importancia... en secreto deseaba no haberle hablado a Miguel de las orillas del río.

(ER, p. 18)

Literary Elements

- **Theme:** “Es más rico el rico cuando empobrece que el pobre cuando enriquece.”
- **Foreshadowing:**
“Me pinché con una espina.”
“No hay rosas sin espinas.”
- **Symbolism:**
 - La hebilla de Papá
 - La rosa
 - La muñeca
 - La cosecha y las frutas
 - El tejido del reboso
- **Mood:** El tic tac del reloj; los candelabros cuando esperaban a Papá.

Figurative Language

Simile: Los tíos como animales y plantas: buitres, unos chivos mal alimentados, burros.

“Los tíos...empezaron a parecerse a la planta de calabaza que tenía Alfonso en el huerto, cuyas enormes hojas se extendían invadiendo el terreno.”

Metaphor: “Aguántate tantito y la fruta caerá en tus manos.”

“Se hundió en un agujero profundo de desesperación e incredulidad.”

Personification: Los trabajadores era como los gatitos, “...animales pequeños y temerosos.”

Language Study Usage

Use of future & conditional tense (ER, p. 9):

“¿Dónde estará Papá?”

“Papá y los hombres se juntarían bajo su ventana para cantarle Las mañanitas...”

“Esperanza correría a la ventana para lanzarles besos a Papá...”

“Papá le regalaría una muñeca de porcelana.”

Language Study

Lexicons

- puñado de tierra
- ranchero adinerado
- arrear el ganado
- pesado racimo de uvas
- los viñedos rendía su cosecha
- capataz de los trabajadores
- las hileras del cultivo
- viña, viñero, viñadero, vendimiar, la vendimia



Chapter Study

- 14 chapters named for fruits & vegetables
- Plot Development
- Character Development
- Thematic Coherence
- Chapter Activities that integrate 4 language skills (LSRW), art & music
 - Focal Dimensions
 - Integrative Dimensions

Chapter Activities

- Fictitious friendly letters (Ex: Between Esperanza & Miguel)
- Readers' Theatre readings based on scenes with dialogue
- Class interviews of characters (Ex: "police" interview of Tío Luis about Papá's murder)
- Write a news story about the fire at El Rancho
- Study music of the Revolución & adapt it to the story (Ex: Write a *corrido* about Esperanza or Rancho de Las Rosas)
- Create a mural or collage of story events from each chapter.

Think-Pair-Share #3

- Describe a multicultural literature book that your class has studied. What cultural themes did the book portray?
- Share some activities that you plan to use for teaching literature. Are these adaptable to enhance explicit cultural teaching?
- Share a new idea from the concept of the Core Book Unit that you want to integrate into your multicultural literature studies.