

teacher resource guide

schooltime performance series



chato's kitchen

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about the performance

In his funny and charming book *Chato's Kitchen*, acclaimed Chicana writer Gary Soto introduces Chato, a cool, low-riding cat from the barrio. Chato wants to eat his new neighbors, a family of ratoncitos (little mice), but things go awry when they bring an unexpected dinner guest to Chato's casa.

Inspired by this tale, Childsplay—a theater company in Arizona that has served and educated children for more than 40 years—adapted Soto's delightful story for the stage.

The action begins when Chato spies a family of four mice moving next door. Sensing an opportunity, he devises what he thinks is a clever plan to lure them: Invite them over for dinner! The mice accept his offer.

Chato starts assembling a meal that would go great with mice: tortillas, carne asada, arroz, enchiladas, fajitas, chiles rellenos, frijoles, guacamole and salsa de tamarindo to wash it all down and flan for a sweet ending to this delicious meal. His feline friend, Novio Boy, helps him prepare.

Meanwhile, the mice create their favorite dish: quesadillas stuffed with cheese, of course. And they bring along their good friend, Chorizo, a dog! Hilarity ensues when the cats are startled by this surprise guest.

about gary soto

Gary Soto is a poet, novelist, essayist, playwright and author of books for children and young adults. He has been hailed as a pivotal figure in Chicana literature for his gritty and evocative portrayals of Mexican-American life in the barrio, the neighborhoods where Spanish and English commingle.

His writings, while set in a specific milieu, have been praised by critics and earned awards for their universal appeal, his deft exploration of the human condition, and his skillful use of language.

Soto was born on April 12, 1952 in Fresno, California. As a young man, he was employed as an agricultural laborer and also worked in the factories of Fresno. Growing up, he did not focus on school.

"We didn't have many books around when I was growing up, and no one really encouraged us to read. In fact, I never thought about being a writer when I was a kid," he recalls in a profile on the Scholastic website. ([scholastic.com/teachers/authors/gary-soto](https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/authors/gary-soto))

Though he graduated with a 1.8 GPA in high school, Soto became interested in the world of letters, literature and poetry during those years. He began reading works by Robert Frost, John Steinbeck and Ernest Hemingway.

He earned an Associate of Arts degree in English at Fresno City College in 1972. He then earned a Bachelor's degree in English from California State University, Fresno. Soto received a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1976 at University of California, Irvine.

Since those early years, he has written more than a dozen poetry collections, including *The Tale of Sunlight*, nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 1978, and *New and Selected Poems*, a finalist for the National Book Award in 1995. He has also written novels, short stories, plays, an opera libretto, and, of course, books for children and young adults.

A museum devoted to his life and work opened several years ago at his alma mater, Fresno City College.

Soto currently lives in Berkeley, California with his family.



in the spotlight

An interview with Jenny Millinger, Childsplay Associate Artistic Director, and Mark Valdez, the playwright of *Chato's Kitchen*

What sparked the play's inception?

Jenny Millinger: This project started with one of our ensemble members who came to us with the idea of making a play that could have a script that was in English and one script in Spanish instead of a bilingual script. We loved this concept for many reasons. We here at Childsplay are very supportive of emergent bilingualism, valuing languages equally and looking at language equity. So for us, the concept meant a lot. We looked at a variety of books that we thought would be a great story to adapt for younger audiences and we looked at Gary Soto's books. We looked at *Chato's Kitchen* and we thought this was perfect because it's so incredibly set and enriched with the barrio of East Los Angeles. It's such a fantastic story filled with humor and warmth. And we knew we wanted someone who shared that same sense of humor and delicious wicked joy with us, and that's when we called Mark.

How did the book inspire the development of the play?

Mark Valdez: We started by approaching this project through a devising process. We started by spending time combing over the book, the words and illustrations, and really looked closely at how Gary Soto uses language and how the illustrator added to the story. So as we started piecing together a story so that we can create the play, we drew as much from the illustrations as we did from the words that Gary Soto wrote. For instance, there is a whole life cycle or subplot that only exists in the illustrations that had to do with birds in the community. This happens in the background. So we brought some of that to the foreground in the play. That's an example of how illustrations made us think about the story. In the book, you see a little story about a bird that's holding a present. As you turn the pages, you see birds in the background and they are getting married. In the book, the birds don't talk. And in our version, they don't talk. They're part of the life of the community.

What does "devising" mean?

MV: It's a way of creating that doesn't begin with a complete script. Most play processes historically start with a script. You show up for rehearsal and the playwright gives you the script. In the devising process, you come towards the creation process more collectively by drawing on the inspiration and wisdom from the people in the room. So we are coming at it deeply and we have somebody leading the devising process for the sake of organization and efficiency.

I play that role. In this process, we improvise a lot, such as taking the bird situation and doing something with that. As a writer in charge of crafting the piece, it broadens your palette. It gives you more colors. It brings ideas from the group you didn't think of yourself.

How does this play best reflect aspects of Latinx/Chicana culture?

MV: That's a very key focus for us. I am the son of immigrants who grew up in Texas and lived in California. A lot of the people who are part of this process identify similarly, not exclusively though. It's important to me we reflect Chicana culture. Chicana culture is famously distinct from a general Latinx culture. So we are making sure we take the sounds, rhythms, flavors, movement and things so specific to Chicana culture. That's the work we have been doing. So we have been very mindful and intentional about words. Chicana draws a lot on Spanglish, an inventive language, so we make sure we get that part right. We are also thinking about parts of Chicana culture like lowrider culture and we add that kind of specificity.

Are there themes or aspects in this performance that would resonate for an audience that is not bilingual or Latinx/Chicana?

MV: I think so. It's a story about how we start to get along with each other and how we see past the physical. What happens once you get to know somebody – somebody who might be an enemy or someone to be afraid of? If you just get the time to get to know them, it changes the relationship. It changes how you see them.

How have people responded to the play?

MV: There is a lot of humor and wordplay in it. Some people enjoy that. There is a lot of music and sounds. There are oldie songs that people have responded to. It sparks memories for them and they smile. They like hearing these songs that they grew up with. People love the lowriders; they are excited about the cars. I also think people ultimately start connecting with these characters.

What do you hope kids take away from watching this play?

MV: I hope they learn about and get to understand and appreciate Chicana culture. That's very important to me. And there is the fundamental human thing: How do we start to talk with one another, learn about each other, get to know each other, and become friends with each other?

inspired ideas in the classroom

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Teacher Focus		Student Activity	NJ Student Learning Standards
Prepare for the performance	<p>Show the cover of the book or illustrations from online resources and/or read a short excerpt from the book to your students to spark curiosity. Inside the guide there are several online resources to help you become familiar with the book and author. A glossary of vocabulary terms is also provided.</p> <p>Prepare Remember Strips. A Remember Strip is a strip of paper that has a question or statement on it that you wish to remember and answer for later. You can create the questions yourself or have students come up with their own. Make sure to keep one side of the Remember Strip clear to answer the question.</p> <p>You can ask questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· What are at least three words you didn't know?· Do you remember something from the book that was funny or interesting?· Can you remember at least three characters' names?· Where in the world are the characters from?· Is the performance in the past, present or future?	<p><i>Pre-Show Activity: 5-10 minutes</i></p> <p>After viewing illustrations and/or listening to excerpts from the book, make predictions on what you think the story is about. Share your responses with the class or write them down on a poster to be displayed.</p> <p>Write a question you wish to answer after watching the performance on one side of your Remember Strip.</p>	<p>English Language Arts NJSLSA.R1. NJSLSA.R3. NJSLSA.W4.</p>
Experience the performance	<p>Make sure you notice which aspects of the performance students enjoy or may have questions about. Determine the similarities and differences between the performance and the book.</p>	<p><i>Post-Show Activity: 5-10 minutes</i></p> <p>Pay close attention to the performance so you will be able to answer the question on your Remember Strip correctly. Think about the predictions you made earlier about the story. Were your predictions correct?</p>	<p>Visual and Performing Arts 1.2 History of Arts and Culture 1.4 Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies</p> <p>World Languages 7.1.NM.A.1</p>
Reflect, respond and read	<p>Have students gather their thoughts about the performance. Be ready to help students recall specific information from the performance so they can participate in upcoming post-show activities.</p> <p>Have students complete their Remember Strips.</p>	<p><i>Post-Show Activity: 5-10 minutes</i></p> <p>Share whether your predictions about the story were correct or different. Complete your Remember Strips and share the responses with the class.</p> <p>Post your strips alongside the prediction poster.</p>	<p>Visual and Performing Arts 1.4 Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies</p> <p>English Language Arts NJSLSA.W4. NJSLSA.SL1 NJSLSA.SL.2</p> <p>World Languages 7.1.NM.A.1</p>
Focus	<p>Shift the focus to the dining room scene. Ask students to think about what happens at the dining room table. Have students think about the behavior and personality of each character.</p>	<p><i>Post-Show Activity: 5-10 minutes</i></p> <p>Think about each character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· How does each character act?· How does Chato interact with the mice at the beginning of the story?· How does Chato interact with the mice at the end of the story? <p>Explain how these are similar or different.</p>	<p>Visual and Performing Arts 1.1 The Creative Process</p> <p>English Language Arts NJSLSA.R3. NJSLSA.R7.</p>
Originate	<p>Allow the students to create a short in-class performance of the dinner scene. Create small workable groups of five or more.</p> <p>Students should write a short script, with each student having a speaking role. Have students incorporate their predictions and vocabulary terms into their performances.</p> <p>Encourage students to use small props from the classroom to aid with their performance as well.</p> <p>Encourage students to have a clear beginning (starting with the two cats fixing the table), middle (invited guest and secret guest arrive), and end (all are sitting down eating dinner together).</p> <p>For younger students the scene can be more improvisational and include pantomime (expressing oneself through gestures without speaking).</p>	<p><i>Post-Show Activity: 15-25 minutes</i></p> <p>Create your own version of the dinner scene. Your scene should only be 2 to 3 minutes long. Share your ideas and collaborate with other members of your group.</p> <p>Brainstorm talking points and write a short script. Include several vocabulary words.</p> <p>Make sure your script has a clear beginning, middle and end.</p> <p>Assign roles for each character.</p> <p>Keep it short but make it fun!</p>	<p>Visual and Performing Arts 1.1 The Creative Process</p> <p>English Language Arts NJSLSA.W3. NJSLSA.SL1. NJSLSA.SL6.</p>
Rehearse	<p>Allow students to break apart into their groups. Walk around and observe students as they plan and rehearse their scenes.</p> <p>Assign a student leader for each group to track the time and keep peers on task.</p> <p>Have the student leader report out as an exit ticket.</p>	<p><i>Post-Show Activity: 10 to 25 minutes</i></p> <p>Rehearse your scene by going over your lines.</p> <p>Your scene should have a clear beginning (starting with the two cats fixing the table), middle (invited guest and secret guest arrive), and end (all are sitting down eating dinner together).</p> <p>Make sure to include vocabulary and that all group members have a chance to participate.</p>	<p>Visual and Performing Arts 1.1 The Creative Process</p> <p>English Language Arts NJSLSA.SL1.</p>
Make magic	<p>Arrange the classroom to have a designated performance space.</p> <p>Set up 2 or 3 desks to resemble a dining table.</p> <p>Allow students prep time and set expectations on etiquette and performance dynamics.</p> <p>Invite neighboring classes and/or supportive staff/administration to see the class performance.</p>	<p><i>Post-Show Activity: 10 to 25 minutes</i></p> <p>Perform your scene to the best of your ability. Make sure everyone has a chance to contribute.</p> <p>Don't forget to include vocabulary terms inside your scene.</p> <p>Have fun and be supportive of each other's performance!</p>	<p>Visual and Performing Arts 1.3 Performance 1.4 Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies</p>

curriculum standards

NJ Arts Standards

1.1 The Creative Process

All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

1.2 History of Arts & Culture

All students will understand the role, development, and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.

1.3 Performance

All students will synthesize skills, media, methods and technologies that are appropriate to creating, performing and/or presenting works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual art.

1.4 Aesthetic Response & Critique

All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment and analysis to works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual art.

National Arts Standards

- 1:** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- 5:** Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- 6:** Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- 7:** Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- 8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- 11:** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

FIND THE STANDARDS

For more detailed information on the standards, visit these websites:

NJ ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela

NJ SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss

NJ WORLD LANGUAGE STANDARDS

state.nj.us/education/aps/cccs/wl

NJ ARTS STANDARDS

state.nj.us/education/cccs/2009/1.pdf

NATIONAL ARTS STANDARDS

nationalartsstandards.org

new jersey student learning standards

NJ English Language Arts Standards

NJSLSA.R1.

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

NJSLSA.R3.

Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

NJSLSA.R7.

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NJSLSA.W3.

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

NJSLSA.W4.

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

NJSLSA.SL1.

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2.

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJSLSA.SL6.

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

World Languages

7.1.NM.A.1

Recognize familiar spoken or written words and phrases contained in culturally authentic materials using electronic information and other sources related to targeted themes.

cultural connections

Cultural representation in children's books

If you travel across America right now and peek into the classrooms of any number of schools, the demographic tidal wave that many sociologists had predicted has come to fruition: Kids in public school classrooms are majority minority, with many coming from rapidly growing Asian and Central and South American immigrant families, according to a 2018 *Public School Review* article.

This reality leads to critical questions on how to teach children of different backgrounds and varying English fluency. It also impacts the children's book publishing world. There is a diversity gap in children's literature, and though it has narrowed in recent years, the divide remains, according to a blog post at Lee & Low Books, the largest multicultural children's book publisher in America. In the past 24 years, the number of books by or featuring people of color or indigenous groups in America has been as low as 7 percent to a high of 31 percent in 2017. And if you peer closer into 2017, Latinx, African Americans and Native Americans wrote only 7 percent of the new children's books that year. By and large, people of color are not receiving the opportunity to write their own stories.

It is mission-critical that all children see themselves in books, and not just "white boys and their dogs," as Marley Dias, an 11-year-old from New Jersey, once quipped in a CNN interview. Dias took matters into her own hands and launched the #1000BlackGirlBooks campaign to find books featuring black girls as protagonists. On the publishing end, companies are aiming to hire more people who reflect society's changing demographics and push for more books that are by and for people of color—despite criticism from more reactionary voices, according to *The Guardian*. Organizers at conferences are holding panels to discover and empower newcomers who can write future books and encourage inclusion in the hiring of new employees as booksellers or as workers in another sector of publishing, noted the *Chronicle Books* blog. "Change will only happen when publishing recognizes that equity is crucial, that the world is rapidly changing, and that creators of color deserve the chance to have their voices heard too," reads a blog post from Lee & Low Books.

Chicanx culture and representation

Gary Soto has been a pioneer in portraying voices not normally featured in children's and young adult literature. His own books about Chato were banned for a brief time in at least one California school district, according to *Tropics of Meta* website. The characters in the *Chato* books were seen as "gang-related" by critics. That dilemma encapsulates certain long-running issues in Chicanx representation: how they are perceived outside the community and how people like Soto have wrested a negative stereotype and refashioned it into something new.

In America, there has been a long history of Chicanx communities being marginalized and victimized. Along with the lynching of black people in America, white people have also killed and lynched Mexicans and Mexican Americans. They had been subjected to segregation, discrimination and forcible deportation

during the Great Depression. This ethnic cleansing, commonly called the Mexican Repatriation, saw over 1 million people deported—60 percent of them born in the United States. Mexican Americans were seen as other than American: more prone to criminality, dirty, disease-ridden and just not American enough. Another mass deportation kicked off in 1954 and was named Operation Wetback (using a racial epithet for Mexicans), which saw as many as 1.3 million people forced away from their families, homes and jobs. Again, many were American citizens too, according to the *History* website.

Mexican Americans, fed up with years of discrimination, brutality and the devastation of their community at the hands of the government, began to protest, demanding better schools, political and voting rights, and freedom from police brutality. They also concerned themselves with recognizing and uplifting their own history and to fighting negative stereotypes about Mexican Americans. Calling themselves chicanos/chicanas, activists launched the Chicano Movement, a mass civil rights campaign that was most active from the 1940s to the 1970s.

The movement saw the rise of leaders such as Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, who advocated for better wages and working conditions for agricultural workers. Artists started mining their own experiences to reflect

“It’s important to me to create and share new stories about my heritage. It’s a huge part of my life,” Soto has said.

cultural connections

on what it meant to be Mexican American, such as the poet, political activist and boxer Rodolfo Gonzales. He wrote a famous epic poem, “I Am Joaquín,” which plumbed the depths of the many struggles endured by his community and defined Mexican American culture.

Other artists and writers after him, like Soto, have drawn strength from the Chicano Movement, clearly seen in their work. In his *Chato* books, Soto took

elements from Chicanx culture that could be regarded as negative stereotypes, such as the word “lowrider” and the depiction of Chato’s friend Novio Boy, and used them to make something new: a winning story about a family of mice that outsmarts two cats.

“It’s important to me to create and share new stories about my heritage. It’s a huge part of my life,” Soto has said.



vocabulary

Barrio

Spanish for “neighborhood”

Chicanx/chicano/chicana

A person of Mexican descent who lives in America. Chicano is for male. Chicana for female. Chicanx is a gender neutral version. The “x” denotes gender neutrality. Used interchangeably with Mexican-American.

Devising process

A way of creating a play, in which theatrical practitioners (actors, the playwright, even people who work behind the scenes) take a source material or ideas and improvise off it by creating performances. The script is developed during rehearsal. This is what occurred with the creation of the play *Chato’s Kitchen*. Mark Valdez, the playwright, took ideas generated during these group brainstorming sessions and wrote the final script.

Fiesta

Spanish for “party”

Latinx/Hispanic

These two terms are used interchangeably but they mean two different things. Hispanic refers to people who speak Spanish or who come from a country that was formerly colonized by Spain. Latinx refers to people who come from Latin America: Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Main languages spoken there are Romance languages: Spanish, Portuguese and French. The “x” in Latinx denotes gender neutrality.

Lowrider

A style of customized cars that usually features a lowered chassis, colorful exterior paint and big, showy wire wheels. Sometimes the cars have hydraulics that enable the vehicle to be raised and lowered. Lowrider style originated in Mexican/Chicanx communities in the 1940s, when men dressed in zoot suits started tricking out their cars. While they were once seen as closely tied to gang violence, lowriders are now considered symbols of cultural pride, artistry and, of course, coolness.

Pre-Columbian

A term that usually refers to a type of culture or indigenous (native) group that existed before Spanish conquistadors colonized the Americas.

Salud

Spanish for “good health.” Typically used as a toast before drinking.

Spanglish

Spoken Spanish with many borrowed words from the English language. Broadly, it’s a spoken mixture of both languages.

Mexican-American Cuisine

Food created and enjoyed by Mexican immigrants and Chicanx communities. It draws culinary influences from pre-Columbian indigenous groups, Spain, Anglo culture, and even Africa and Asia via the slave and shipping trade, respectively, during Mexico’s colonial period. Popular Mexican-American dishes turn up in *Chato’s Kitchen*.

Arroz

Rice

Carne asada

Marinated grilled beef

Chiles rellenos

Stuffed chili peppers

Chorizo

The name of a dog in the story, but when it comes to food, chorizo is a type of delicious spicy sausage

Enchiladas

Rolled-up tortillas with a filling, covered in a chili sauce

Flan

Custard-type dessert with a caramelized top

Frijoles

Beans

Guacamole

A type of seasoned avocado dip

Quesadillas

Two tortillas sandwiching a cheese, meat or bean filling

Salsa

Usually a tomato-based sauce

Tamarindo

A sweet drink made from the tamarind fruit

Tortillas

Flat corn cakes

resources

Websites

Gary Soto
garysoto.com

Gary Soto profile at Academy of American Poets
poets.org/poet/gary-soto

Gary Soto at Poetry Foundation
poetryfoundation.org/poets/gary-soto

Gary Soto in his own words
scholastic.com/teachers/authors/gary-soto/

Gary Soto Gives Open Tour of His Museum to Students at FCC
wp.me/p2hCSH-aA8i

Gary Soto Literary Museum dedicated to the hard work of writing
poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2010/12/gary-soto-literary-museum-dedicated-to-the-hard-work-of-writing

Teaching Chicano Literature: An Historical Approach
faculty.georgetown.edu/bassr/tamlit/essays/chicano.html

14 Must-Read Works of Chicano Literature
www.buzzfeed.com/rigobertogonzalez/must-read-chicano-literature

10 Essential Authors of Chicano Literature
earlybirdbooks.com/10-essential-authors-of-chicano-literature

Videos

Chato’s Kitchen (Trailer)
youtu.be/kOgNYz8-vac

Chato’s Kitchen
youtu.be/Fjrp21ChZU

Chato’s Kitchen (Español)
youtu.be/WuNXbxE22xg

Gary Soto “2017 Effie Lee Morris Lecture” at the San Francisco Public Library
youtu.be/JmvHT7pu_XI

Gary Soto Interview 1
youtu.be/3ur2xdN-Wlc

Gary Soto Interview 2
youtu.be/WND1gVgPXko

Remix Readings: Three Questions with Poet Gary Soto
youtu.be/RPK7RF-osWY

What Poets Are Like by Gary Soto – book trailer
youtu.be/ZQp7ahDbvIY

Ode to Obama: Gary Soto from Associated Press
youtu.be/4XOeE2xwOc8

Defining the Humanities: Chicano Studies
youtu.be/X3k64e_ZBTg&t=73s

What Does It Mean to Be Mexican-American?
youtu.be/WXrvQWUWJBA

Chicano! PBS Documentary Fighting for Political Power
youtu.be/yEqW_IF67pw

Why Ethnic Studies Matters | Ron Espiritu | TEDxAmherstCollege
youtu.be/XvvMgujD4i8

A Local’s Guide to Chicano Style in Los Angeles | American Women | Vogue
youtu.be/gihjWXPhgHs

Books

Chato and the Party Animals
By Gary Soto and Susan Guevara, illustrator
Puffin Books – February 9, 2004
buy here

Too Many Tamales
By Gary Soto and Ed Martinez, illustrator
Puffin Books – August 8, 1996
buy here

The Skirt
By Gary Soto
Holt McDougal – June 21, 2016
buy here

Baseball in April and Other Stories
By Gary Soto
HMH Books for Young Readers – April 1, 2000
buy here

The Elements of San Joaquin: poems
By Gary Soto
Chronicle Books; revised, expanded edition – April 3, 2018
buy here

You Kiss by th’ Book: New Poems from Shakespeare’s Line
By Gary Soto
Chronicle Books LLC – March 22, 2016
buy here

Chicano Nations: The Hemispheric Origins of Mexican American Literature (American Literatures Initiative)
By Marissa K. López
NYU Press – October 1, 2011
buy here

Chicano and Chicana Literature: Otra voz del pueblo (The Mexican American Experience)
By Charles M. Tatum
University of Arizona Press – September 14, 2006
buy here

Chicano Movement for Beginners
By Maceo Montoya
For Beginners – September 13, 2016
buy here

njpac staff

(partial listing)
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the arts in your school

In-School Residencies: Drama + Social Studies. Dance + Math. It all adds up in NJPAC’s In-School Residencies in which professional teaching artists partner with educators to bring the arts into the classroom. Each 7- to 10-week program culminates in a student performance or an interactive family workshop. All programs address state and national standards. NJPAC is the regional provider in New Jersey for international arts programs like the NJ Wolf Trap Program and Dancing Classrooms Global.

Assemblies: NJPAC presents engaging school assembly programs that are presented by professional artists that invite students into the enchanting world of live performance. NJPAC’s assembly series promotes cultural awareness and invigorates learning by presenting works that are connected to your school’s curriculum.

Professional Development: NJPAC Professional Development engages classroom teachers, arts specialists and teaching artists as integrated teams that combine arts pedagogy, content, classroom management and social behavioral strategies to ignite and inspire arts-rich classrooms. Working as a team empowers teachers to share practice and strategy. Our goal is to inspire artistic and intellectual capacities in students, building competence and confidence in both students and teachers.

study the arts at njpac

Saturday Programs: NJPAC’s Saturday programs are geared towards students at every level—from those who dream of starring on Broadway to those who are still learning their scales. Students work with professional artists to build technique and develop their own creative style in film, contemporary modern dance, hip hop, jazz, musical theater and symphonic band.

Summer Programs: Want to begin to explore the arts? Or immerse yourself in the study of one genre? Then join us at NJPAC next summer in one of seven programs that spark the creativity in every child through the study of music, dance and theater.



For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call our education sales team at 973.353.7058
or email artseducation@njpac.org. Visit www.njpac.org/education

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