

Reviewed by Sherrie Sacharow

THE LATINA'S BIBLE: THE NUEVA LATINA'S GUIDE TO LOVE, SPIRITUALITY, FAMILY AND LA VIDA. (1ST ED.)

BY S. GUZMAN,
THREE RIVERS PRESS, 2002

The Latina's Bible is tart, timely and terrific reading. This title is reviewed from the perspective of teachers and school librarians who are trying to find titles for young English language learners. The book is an 'information and advice' format told by the author, a female Latin American journalist, and focuses on Latin teenage girls and their assimilation and relationship to their culture through language and customs. Although it is recommended for grade 10, it might be very useful by grade 8. Readability is high for cross-cultural Latinas as the book addresses fears, myths, and commonly held beliefs that concern women in Latin cultures. It challenges and offers Latinas a path to success in the modern two career couple, or comforts those who choose to live in the traditional household.

This book addresses taboos such as physical and sexual abuse, and raises consciousness about homosexuality in the Latin community. The reader is offered a common sense, factual look at Hispanic gender inequality, along with the consequences and choices for students. The layout of the book is done with short encyclopedic entries that display

factual information and advice. An interspersing of Spanish and "Spanglish" make the patois familiar and trustworthy for students who are truly torn between two cultures and languages. The book has facts, statistics, biographical vignettes, web sites, and bibliographies. This title is appropriate for any high school in South Florida, and it is probably going to be a very popular title for young learners in many other locales. From a non-fiction genre, this book reflects the variety of cultures of Latin Americans, includes current teen gender issues, issues of career potential, and warrants special attention as an excellent application for English language learners.

For teachers looking to offer students culturally relevant literary works, this book fulfills the following Florida Sunshine State Standards and competencies:

1. Evaluate information in order to draw inferences. (L.A.A.1.4.4) (L.A.A.2.4.6) (L.A.A.2.4.8)
2. Highlight keywords in a text to construct meaning. (L.A.A.1.4.1) (L.A.A.1.4.2) (L.A.A.1.4.3)
3. The student will demonstrate an ability to organize information and increase reading potential and

is able to use appropriate pre/post reading strategies to facilitate text comprehension .(LA.A.1.4.1) (LA.A.1.4.2) (LA.A.1.4.4) (LA.A.2.4.8)

The Author

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