



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1978 Volume I: Language and Writing

“Literacy: The Puerto Rican Papers”

Curriculum Unit 78.01.09
by D. Jill Savitt

Imagine the following scene: you’re 10 years old. You’ve just travelled across waters and miles to a strange country that bears no resemblance to what you’ve known. From a clean, cool, country house, you’ve come to settle in a hot, dirty wooden tenement. The streets are noisy and filled with people who look familiar, but with whom you have little in common. Your mother walks you to school and leaves you there—amidst a sea of faces, names, and voices that make your head swim. The teacher smiles and asks your name. You sit there dumbfounded—words are coming out of her mouth like a cartoon character, but nothing makes sense. She looks puzzled and you start to quiver. You are Greek, Puerto Rican, Korean, Italian and you’ve been dropped off in America. It’s happening everyday, everywhere. The American Dream Machine is being played and the nightmare for you, the child—unequipped with the proper tools—is only beginning. It hasn’t always been like this, and perhaps the best times are yet to come. Yet, for many, the last decades were the worst realization of the immigrants’ hopes. Within the realm of education alone, things are progressing positively. Unfortunately, attitudes are lagging behind.

Before I can discuss the unit I’ve prepared, I must begin to explain some basic facts about bilingual education. Most people have as many misconceptions about bilingual education as they do about leprosy. Thus, we must talk about possibilities, alternatives, and historic antecedents. Since language learning is, perhaps, the biggest factor in a bilingual program, we must discuss theories on language learning. Since attitudes are the biggest impediment or motivation to a sound bilingual program, we must delve into pros, cons and feelings about what does exist. Because I created my unit for my students, who are 100% Puerto Rican, we must talk about Puerto Rico, the Puerto Ricans, and what is being written by them.

Bilingualism, as an educational concept, is not particularly new. In fact, bilingualism and its counterpart within the schools were not restricted until the onset of World War I when certain fears about foreigners and cultural pluralism began to spread. New Mexico, for example, was a “bilingual state” long before the 1972 *Lao vs. Nichols* decision. In the 19th century, we find bilingual schools existed. The illustrious “melting pot” theory had not yet been forged. Instead, an egalitarian yet pluralistic society was projected. How much healthier! At this time, classes were being taught in German, French and Spanish throughout the United States. In the early 1900’s one could find classes and schools functioning in the English, Czech, Polish, Dutch, and Swedish languages. Then the laws began to proliferate. Different states decided it was illegal to teach in any other language than English. What finally happened to change the course of bilingual education in the United States was a legal decision—*Lao vs. Nichols* in San Francisco, 1972. The decision did not result in mandated bilingual classes for all non-English speakers; instead, each city or state was allowed to develop its own program as it

saw fit. In fact, the law did not “ *require* ” a program, but rather *permitted* it. Since then, many states have implemented their own programs and have provided adequate, and at times obligatory, bilingual programs. Connecticut just passed a law requiring some type of bilingual program wherever 20 or more children of one language group other than English reside in a school district. Children comprising such language groups must now be identified. What kind of programs will be provided? What kinds are available?

In “Bilingualism and the Spanish Speaking Child,” in *Language and Poverty* , bilingual education is defined as “the use of two languages as languages of instruction.” If we were only worried about bilingualism, the project would be simple. However, any successful bilingual program must introduce the concept of biculturalism. An understanding of the culture as a whole should be a basic tenet in language learning. To teach French to English speakers without mentioning wine seems vacuous. Words carry a host of culturally specific associations, attitudes, and values. Thus, in a bilingual program of the most natural kind, not only are the children living and learning the English language of the society around them, but their own cultural identity is being maintained through the use of their mother tongue as an educational tool. In Wallace Lambert’s study of “A Social Psychology of Bilingualism,” he admits that bilinguals may suffer problems of conflicting allegiance/values, but it is also to their advantage that they tend to lose the ethnocentrism so rampant in the American people. Programs which foster biculturalism are called “two-way” programs. “Two-way” programs differ from “one-way” bilingual programs in that both English speakers and non-English speakers participate in the two-way program. Thus, an Anglo student in Coral Gables, Florida, will receive half of his/her instruction in English and half in Spanish, just as will her/his counterpart. One-way programs, the most widespread due to needs and limited space, restrict themselves to the non-English speakers.

Along with being one-way or two-way, a bilingual-bicultural program may be a maintenance, transitional, or pullout program. A maintenance program advocates the use of the native language for all or some of the subjects, even after the child is able to function in the target language (that being newly acquired). A transitional program has met its goals, on the other hand, when the child is competent in English. He or she is then mainstreamed out until no native language is used in the class. A pullout program is one in which the child is taken out of the classroom to receive intensive target language study. This is usually more of an E.S.L. (English as a Second Language) program than a bilingual-bicultural program. Whichever bilingual program is used, the idea is to create an atmosphere where language learning and subject learning can go on simultaneously. If this means providing the child with an environment close to his/her own native background, then let it be.

For adults, language learning most often succeeds in an artificial atmosphere—classes, texts, language labs, etc. Children, on the other hand, learn language best in a very natural situation—on the street, in the home, from peers, through natural imitation. Susan Erwin in “Imitation and Structural Change in Children’s Language” points out that children know certain difficult grammatical structures but that nobody taught the structures to them, and that teachers try hard to eradicate these gains through the glorified learning process. There seems to be greater semantic consistency in children’s language than in adult speech. According to Ms. Erwin, there are three theories of how children learn to speak. A child imitates adults and gradually eliminates errors or children comprehend adult rules but make random errors. The third theory is held by specialists who state that language involves successive systems, all with increasing complexity. As a child proceeds to imitate and mature, she/he either learns to use correct language systems or does not.

According to William Labov, there is a logic to so-called non-standard English. Linguists, in fact, argue that non-standard dialects are highly structured systems. Learning a new language is always, in some measure, the repetition of an old experience. Languages are composed of skilled, patterned behaviors. Structures are

the base; vocabulary and situations are thrown at the language learner which he/she must fit into learned paradigms. We must always take into consideration the inherent differences between a child's acquisition of a first language and a second, and the differences between an adult learning a second language and a child. A child learns language more unconsciously, while an adult is more aware of patterns, drills, and formulas. As Noam Chomsky notes, language learning is "rule-governed creativity."

There are many arguments against bilingual education. Some come from the heart, some from the head. They begin with the sentiment, "we didn't have it, why should they"—the nebulous "we," the nebulous "they." Other anti-bilingual education arguments fear that bilingualism will create a dependency on the native tongue to the exclusion of the national tongue. "They are in America, they should speak English." "Should we coddle these students? Is it possible to find teachers capable of not only knowing their subject matter, but also able to teach it in two languages? Won't it be more expensive?" The biggest fear is that bilingual students will be isolated or separated from the mainstream. Should educators be willing to create clusters of students who can communicate in a language that they, the educators, can't understand? Though there are many arguments against bilingual education, there are many more in favor of a successful program. One goal is to create a truly bilingual student. We must produce "balanced bilinguals," those who function equally well in both languages, rather than "compound bilinguals" who mix the two languages inadvertently. The other goal, equally important, is to create an atmosphere in which the child will flourish, not wither. Bilingual education is inherently holistic. We want to create a whole person who can function well in both the newly acquired culture *and* his/her native culture.

We must fight the cons with the pros. Just because other immigrant groups weren't provided with bilingual/bicultural programs, can that justify our neglect of the needs of new groups? Different immigrant groups carry different realities with them. The Italians who came during the early part of this century rarely went back. Most Puerto Ricans travel here hoping to return home. This situation brings with it a most unique set of problems—the child must be given a set of tools to function with when he returns to his native home. As to the fear of pluralism, one must realize that minorities have made America great. The melting pot has proven to be a myth. Anglos should be provided with the opportunity to know other cultures. Bilingual education does not coddle youngsters. Instead, a child is required to work in both languages. This makes more knowledge available. The dropout rate is lowered, frustrations are decreased, and self-esteem is raised through effective programs. Does this not benefit all of us? Bilingual programs may cost a bit more in the beginning, but the costs level off over a period of time. Bilingual education is actually easier on a child, in that learning is transmitted through language. A child learns to read his/her own language first. Though biculturalism perhaps can't be taught in a classroom, the unique opportunity of living in one culture and learning its language, coupled with the maintenance of the native cultures, is an opportunity all of us should demand and embrace. Unfortunately, the Lao vs. Nichols law didn't state what type of program must be provided, but indicated that schools receiving federal aid must provide equal opportunities for all children. Perhaps we should investigate those already established opportunities and demand not equal but better opportunities for all.

Who are the Puerto Ricans and why are they being taught in two languages? Puerto Ricans are a microcosmic reflection of all of us. They are Spanish and Indian and African. They are all of the above and none of the above. They were first conquered by the Spanish from whom their "first language" evolved. They were then nailed to the cross by the North Americans who gallantly gave them their second language and a tendency towards schizophrenia. There are more suicides per capita in Puerto Rico than anywhere else. Puerto Ricans have two languages and two places to live. Why is there such a high failure rate? Have we tried to mold these gentle, but volatile, people to our standards? There are Puerto Ricans who never leave the Island. There are

Puerto Ricans who never see it. There are those who commute. There are real differences among these groups. If a child is born in Puerto Rico, raised here for five years and then sent back to Puerto Rico to finish high school, his or her language and cultural problems mount. Those who arrive and leave again are in the majority. Therefore, they must be taught the skills of their own language to read, write, and enjoy literature. Pride in their country's accomplishments must be instilled. People with creative success must be uncovered. This is what I propose to do in the following unit, "Literacy: the Puerto Rican Papers."

LESSON I—An introduction to what will be read, the authors and some literary terms.

Objectives . to equip students with the vocabulary needed to handle subsequent lessons; to instill a cultural commonality with the authors; to present what is to be read before hand in capsulized form.

Literary Terms —

leyenda : tradición popular de hechos históricos o maravillosos, esp. vidas de santos o heroes.

mito : interpretación fabulosa de los fenómenos naturales y de lo sobrenatural.

fábula : composición literaria en verso en la que por medio de la personificación de seres irracionales o inanimados se da una ense-anza.

cuento: narración reducida, esp. la tradicional o popular propia de todos los pa'ses y épocas.

drama : pieza de teatro de un género mixto entre la tragedia y la comedia.

dramaturgo : persona que compone las obras de teatro.

teatro : como género hechos, acciones, cuento o versos escritos para la actuación de ellos.

poema : obra en verso; obra en prosa, pero análoga a un poema por su fondo o estilo.

prosa : forma no sujeta a la medida o cadencia del verso.

poes'a : sentimiento de la belleza, de la vida humana y el espectáculo del mundo real. Expresión de esta belleza por medio del lenguaje, esp. Lenguaje en verso.

rima : seme janza o igualdad entre los sonidos finales de los versos contando desde la última vocal acentuada.

rima perfecta o consonante : la de aquellos versos en que, a partir de la última vocal acentuada, coinciden todas las vocales y consonantes, ej. viento cuento.

rima imperfecta o asonante : cuando coinciden sólo las vocales, ej. clara casa.

métrica : ciencia o arte que trata de la composición de los versos; la métrica clásica se basa en la cantidad de las s'labas.

verso : palabra o conjunto de palabras sujetas a leyes r'tmicas que var'an segun los tiempos y los idiomas.

verso amétrico : el que no se sujeta a una medida fija de s'labas.

verso blanco , libre o suelto: el que no forma con otro consonancia ni asonancia.

sextina : composición poética que consta de seis estrofas de seis versos endecasílabos cada una, y de otra que sólo se compone de tres versos.

octavo : toda combinación métrica de ocho versos.

estrofa : cualquiera de las partes de una composición poética compuesta del mismo número de versos y ordenados de igual modo.

soneto : composición poética de catorce versos, de once sílabas (endecasílabos), distribuidos en dos cuartetos que repiten sus rimas y dos tercetos.

ripió : palabra superflua usada para completar un verso.

aliteración : en Literatura, repetición de unos mismos sonidos para sugerir imágenes.

personificación : atribuir acciones y cualidades propias de personas a los seres irracionales o a las cosas inanimadas, animales, etc.

onomatopeya : imitación mediante el lenguaje de algunos sonidos típicos de los objetos.

The students will be supplied with biographical background on the following authors:

Julia de Burgos	“A Julia de Burgos”
Victor Hernandez Cruz	“Volver A / Volver A”
José Luis González	“La Carta”
José Luis Vivas	“Interludio”
René Marques	“Un Niño Azul para Esa Sombra”

Lesson Outline —

Literary terms will be introduced and discussed. Most will come into further use with the studied works.

Biographical materials will be read and treated as sociological-historical material as well as literary background.

Students will be given a rough outline (orally) of the works to be studied. They will be asked to think about which author they might like to investigate further studying other works by these authors at a later date.

Materials: vocabulary sheet

biographical information sheet

LESSON II—Historical Narration. The Legend.

Objective to see history through a literary genre; to see Literature in an historic light; to become familiar with the “writing down” of the oral tradition.

Lesson Outline —

“La Botijuela de Dinero” from *Narraciones Históricas* .

a) Students will define and study meaning of the following words before reading the story.

botijuela estiba morbo
goleta escondrijo pernoctar
patra-a solariega coincidencia
conciliar macuquinas

After the words have been discussed, students and teacher will read aloud the story.

The following questions will be presented for oral interpretation:

1. ¿Fueron coincidencias? ¿Eran las ratas?
2. ¿Podría pasar en realidad lo que pasó en el cuento?
3. ¿Cómo sabes que pasó en el pasado? ¿Qué palabras dan la idea de pasado?
b) “La Hija del Verdugo” de *Leyendas Puertorrique-as* .

The following words will be defined by students through dictionary work before reading the story.

mole hura-o diáfana
perpetuidad núbil cercioró
hacendoso fornido siniestro
reo tejares apoplejia
apaciguar buques encubrir

After vocabulary is studied, students and teacher will together read aloud the legend.

The following questions based on the story will be answered and discussed.

1. ¿En qué siglo pasó este cuento?
2. ¿Qué hechos históricos transcurrieron en aquella época en Puerto Rico?
3. ¿Cómo eran los modales sociales en aquella época?
4. ¿Por qué se mató (se ahorcó) al novio?
5. ¿Por qué se suicidó la hija del verdugo?

6. ¿Fue coincidencia que la hija de un verdugo se murió ahorcándose?

Activities will include the following special projects:

1. Investigate further the historical background of this story. Present a short report to classmates on what was happening in Puerto Rico at this point in history.
2. Children will be asked to talk with parents and family about possible legends or folk-tales. Children will then select several favorite stories to write down in their own words.

Materials stories

vocabulary sheets

biographical data

LESSON III—Poetry

Objective to introduce students to the concept of poetry and possible forms of verse; to stimulate student interest in the creation of poetry.

Note: With this lesson, the first lesson's literary terms should be within arm's reach. Though the more classical forms of poetry will not be presented, the vocabulary pertaining to such classical forms is important and will be studied.

Lesson Outline —

"A Julia de Burgos" by Julia de Burgos.

a) The following vocabulary words will be defined and studied by students:.

murmurar destello olfatear

ropaje hipocres'a

abismo resignado

viril sumisa

The following questions will be presented for study:.

1. ¿Hay ejemplos de aliteración en este poema? Cítalos.
2. ¿Hay rima? ¿Parece ser de qué clase?
3. ¿Cómo se describe por ella misma Julia de Burgos? ¿Cómo la ven los demás?
4. ¿Nos importa cómo nos ven los demás? ¿Porqué?
5. ¿Parece que el poema habla de dos Julias de Burgos. ¿Por qué? ¿Cómo se logra este efecto?
 - b) “Volver A / Volver A” by Victor Hernandez Cruz.

This poem presents little vocabulary difficulty. After the poem is read aloud by teacher and several students, the following discussion questions will be presented:.

1. ¿Dónde piensa que “ocurre” este poema? ¿Dónde fue escrito?
2. ¿De Qué trata?
3. ¿Que sientes cuando el poeta mezcla el inglés con espa-ol?
4. ¿Hay rima? ¿Qué tipo de versos hay?
5. ¿Cómo te hace sentir este poema?

A final lesson activity will be the attempt by students to write two poems. One should be more classical, following certain syllabication, verse, and rhyme rules. The other should be an attempt at free thought and blank verse. It may be in English, Spanish or a conscious mixture of both.

Materials the poems

literary vocabulary from the first lesson

vocabulary from poems

biographical data

LESSON IV—The Short Story

Objective to introduce the student to the concept and form of the short story as it differs from other genres; to present two short stories by Puerto Rican authors.

- a) “La Carta” by José Luis Gonzalez

The following vocabulary words were taken from “La Carta”:

Administrador ra’do umbral despachar
borrones acuclilló fingir

Story is to be read aloud by several students, taking turns.

The following study questions based on the story and its interpretation are to be discussed.

1. ¿Qué es la base de este cuento?
2. ¿Que quiere fingir el muchacho?
3. ¿Qué promesas hace?
4. ¿Puede cumplir con estas promesas?
5. ¿Ha fracasado el muchacho? ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Ves algunas palabras mal escritas? ¿Qué quiere indicar el autor con estos errores?

Special Activity “La Carta” holds special interest due to its excessive use of misspelled and misused words. The student will be asked to transform the story by correcting these misspelled words. How has the story changed? Does how we feel about the story change with these corrections? Do we seek a link between form and meaning? These questions will then be discussed at length.

b) “Interludio” by José Luis Vivas.

The following words will constitute the vocabulary of this lesson:

mangle borbotón
desperdicio hostil
esférico huidizo
diurna implosión
roedor arremolinar

The following questions will be used as a guideline for the students’ interpretation of the story.

1. ¿Dónde transcurre la acción del cuento?
2. ¿Quiénes son los protagonistas del cuento?
3. ¿Qué tipo de personas son?
4. ¿Qué revela la basura? ¿Qué se descubre en la basurera?
5. ¿Qué le pasa al niño?
6. ¿Cómo ha cambiado la vida del viejo? ¿A causa de qué?

Materials stories

vocabulary

biographical

End of Lesson Activity have the student write a story from something he/she has experienced recently. Have the character be spoken of in the third person.

LESSON V—The Play

Due to the length of the play, this will be a two week lesson or an equivalently longer lesson than previous ones.

Objective to introduce the student to the concept of the play; to understand and undertake the actual dramatization of a literary work.

“Un Niño Azul Para Esa Sombra” by René Marques.

Lesson Outline —

In the first part of the lesson the students will divide the play into acts and scenes. Vocabulary for all three acts has been outlined. Words must be understood to produce an even fluent reading of the play.

The play will then be read in five 20 page sections, to lessen the chance of losing the thread of comprehension. A final re-reading and/or enactment will be done in its entirety.

The questions will be divided by acts.

Vocabulary to be defined and studied.

Act I

escéptico
postigo turylete
desatar oll'n
encaramado savia

Act II

halagar lastre inmiscuirme acatar
insinuar veredicto presidio cátedra
prodigar obsoleto baturro entablar
fiscal evasivo anfora burda
entronizar allanamiento indignación
endoso asidero incalificable
ultraje mutilar chusco

Act III

d'scolo monserga barricada
soberano comino mes'a
irremediabilmente vaina hollin

The following questions will be discussed and written out after each act has been read:

Act I

1. ¿Cómo es Michel'n de caracter? Es un ni-o alegre, inteligente, sensible, o qué?
2. ¿Por qué piensas que su mama le llama "Michael" o "Mike" y no Michelin?
3. ¿A qué juegan los muchachos? ¿Como se lo juegan?
4. Según ellos, ¿qué pasó al papa de Michelin? ¿Dónde está ahora?
5. ¿A qué clase social pertenece Michelin? ¿Cómo sabes? ¿Está contento?
6. ¿Qué pasó al quenepo?

Act II

1. ¿Por qué se vuelve la acción dos a-os?
2. ¿Cómo se caracteriza a la mama de Michelin?
3. ¿En qué clase saca Michelin malas notas? ¿Por qué crees?
4. ¿Quién regresa durante este acto?

5. ¿Qué explica Michel a su hijo?
6. En la escena de los ni-os con Michelin, ¿que discuten?
7. ¿Quién es Cecilia? ¿Parece personaje importante?
8. ¿Qué significa el quenepo para Michel?
9. ¿Qué hizo Mercedes con los escritos de Michel? ¿Por que?
10. ¿Qué pasó a la estatua de la ciudad? ¿Qué podría significar esta estatua y lo que la pasó?

Act III

1. ¿Cómo se resuelve el problema del tiempo de contar los hechos del pasado?
2. ¿Qué ocurre cuando empieza el tercer acto?
3. ¿Qué le regala Mercedes a Michelin?
4. ¿Qué quiere Mercedes de él? y él, ¿qué le pide?
5. ¿Como reacciona Michelin a su pedida? ¿Parece una reacción normal?
6. ¿Cómo trata Mercedes a Cecilia en este acto? ¿Es distinto su trato ahora? ¿Por qué?
7. ¿Qué cuenta Mercedes a Michelin que le hace huir?
8. ¿Cómo reacciona Michelin a su fiesta?
9. ¿Qué hace Michelin en la escena final?
10. ¿Es importante el quenepo ahora?

The preceding questions are study or guide questions and may be used accordingly.

The following questions are over-view questions based on the whole play. This will be used as a final exam for Curriculum Unit 78.01.09

the end of the lesson.

1. ¿Es una obra contemporánea?
2. ¿Que clase social Puertorriqueña describe?
3. ¿Parece trágica?
4. ¿Por qué se fue a la cárcel el papa de Michelin?
5. ¿Qué piensa Michelin de su papa y de lo que le pasó?
6. ¿Michelin idealiza a su papa?
7. ¿Cómo es la relación entre Michelin y su papa?
8. ¿Cómo es la relación entre Michelin y su mamá?
9. ¿Cómo es la relación entre la mamá y el papa de Michelin?
10. ¿Uno puede morir por un ideal? ¿Se puede matar por un ideal?
11. ¿Es una obra política?
12. ¿Cómo entra la idea de los sueños, la fantasía, la imaginación, etc. en la obra?
13. ¿Qué simboliza al final el quenepo, el veneno azul?

Lesson Outline —

After the study of vocabulary, the initial reading(s) and the discussion of the study-guide questions, the final essay questions will be written. The play can now be undertaken as an informal or formal activity, with parts chosen and rehearsed. The play will then be put on within the classroom or for other classes. Parents and community may be invited.

Other activities include the researching of the beginnings of the Spanish-speaking theater, the study and presentation of various theatrical terms, and the selection of other plays to be read and, perhaps, enacted.

A unit of this type never really ends. Due to an unlimited selection of poems, plays, stories, etc., the unit as a model can repeat itself ad infinitum. The activities presented here are, by necessity, basic. The following constitute additional or substitute activities for any or all of the lessons. They can also be used as individual tests for each unit. Some focus on vocabulary, others on spelling, others on writing skills.

Activity One : the students make up their own questions for each selection and exchange questions with other

students. A final quiz for each lesson will be based on these questions.

Activity Two : using the vocabulary list, individual quizzes can be made up to test the spelling of these words. Any number of puzzles can also be used to strengthen vocabulary spelling.

Activity Three : quizzes can be used to test for understanding of the meaning of the vocabulary.

Activity Four : vocabulary words can be assigned for sentence writing where students use each word in an original sentence.

Activity Five : dictations can be prepared from any of the selections. Students may study certain passages beforehand.

Each unit's questions and vocabulary can be administered as a test. A final test on the unit would include questions and vocabulary from each lesson. More important, as a measure of having successfully completed the unit, would be the students' writings—the essay questions, their poems, stories and legends. For, through reading, analysis and imitation, the creation of these student-produced writings is the final goal of this unit.

For The Teacher —Capsulized biographical material with comments on the texts.

Julia de Burgos . A woman of great talent who died tragically in poverty in New York City. Born in 1918 in Carolina, Puerto Rico. She always strived for perfection and purity in her life and in her work. She spent much time away from her Puerto Rico, in Cuba and in New York. She died in 1953.

Victor Hernandez Cruz . Born in 1949, he has published in Evergreen Review, New York Review of Books, Ramparts et al. Books include *Papo Got His Gun* and *Snaps* .

José Luis Gonzalez . Born in Santo Domingo to a Dominican mother and Puerto Rican father, José lived his childhood and adolescence in Guaynaba, Puerto Rico. He has lived in Prague, New York and Mexico City. His works have been published in various Spanish countries and translated into English.

José Luis Vivas . Born in 1926 in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, José is currently living in New York. Teacher by vocation, writer by devotion, he has written *Luces en Sombra* , and has been published in many anthologies.

René Marqués . Perhaps the most prolific and well known of all the contemporary Puerto Rican writers, Marqués was born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico in 1919. Since then he has lived and taught in Spain, New York and Puerto Rico. He has written plays, short stories, and anthologies, and is perhaps most well-known by English speaking audiences for his play "*La Carreta* " (The Ox-Cart).

The Works

- a) "La Botijuela de Dinero." Short folktale of superstition and money well-hidden and suddenly found.
- b) "La Hija Del Verdugo." How the hangman's daughter modestly falls in love, finds her intended hung for misdeeds, and proceeds to hang herself.
- c) "A Julia De Burgos." How Julia de Burgos sees herself and sees others seeing her.
- d) "Volver A / Volver A." Through the mixing of English and Spanish, the plight of the Latin caught in the paws of New York City is shown.

- e) “La Carta.” Excruciatingly short and exquisite letter home meant to say “all’s well” when all is really hell.
- f) “Interludio.” A garbageman and a lonely little boy come together for fleeting moments and, ultimately, separation and pain.
- g) “Un Ni-o Azul Para Esa Sombra.” A play about political ideals, Puerto Rican upper class on the island, a child’s idealization of his father and, the lies, myths and fantasies surrounding the father’s absence.

Student Reading List

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*Supplementary reading—includes biographical data

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