

GOING PLACES:

A Way to a New Life

CLASS 801 & 802

HARBOR HEIGHTS MIDDLE SCHOOL

BEHIND THE BOOK | NYC

GOING PLACES

A Way to a New Life

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Behind the Book

Behind the Book's mission is to develop engaged readers and writers in underserved NYC public schools by designing and delivering programs that are multi-disciplinary, culturally responsive, and promote deeper connections to books and their authors.

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Behind the Book • 216 West 135th Street • New York, NY 10030

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Printing: PDC Graphics

SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to extend our deepest thanks to Gloria Kimbulu from The Bronx Defenders, for educating students about myths surrounding immigration, and for offering helpful informational resources.

We would also like to extend our deepest thanks to Alexa Patrick, Programs Director at Shout Mouse Press, for excellently moderating discussions between students and the two visiting authors, Selena and Rosa.

In the interest of honoring student voice, Behind the Book presents students' work as received from the teacher.

We would like to thank two of our generous funders: The Guru Krupa Foundation, whose contribution made this program possible, and The Korein Foundation, who supported the creation and publication of this class book.

We would like to dedicate this book
to our family and friends
who've supported us throughout
our lives.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

How can we understand the experience of immigrants and become better advocates for them in our shared country?

The eighth-grade students in Mr. Owen's classes dove deeply into discussions about the real lives of young immigrants and studied some of the myths associated with immigration and assimilation. They did this through readings, meeting with young immigrants and advocates, discussions, writing, and creating original art.

They began by reading *Voces Sin Fronteras: Our Stories, Our Truth*, a book by the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) Writers. This graphic work tells the stories of sixteen remarkable young people who immigrated to the U.S.

In preparing to meet some of the authors and discuss the book with them, the class analyzed a political cartoon to understand how inaccurate stereotypes of immigrants are often presented in the media and can influence people's attitudes. When the class met virtually with two of the book's authors, Rosa and Selena, along with Alexa Patrick from Shout Mouse Press, they were full of thoughts and questions.

They asked the two about their experiences and the process of writing their own narratives. They were intrigued by the use of symbols and imagery in the writing.

The students were then able to expand their understanding of the immigrant experience by meeting with Gloria Kimbulu of the Bronx Defenders. She told them how her own immigration journey inspired her to work with the organization that offers immigrants legal,

emotional, and informational support. She provided lists of various myths about immigrants and facilitated spirited small-group discussions about the validity of these claims.

The students were full of ideas to begin writing their own thoughts and feelings about the immigration experience. They chose either to write letters to the book's authors or original poems. Their work highlighted their new understanding of the realities of immigration and assimilation, hoping to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions. As one student suggested, "Immigrants aren't stealing jobs, they are usually doing the jobs that no one else wants to do and are constantly underappreciated." The class revised their work and submitted it to others for peer editing.

Finally, like the authors of *Voces Sin Fronteras*, the students created 6-panel comics, detailing a part of their own experience in New York. Under the guidance of cartoonist Alexander Shapiro from Young Audiences New York, they sketched, inked, and colored their finished work.

This program gave the students many opportunities to explore their own journeys as immigrants or as those welcoming newcomers to the U.S. We have been inspired by all these stories of transformation and can better appreciate our different life paths. One student summed up that as an immigrant to the U.S., "I am able to balance and maintain the love I have for my own country, even though I am in a different country."

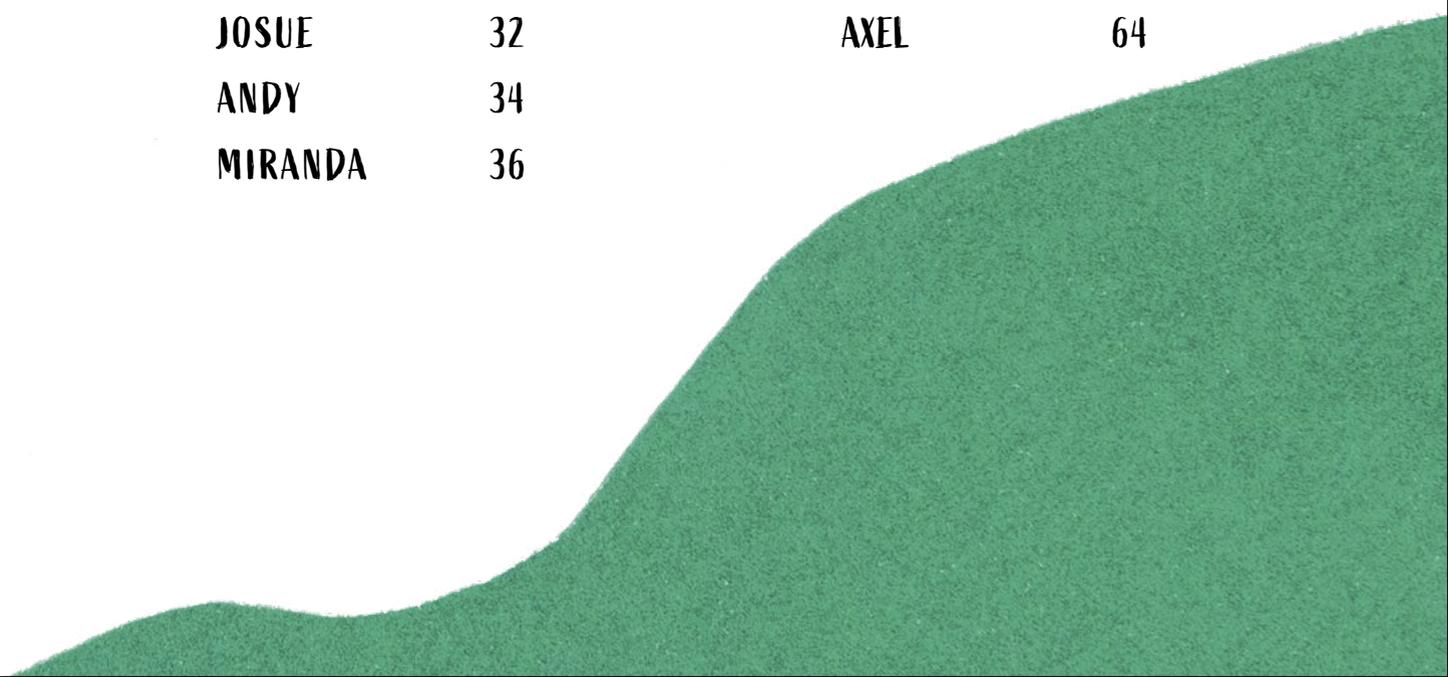
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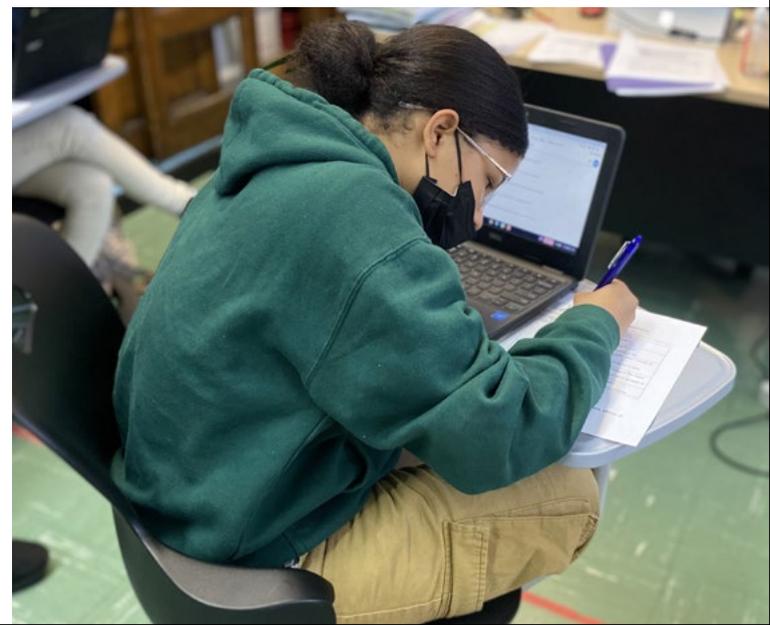
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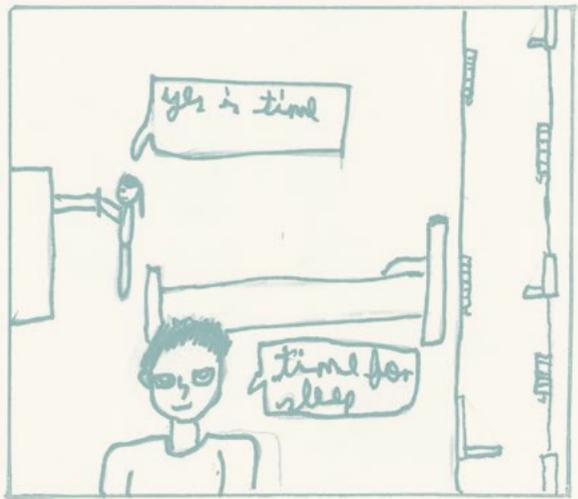
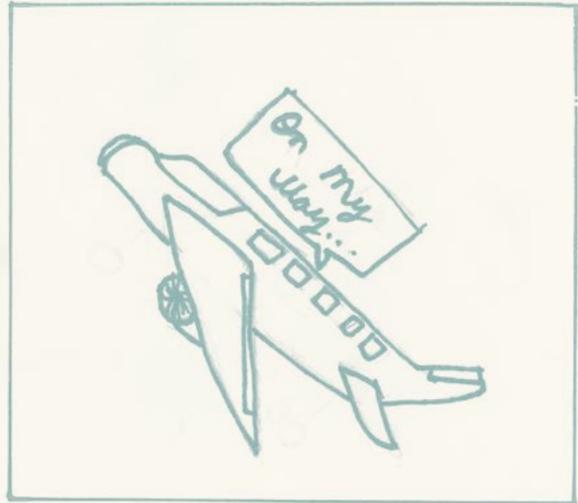




CLASS 801



ANGENY



I Am From....

vengo de un pueblo que esta cerca de los rios grandes,
que hace que el maíz y el frijol crezcan rápido con la hidratación que le regala el
agua.

Vengo de un café, de un pan de agua a las siete,
de un queso cheddar, de un jamón natural y de las habichuelas dulces.

Vengo de una gran familia como una ballena.

Vengo de las risas de mis amigos como los gruñidos de los leones, tiempos
compartidos e innumerables experiencias.

I Am From....

I come from a city, with many colors.
I Came from a monument, patriarch.
I come from a school, full of love and affection.

I come from a beautiful and strict grandmother.
I come from the advice of Mr.Martinez, Mr.Tabares.
It came from the miky woodz song.

I come from saying one day at a time that my grandmother always told me.
I come from the beautiful words of my dad.
I come from Doña Vianney's advice.

I came from the cries of ms.Nin for not wearing the uniform.
I come from Miss Lía García's nonsense.
I come from my dear Professor Owen.

3-31-22

Dear Joe Biden, President of the United States

I am writing you this letter to tell you about the importance of myths about immigration to this country or to other countries in the world.

There are many reasons why some people migrate to this country, one of them is for the economy of their country, the second for their conditions, whether it is garbage or medical reasons.

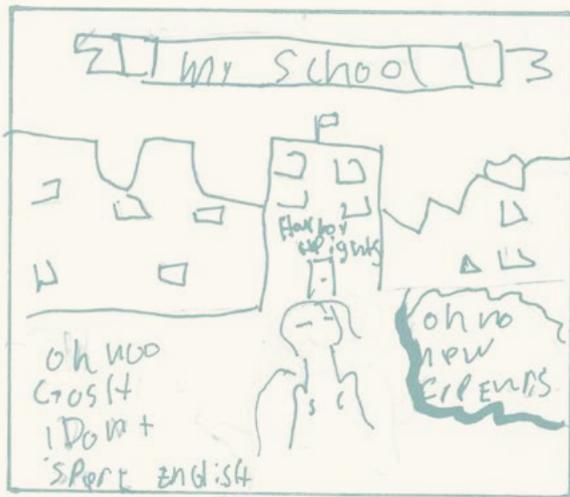
One of the ways that immigrants help this country is in the construction of this country in agriculture, or in kitchen work and more. Another way that immigrants help this country is in the school in the houses in the wineries bind our community in cleanliness.

In conclusion, my dear president, immigrants are very important for this country and it is very important to understand their history because they do not know the reasons why they are or emigrate to this country.

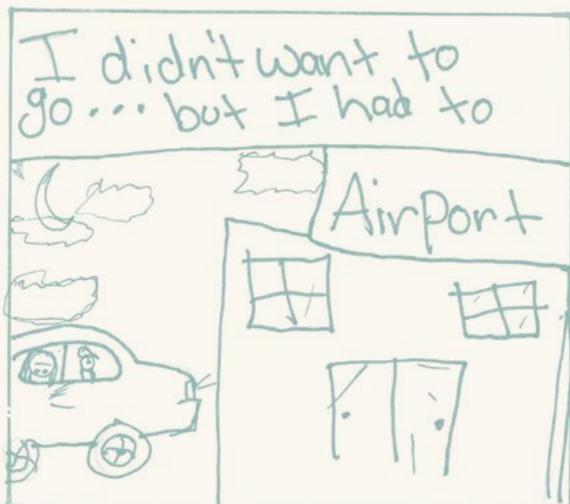
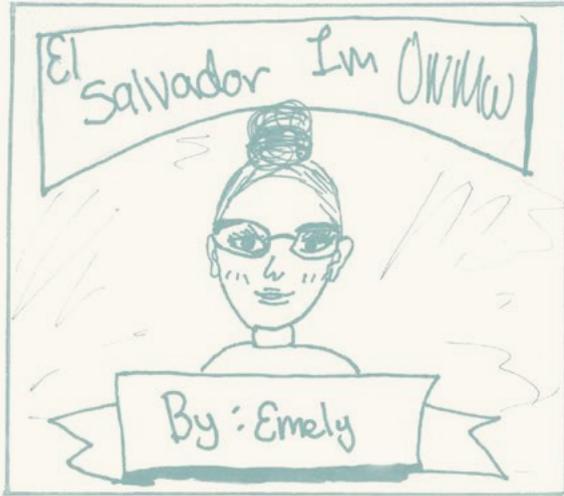
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly "Joe Biden", written in a cursive or semi-cursive style.

VIANNY



EMELY



I Am From/Vengo....

I Am From

My mom's pupusas, which are the best, and never miss the spot.
My uncle's delicious ceviche that makes me drop,
And the anime that makes me cry and hop,
With emotion and all it's got.

I Am From

The sound of the busy cars buzzing like hungry bees.
The smell of my mom's sweet flan bubbling like cooking cheese,
The sound of applause during ceremonies
And the feel of the wet clothes in my hands while I do the laundry.

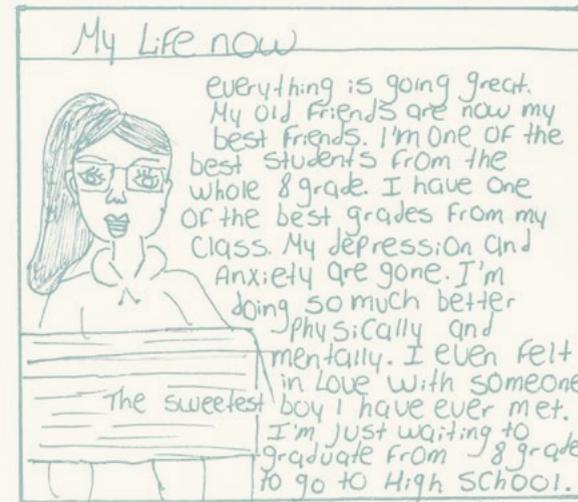
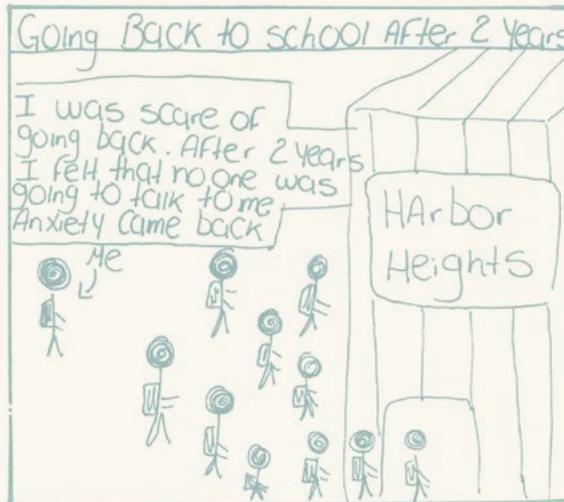
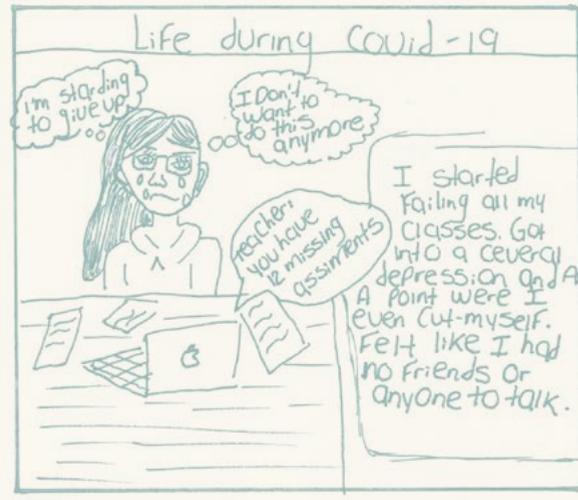
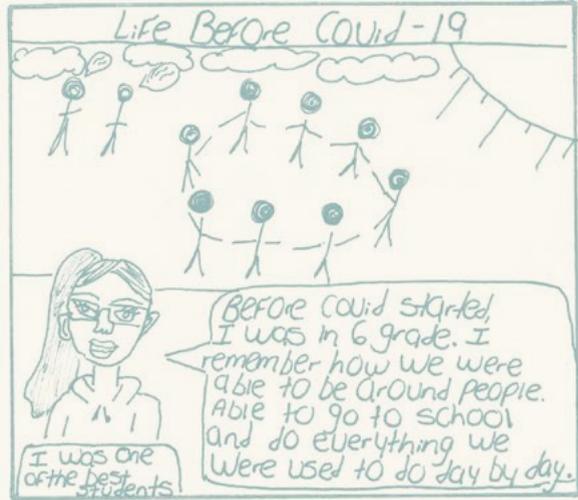
I Am From

Never going out without permission. If not, I'll get the slipper.
Taking care of my family, they're the only ones I have.

I Am From

The hate of the haters
The love of Orlando and Rosa,
The care of Carlos and Bella
And the laughs of Josue and Erica.

JASLY



I just know I'm happy and I hope everything stays like this.

Dear Rosa,

Thank you for sharing your experiences with us. Having the chance to read such an incredible story makes anyone realize that it's important to spend time with the people we love. We never know when it's going to be the last time we're gonna see them or be with them.

While I was reading your story I had some connections with you. My life also fell apart just like yours, but we had different reasons. On page 52, you wanted to interpret how you were getting distracted and having bad grades after the death of your father. I had a connection because even though I didn't lose anyone, when I was in 7th grade I got completely distracted and started getting bad grades. I had depression, but now everything it's getting back to normal. On page 54 you said, "I had to use my sadness to push forward", just like I'm doing now that I'm in 8th grade.

You didn't talk much about your journey to the US. You did mention that you wanted the visa to travel to the US for better opportunities. You struggle to get it but you didn't give up until they finally gave it to you. I personally don't remember much about my journey to the US, but moving here was the best decision that my parents ever made. Having the opportunity to receive what the United States could offer us was incredible. We moved for better opportunities and better education for me and my sister. While being here, I have received what my parents expected for me to. I have had a better education and it has been easier for me to learn more quickly and clearly. Moving here changed my life in a current way that I feel like a whole different person from who I was almost 6 years ago.

In some way I felt identified with your story. I really appreciate and admire how brave you were for sharing such a hard and sad experience. I hope now you're doing better than you were. Always remember that even though you can't see her, she will always be there for you.

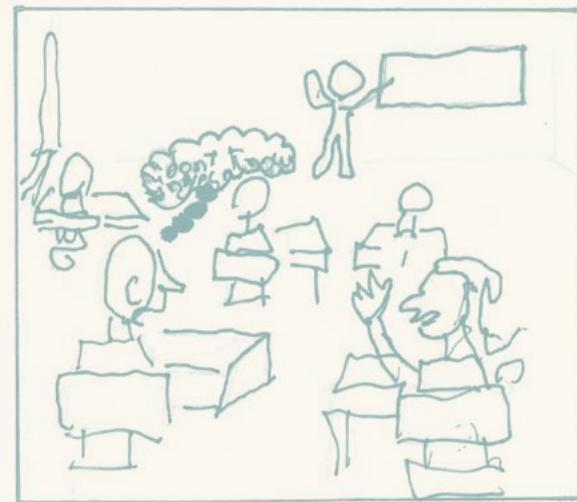
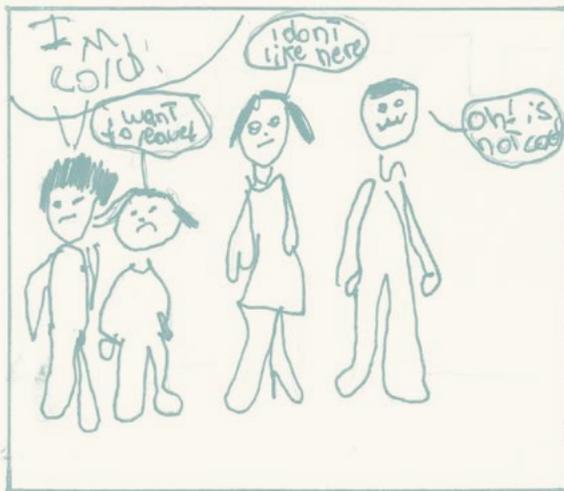
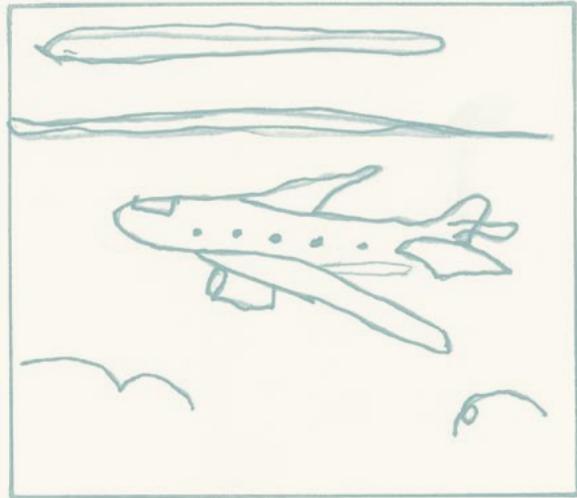
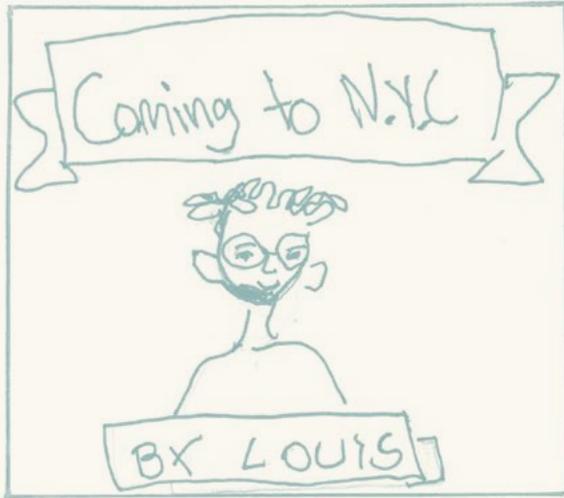
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jashu". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

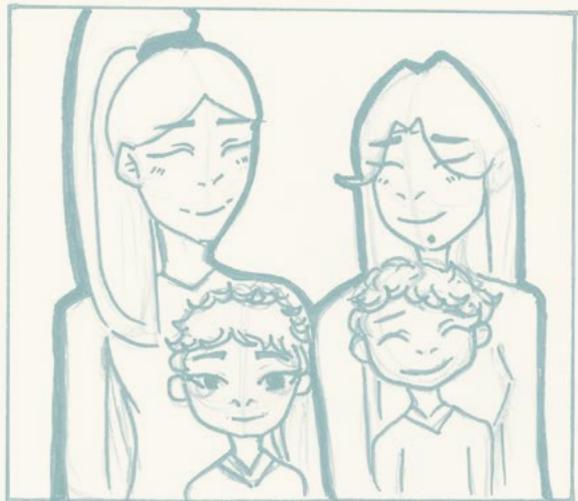
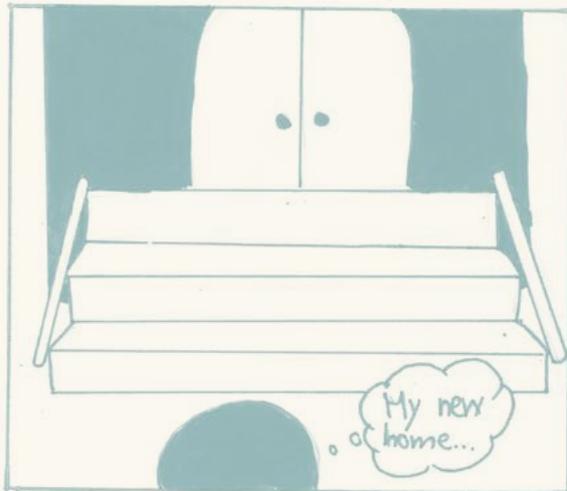
I Am From

I am from the bread that my mom ate when I was inside of her.
The water that she drinks.
From the blood that she loses.
From the medicine that gives health.
I am from the air that I breathe.
From the singing of the birds and the woods.
Which is like air that always stays with me.
I am the happiest mom.
From the dry and cold of my father.
I am from an island where everyone is your family.
From the food that we search.
From a lot of people that I don't know.

LOUIS



ANDREA



I Am From

I come from my grandmother, who is like a mother to me,
I come from my cousins, with whom I fight with every 5 days,
I come from injuries and falls, I come from running barefoot
down a stone path, I come from bathing in the rain, while my grandmother scolds me.

I come from Buenaventura, from bachata,
from the smell of bueñuelos on Christmas days,
my neighbor who was always spiteful and sang Romeo Santos songs,
the noisy roosters that woke us up at 7 in the morning,
the sound of the passing train up the hill,
from the rice pudding that my neighbor passed me, even if she was embittered,
I come from the power outages every week. I come from Colombia.

I come from the parties that my family used to have on weekends,
from my uncle bothering me every time he visited us,
from all the friends I had to leave in Buenaventura,
from the fights between my grandparents, from all the moves
and the houses where I stayed and my memories stayed.

I come from the love of my family
and all the things they teach me throughout the years,
I come from the memories that I continue to treasure
to this day and that have made me who I am,
but the most important thing is that I come
from all the effort and dedication that a person
had for me, my grandmother, the first person who never gave up on me.

LISBETH

I Am From/Vengo....

Vengo de los bonitos paisajes de Santo Domingo,
Como sus restaurantes,
Sus ciudades,
Y lo que lo representa,
Sul famoso monumento.

Vengo de quienes siempre he querido,
Mi familia, quienes siempre están ahí,
Mis primos, quienes siempre hacen alguna que otra travesura,
Mi abu, quien siempre busca lo mejor de mi,
Y mis padres, quienes me cuidan como un valioso diamante
Y yo, quien siempre busca sentirse mejor.

Vengo de quienes siempre he querido,
Mi familia, quienes siempre están ahí,
Mis primos, quienes siempre hacen alguna que otra travesura,
Mi abu, quien siempre busca lo mejor de mi,
Y mis padres, quienes me cuidan como un valioso diamante
Y yo, quien siempre busca sentirse mejor.

Vengo de mi yo interior,
Quien piensa que puedo hacerlo mejor,
Quien cree que debo ser más proactiva,
Quien quiere que sea capaz de conseguir lo que me plazca,
Y quien piensa que debería ser yo misma.

Vengo de donde crecí mentalmente,
La escuela,
Las redes sociales,
La matemática,
La ciencia,
Y hasta de lo que más me gusta,
La música.

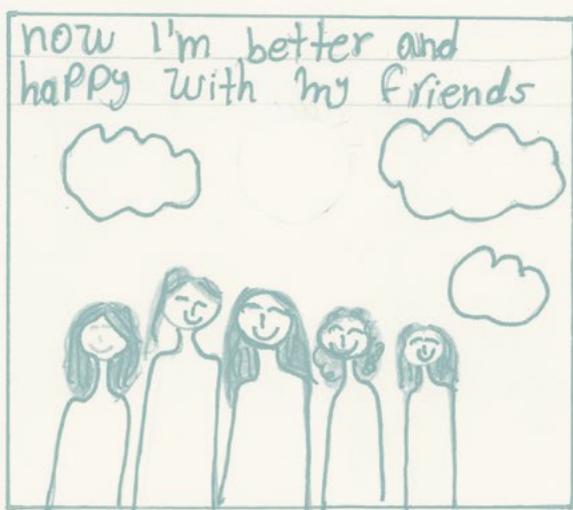
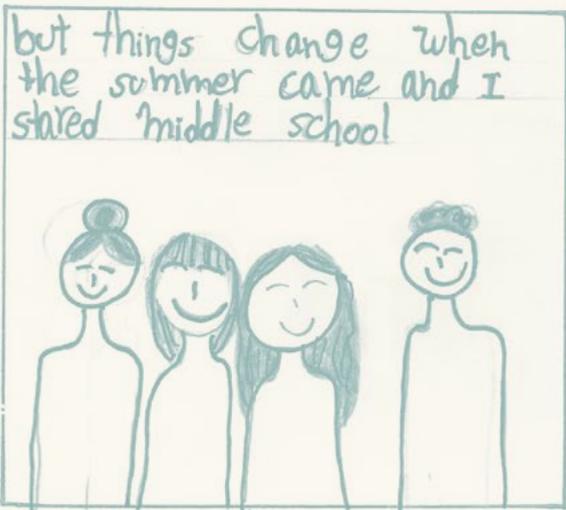
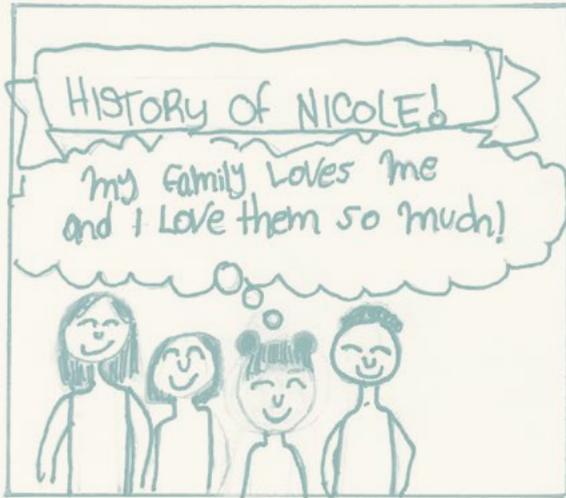
I am from

I am from Mango, which sweeten my mouth with each bite,
I am from toasted corn,
I am from the tres leches cake.

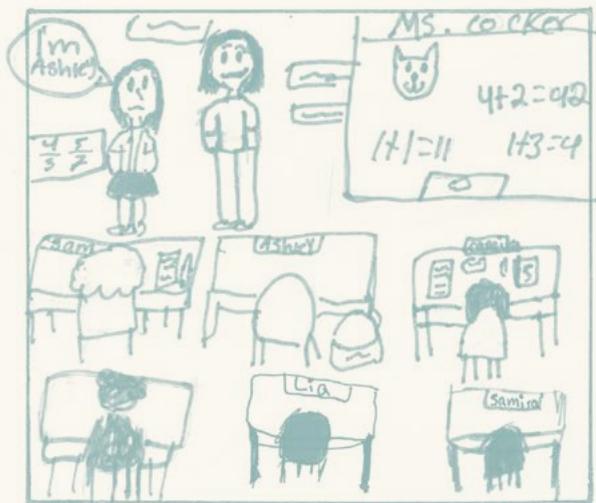
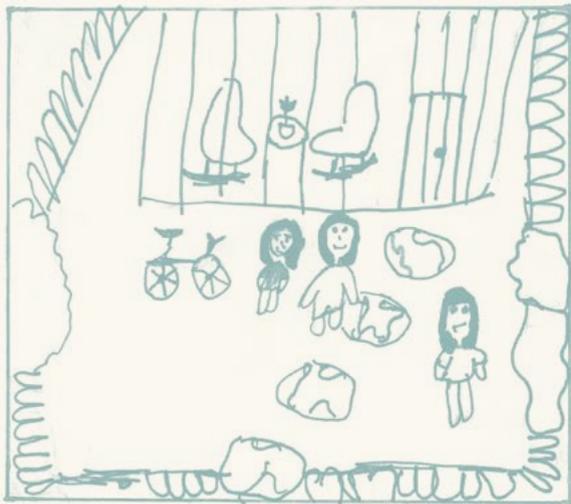
I am from Dominican Republic, a country,
I am from the lavender smell of my plushies, that makes me feel out of orbit ,
I am from "you have to eat everything or you don't have candy",
I am from "duermete temprano muchachita",
I am from "for that phone your appetite goes away".

I am from a clear like water friendship with my best friend,
I am from a good relationship with my mom and sister,
I am from loving my family everyday more.

NICOLE



ASHLEY



I Am From

I am from a cultured family, who are very passionate when it's about asopao.
I am from a loving family, who buy pica pollo late nights when in the mood.
I am from a dramatic family, who gets mad for the smallest things.
I am from a family that loves to make sancocho on hot days.

*I am from a town where everyone knows each other, a town where everyone is family.
I am from a beautiful town which is exquisite with the seasonings of our country.
I am from a town, a town that expresses their love and kindness in their food.
I am from a town, a town where the gossip, love, drama, friendship and family runs everywhere.*

*I am from an impatient family, who put pressure on you to the point they leave you.
I am from an extroverted family, they get along with most people everywhere.
I am from a bipolar family, who can't stay mad at each other for too long.
I am from a big family, it's hard to know everyone in family reunions but the time to meet a new family member, they are received with love.*

*I am from a loving big family, starting with the romance of Ana and Juan Morel.
I am from an amazing family, that no matter what they can always forgive.
I am from a dominican family, no matter how many family dramas there are, they always get along. A family that is usually together every holiday even if it has to be by distance.*

4-1-22

Dear New York Times,

It's important to dispel the myths about the immigrants because they can tell u what happened to them when they were coming to the united states.

Reason number 1 because they don't earn too much money in their state. Reason number 2 because they can have a better future in the United states. Reason number 3 because they wanna have their future job.

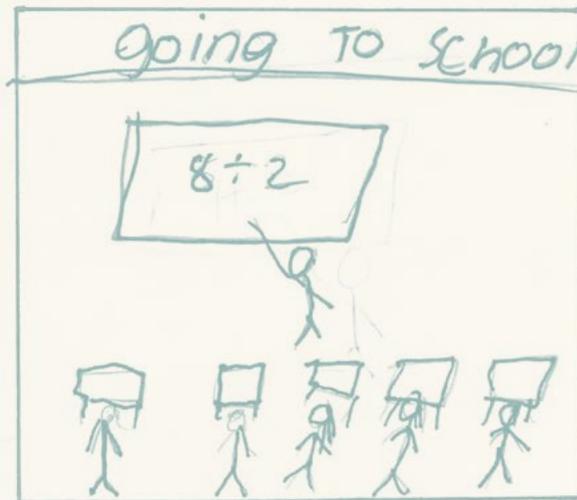
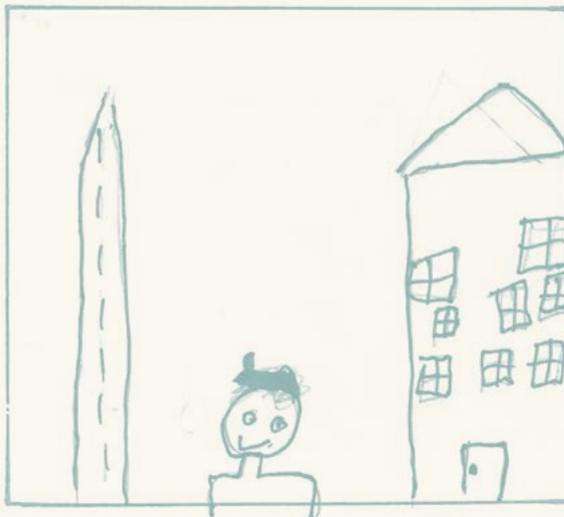
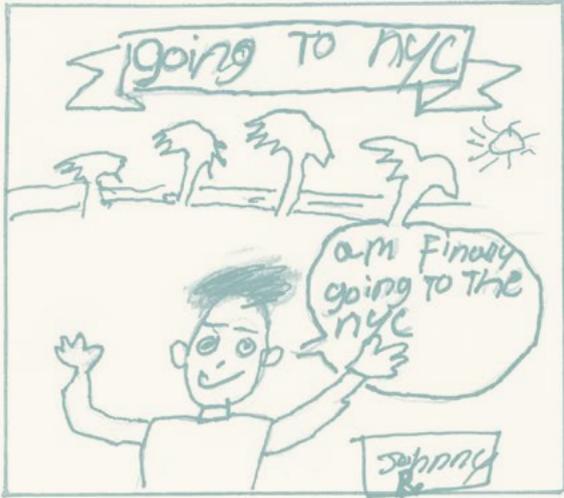
In my opinion i think that the immigrants make our country better by represents are country, be recognized by the public.

It's important to understand the story of immigrants because they pass through many things and there's almost no justice for them

Sincerely,

Johnny

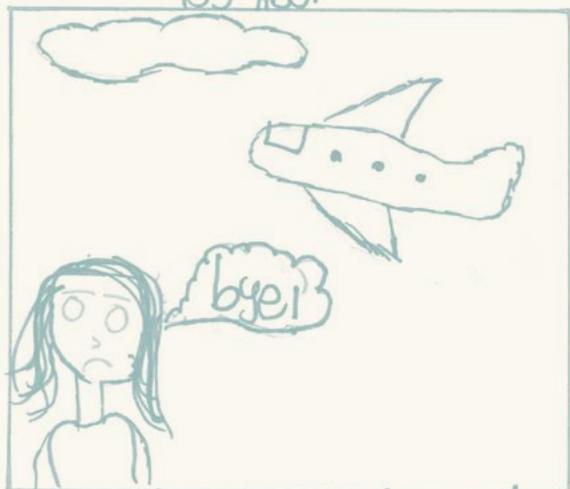
JOHNNY



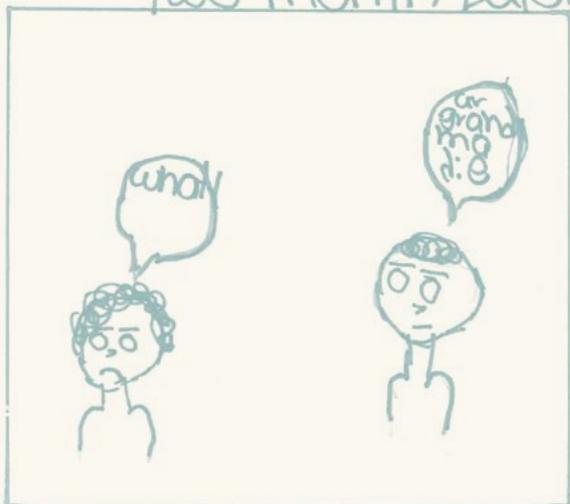
ABEL



By Abel



two month later!



3-31-22

Dear Selena,

Thank you for sharing how difficult it is to be an immigrant. I also thank you for sharing some stories that I feel identified with.

I have a mirror with you because my grandma died too. Also when you come to the US she feels alone and thinks that her parents didn't love her.

In my opinion, your experience was very sad because her grandmother then went to live with her parents in the USA, who were not with her for almost her entire life. She also felt that she did not fit in the USA and that her parents would not love her for I think that Selena's experience was very sad. If you read this letter, thank you for reading it. I also want to conclude this letter by letting you know that I loved the book very much and I found the stories and experiences.

Immigrants have a difficult life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ariel". The letters are connected and written in a cursive style. The "A" is tall and narrow, the "r" has a loop, and the "e" is a simple oval. The "l" is tall and narrow with a small loop at the top.

JOSUE



I am from..

I come from the soups in the scorching heat.
I come from the food my grandmother served.
I come from the times when we all sat at the table together
I come from wanting to discover new things every day as if it were a mind that never gets tired

I come from Ecuador.
I come from the largest city, Guayaquil.
I come from the sound of work cars.
I come from the smell of cherries, earth, mud and soups.
I come from M.J. Street..

I come from the memory of my cousins, uncles and my grandparents.
I just came from helping give nicknames to my cousins.
I come from Titi's jokes and jokes.
I come from the laughter of Yuyu and Andrés.
I come from understanding myself very well with Sebastian.
I come from participating in the madness of my cousins.
I come from appreciating and loving new people.

I come from missing my country every night.
I come from missing my best friends.
I come from wanting to be next to my grandparents.
I've just missed my grandfather on my mom's side, even though I didn't know him.
I come to laugh with my uncle Carlos.
I come from walking aimlessly around the farm.
I come from wanting to stop things...
I come from the most beautiful moments on the farm when the end of the year was celebrated.

4-1-22

Dear Rosa,

I am happy for Rosa to share her story because she demonstrates how it was her life and she did not live an easy life in order to emigrate or fulfill her dream of hers.

For my a Mirror:

I felt in her place because she had to emigrate for a better future although mine was not my way of emigrating.

For my a Window:

She emigrated for a better future than mine, too.

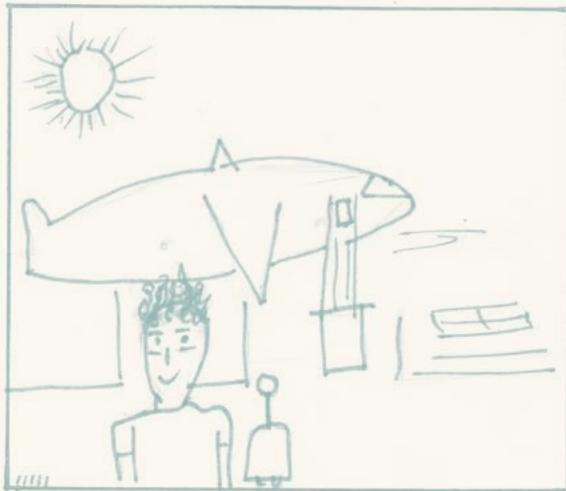
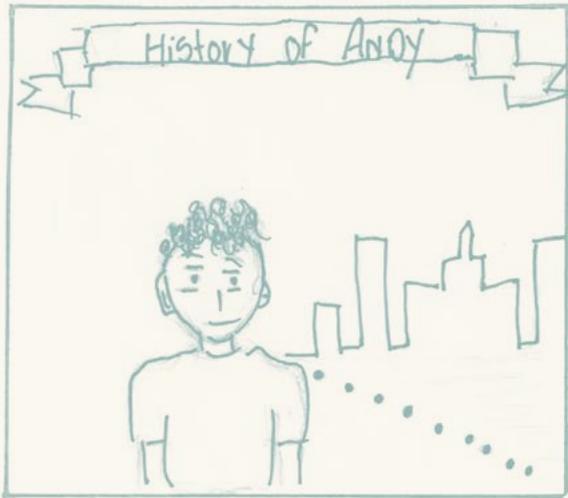
I felt good because you emigrated to see your family and because you had a future thought.

That you did a good job expressing everything you felt.

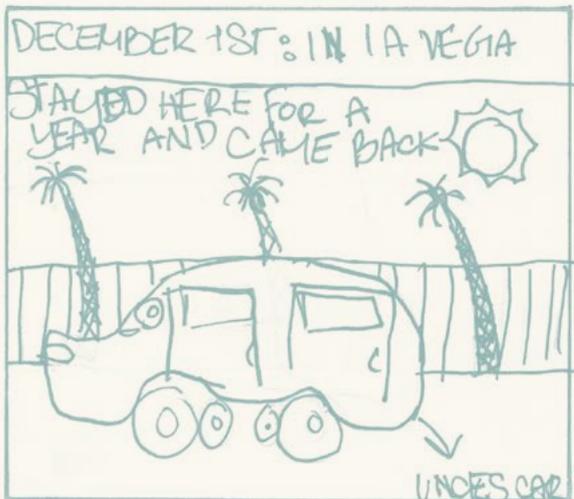
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'A' and a horizontal line crossing through the middle of the name.

ANDY



MIRANDA



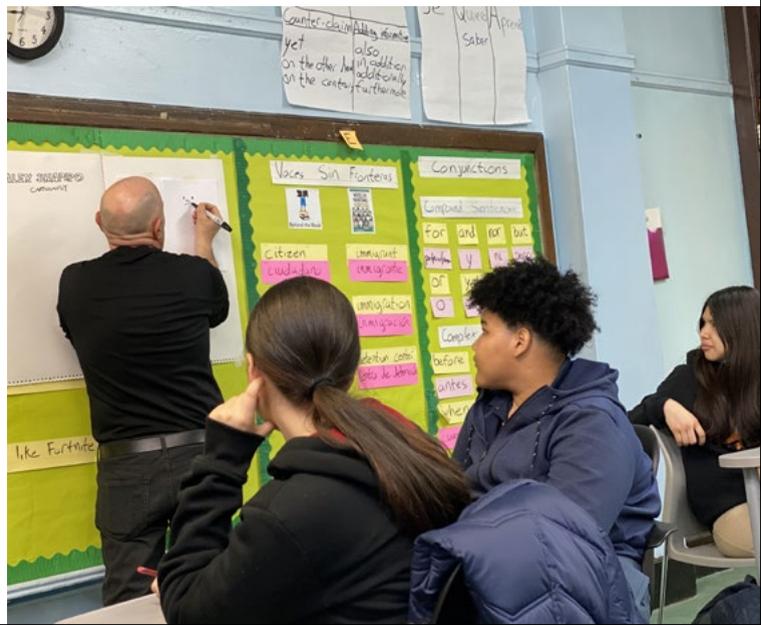
I am from....

I am from Spicy Korean Rabokki, which reminds me of kdramas.
I am from Marinated shrimp and fried plantains, which reminds me of my country.
I am from Fettuccine alfredo. With a flabbergasting flavor. That never ends.

I am from k-pop. With all the deja vu and nostalgia.
I am from La vega where there are carnivals that don't sleep at night.
I am from Sarcasm and satire personality. From my mother.

I am from " ehh mira recoge el' cuarto que viene visitas"
I am from " chichi vete para arriba con nathalia y camila , y te quedas ahí"
I am from " cómetelo todo , porque después tú estás en la cocina buscando comida"

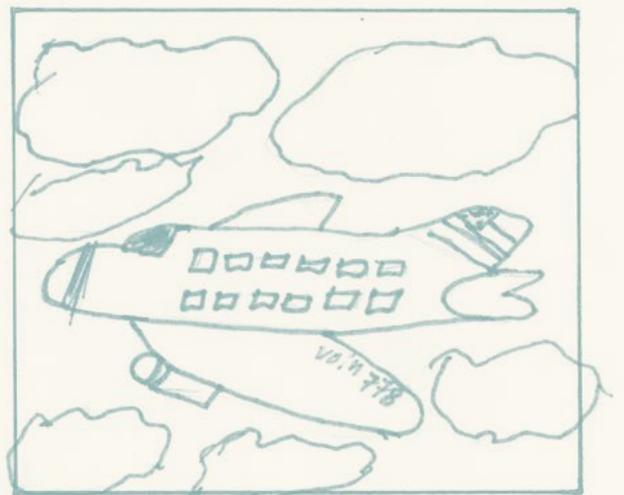
I am from my family and friends giving me nicknames " beba, chichi, nena, amanda, malu, mia, mandarina and lulu"
I am from Japanese onigiri that my great-great-great grandmother used to buy before going to school.
I am from all the lectures my mom gave because I got 80 in math and it wasn't good enough.



CLASS 802



JHONARIEL



I COME FROM

I come where the best coffee is roast

I come from a country that is famous for its landscapes and rivers.

I come from a country where the sayings are very famous like (The tree that bears fruit, they always throw stones at it).

I come from a country where people dress differently from other countries.

4-1-2022

Dear Selena,

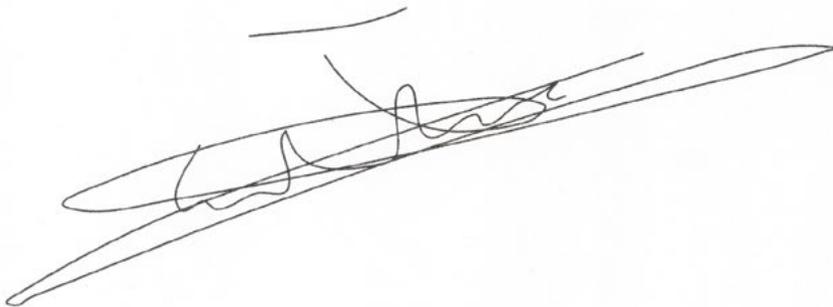
That Selena was the same as my life was when my grandmother died and that we only had two yoni grandfathers and we decided to bring us to this country.

The connection that I have with your story is a mirror because they killed her father, if he did nothing. I would like to know why it doesn't say anything about him there in the book, and I want to know why his father was killed. That's what I want to know.

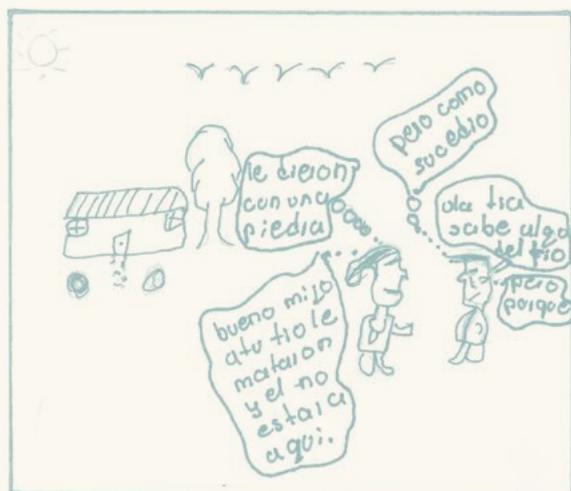
I think she is a good girl and she traveled because her grandmother passed away and her parents came to see her to take her to another country and have a better future to be able to spend more time with her daughter.

I hope that she is happy with her parents who are now together in this country. She fears that her grandmother may rest in peace and continue with her current career.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Selena", written over a horizontal line. The signature is somewhat stylized and cursive.

CARLOS



I Am from

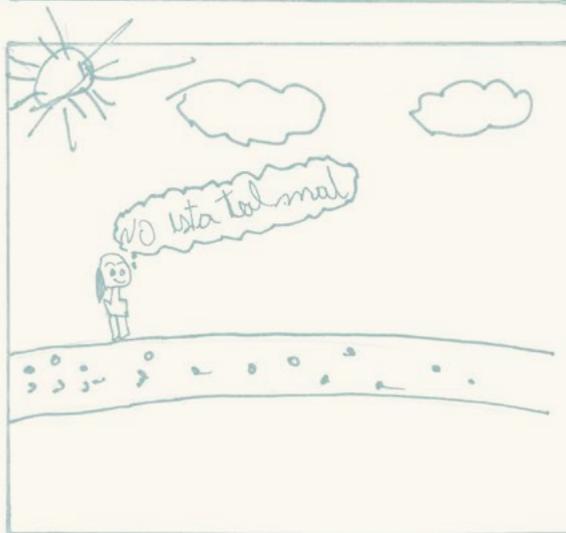
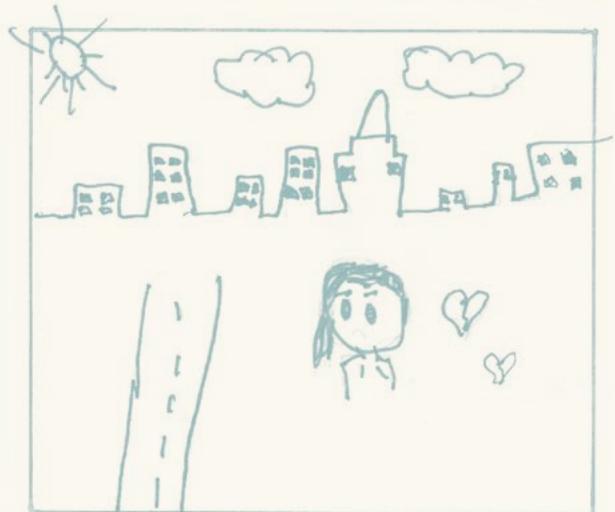
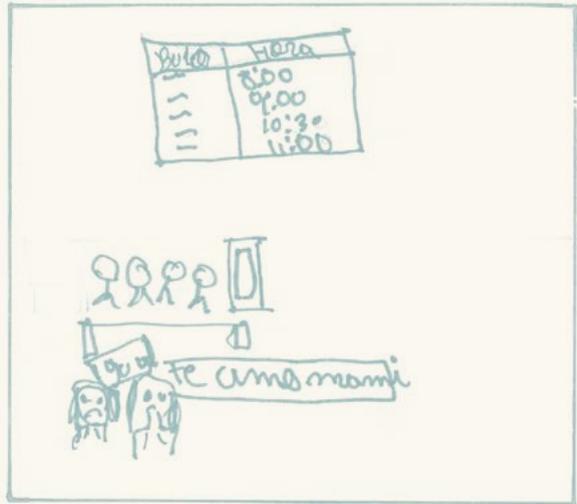
I come from my mother's rice and her meat, I come from my aunt's food

I come from my mom's perfume, so special, I come from my aunt's food aroma

I come from the saying of my family is everything

I come from the affection of Gaudi, my mother, I come from Jenifer's hugs

ASHLIE



ANDRY



I come from.../Vengo de

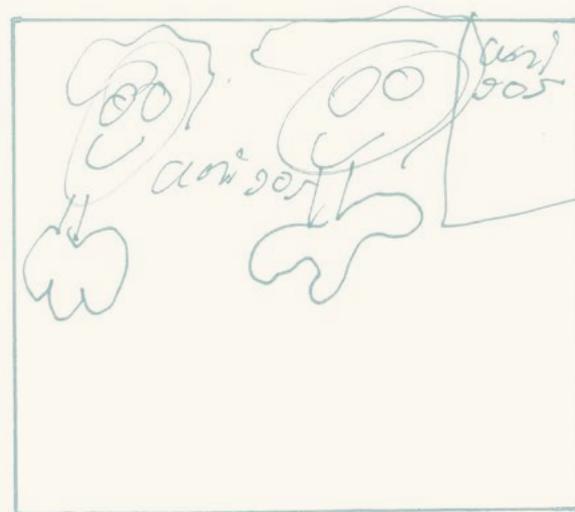
**I come from the Dominican Republic
I come from mangu and the hot coffee in the morning
I come from the rice and beans
I come from my Dominican roots and my mother's womb.**

**I come from my grandmother's patio
I come from a land full of joy
I come from a proud country that doest fell frightened to raise their flag
I come from my annoying cousins who would always what something I had
I come from a big proud family
I come from the smell of the rain in the morning
I come from the sound of the rosters at 7 am
I come from the music my grandmother always used to play at 12 pm in the afternoon.**

**I am from the city and the countryside,
I am Dominican and I raise my flag high in the sky
I come from the trips to the beach, I come from**

**I come from my friends,
I come from my parents,
I come from the Caribbean on a little island
I come from the capital(Santo domingo).**

REYNO



4-1-22

Dear Rosa,

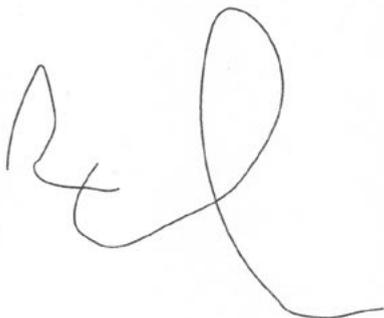
Gracias rosa por mostrar tu historia, fue muy interesante .

Las conecciones que tuve con rosa fue la muerte de mi papá y tuve que emigrar a los estados unidos un mes después de la muerte de mi papa.

La experiencia de rosa, fue muy mala porque se lo que se siente perder un padre porque su padre murió y tuvo que emigrar a los estados unidos y no sabia ingles

Bre Rosa fue un placer contarte lo que me paso y me gusto tu historia escucharte . att Reyno garcia

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Reyno Garcia', written in a cursive style.

3/31/2022

Dear Rose,

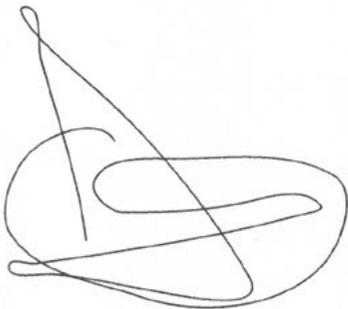
Thank you Rosa for sharing your stories.

Mirrors (The pink thing happened to me that her father died and my grandmother too and when I went to my native country I felt alone and my grades were also going down.)

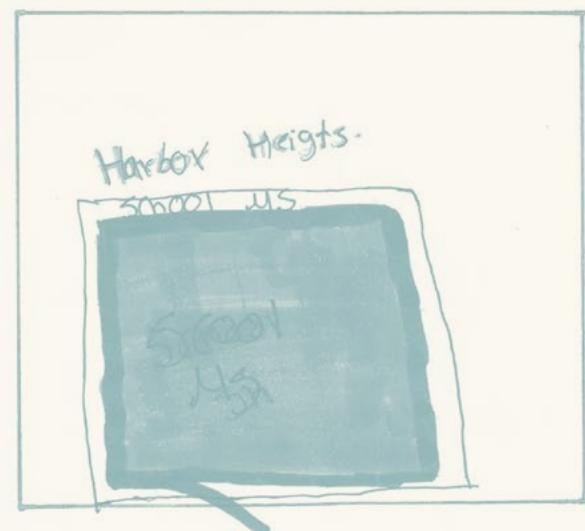
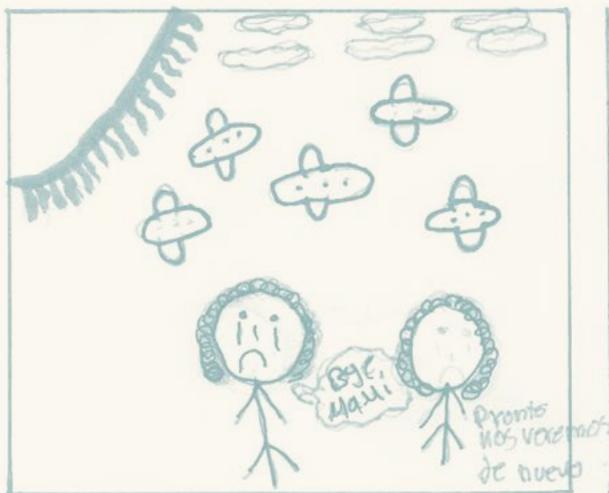
What I think about her story is that it is very hard because losing her father would be difficult because he was the one who was with her in everything and he was the one who helped her and gave her food.

Thank you Rosa for sharing your story. It helps me to know that when a very important person dies, we must move on and keep getting good grades in school in order to graduate.

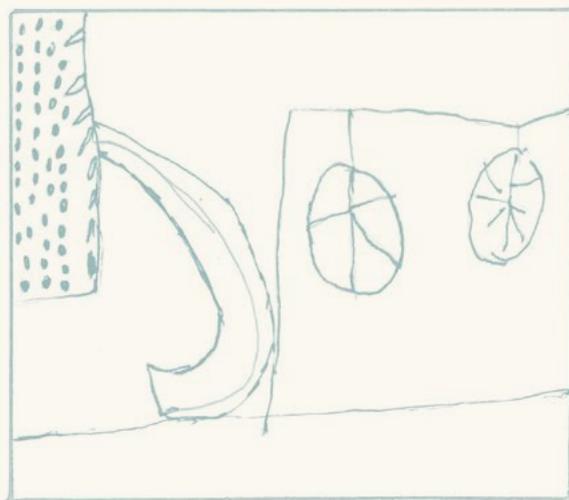
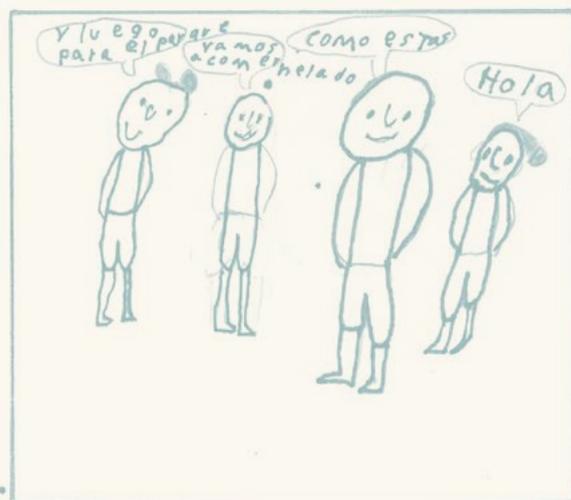
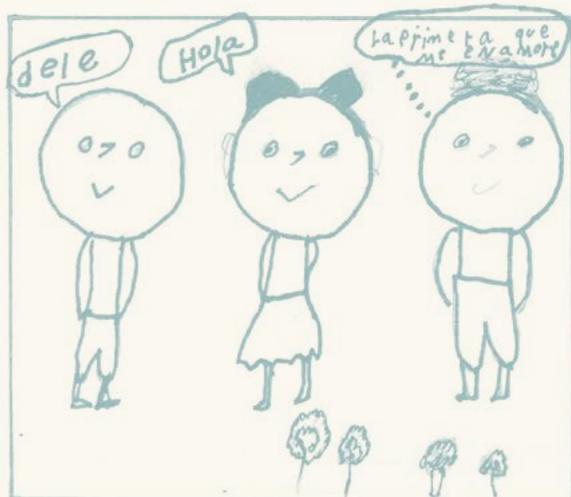
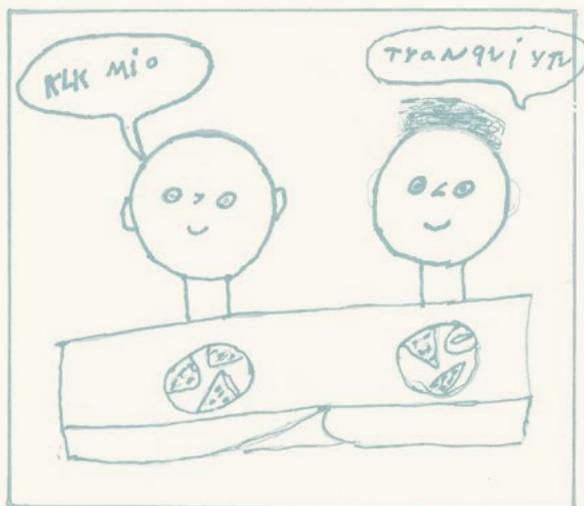
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and lines, appearing to be a stylized name.

ROSELIN



BRAYAN



“I Am from Poem”

I come from the Dominican Republic, where the beaches are beautiful with crystal clear and fine sand.

i come from dominican republic, from the trenches where theirs bananas and cocos

I come from the Dominican Republic where they say “ el que nada debe nada teme”.

I am from the Dominican Republic, where I had good neighbors that cared and loved me.

3/31/22

Dear Rosa,

Es importante disipar los mitos sobre los inmigrantes para que vean que los inmigrantes vienen a trabajar sacar a su familia adelante porque en sus países no tiene la economía suficiente que hay en otros países y no viene hacer daño a las personas de otros países.

Razones porque los inmigrantes dejan sus países de origen. 1. Porque no hay tanta economía 2. Porque hay muchas bandas malas 3. Para ayudar a su familiares.

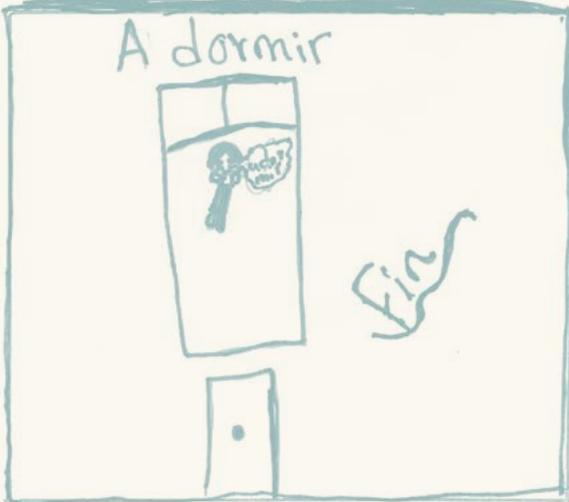
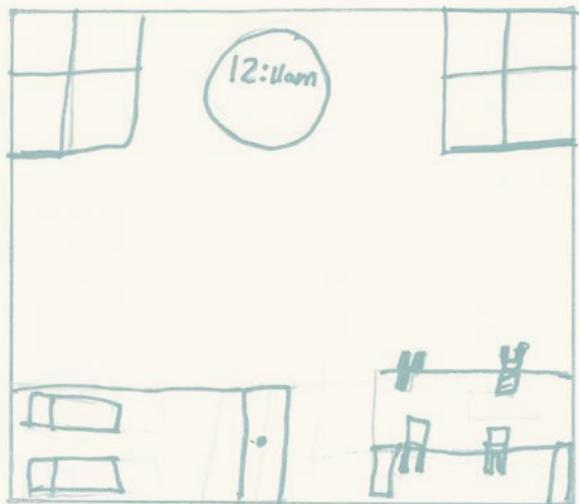
Las formas en que los inmigrantes hacen que nuestro país sea más fuerte y mejor. 1. Porque viene a trabajar 2. Porque viene a desempeñar cualquier trabajo y así la economía sube incluyen salarios mas altos, 3. A desarrollar el país.

Es importante entender las historias de los inmigrantes. Porque podemos saber cómo está su país a través de ellos.

Sincerely,

Mexelyn

MERELYN



JEIMY



“I Am from Poem”

Vengo del sabor de un té frío en la noche, vengo de las cenas en el patio con mi familia, vengo del sabor de un desayuno en el patio, vengo de el pastel de cumpleaños de mis primos, vengo de las fiestas sorpresas con mi prima, vengo de las pupusas de mi mamá.

Vengo de el atol de mi abuela, vengo de los tamales de mis tías, vengo del jugo de naranja que prepara mi hermana, vengo de las pijamada con mi amiga, vengo de las enchiladas de mi abuela, vengo de minutas de los juegos de futbol.

Vengo de las vistas de los atardeceres, vengo de los sonidos de los ríos de mi país, vengo del olor a rosas de mis jardines, vengo del olor a mis comidas favoritas, vengo del olor a lluvia, vengo del olor de una sopa caliente.

Vengo del olor de un clavel , vengo de las vistas por la tarde, vengo del sonido de la lluvia, vengo del olor de las flores, vengo del olor de una pizza caliente, vengo del sonido de la brisa, vengo del sonido de los pájaros.

Vengo de los dichos que mi abuela decía, vengo del dicho en arca abierta hasta el más justo es pecador, vengo del dicho no por mucho madrugar amanece más temprano, vengo de el dicho no hay peor ciego que el no quiere ver.

Vengo del dicho el que es perico donde quiera es verde, vengo del dicho el que con lobos anda a aullar aprende, vengo de el dicho son como uña y mugre, vengo de el dicho mas vale estar solo que mal acompañado.

Vengo de los peinados de Mayeli, vengo de los abrazos de mi sobrina, vengo de los cariños de Keylin, vengo de los momentos graciosos con mi tia , vengo del amor de mi Esmeralda, vengo de las sonrisas de Josselyn, vengo de con chistes de Yaneth, vengo de el apoyo de Maria.

Vengo de los cuentos de mi tío, vengo de los paseos con Carlos, vengo del abrazo de mi Manuel, vengo del amor incondicional de Douglas, vengo de los recuerdos de mis abuelos, vengo del respeto de Digna.

4-1-22

Dear Rosa,

Hola mi nombre es Anyi y te quiero agradecer por compartir esa historia de lo que paso con tu padre te agradezco mucho.

Hoy te voy a contar porque me siento identificada con tu historia. Cuando yo tenia 4 anos mi padre nos voto de la casa y yo la mayoría de tiempo yo me la pasaba él y lo extraño mucho, hasta que a los 9 años mi vida cambiò mucho y extraño mucho todo en Santo Domingo. Yo estuve 10 años sin saber nada de él.

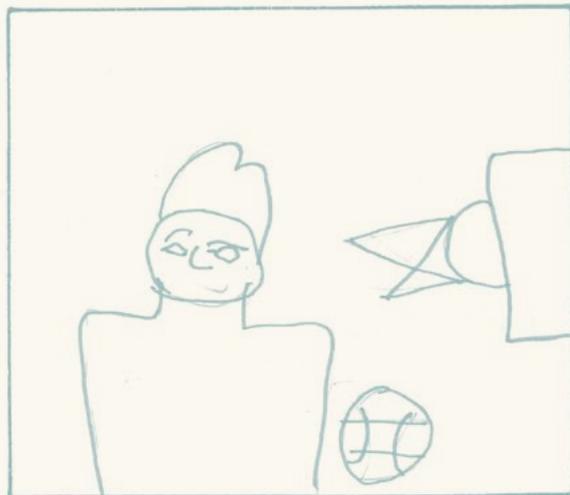
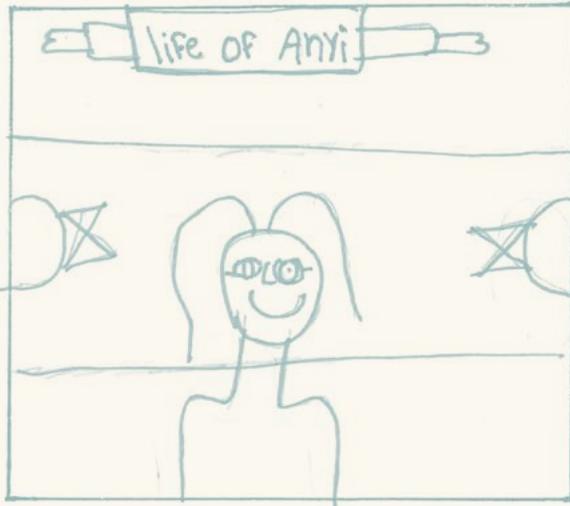
En mi opinion tu no pasaste mucho trabajo como otros inmigrante pasa. Por ejemplo, hay personas que pasan hambre y tú no lo pasaste por tu padre.

I want to thank you because not everyone can share the situations in life that have happened to them

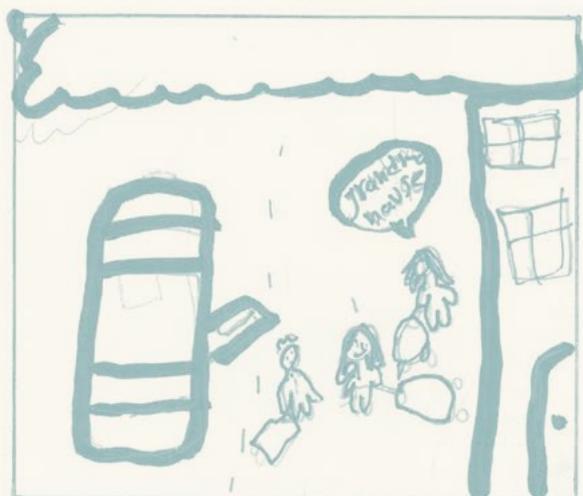
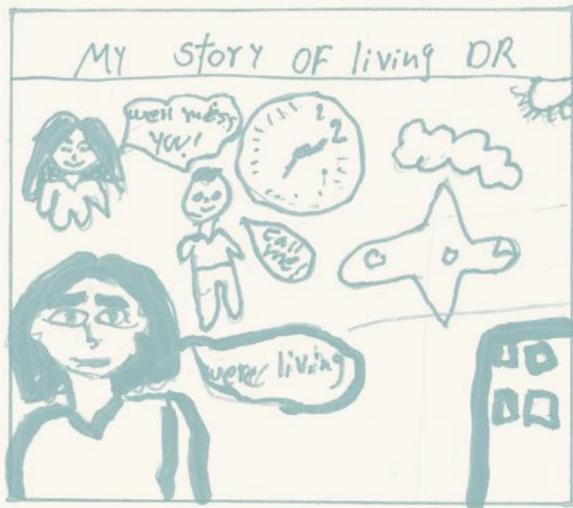
Atentamente,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several large, overlapping loops and curves, appearing to be the name 'Anyi'.

ANYI



YOSI



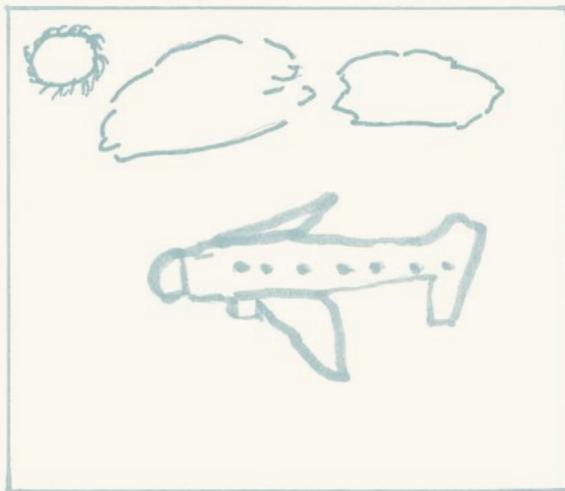
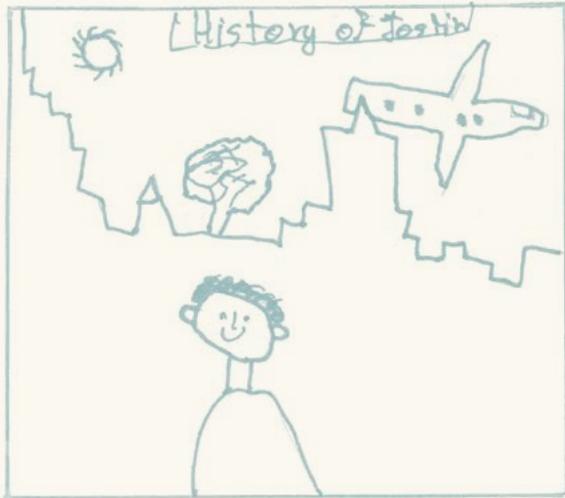
I come from.....

I come from the Dominican Republic. I'm hispanic.

I come from that woman called yozenia, and from that man called Librado.

I come from

JUSTIN



I Am From/Vengo...

Vengo del Café de mi mamá , vengo de la comida de mi abuela.

Vengo de mi abuela y de sus consejos que me educó .

Vengo de mis tías y de mi abuela y de mi mama.

Vengo de mi abuela porque con ella me la pasaba mucho tiempo.

4-1-22

Dear Rosa,

Because that way we can know what happened to them when they came to the United States like Rosa and Selena, that they went through a lot of work to get to the United States. I think that they leave their countries to have a better future or maybe they are trying to escape from a war or earthquakes that may affect them. They show that there are more opportunities here than in other countries, and when immigrants arrive in the US they think they can have a better job here than in their country. Because it may be that they have a story similar to ours and it may be that we have an adventure just like theirs.

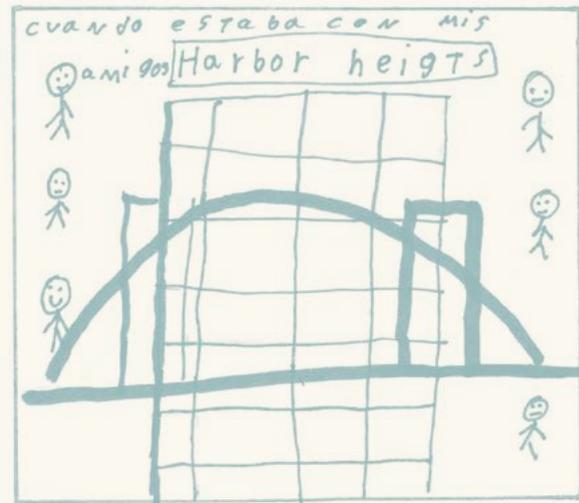
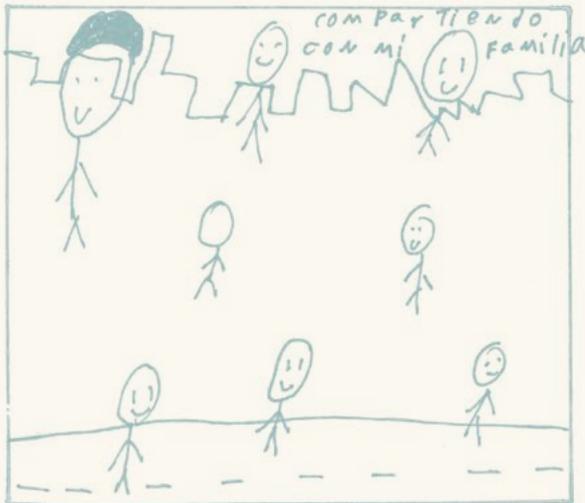
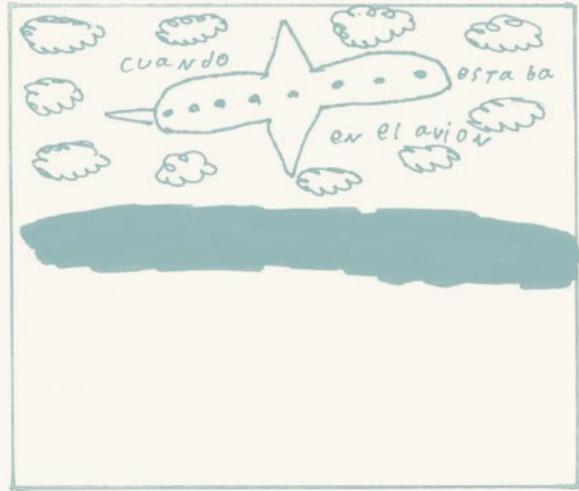
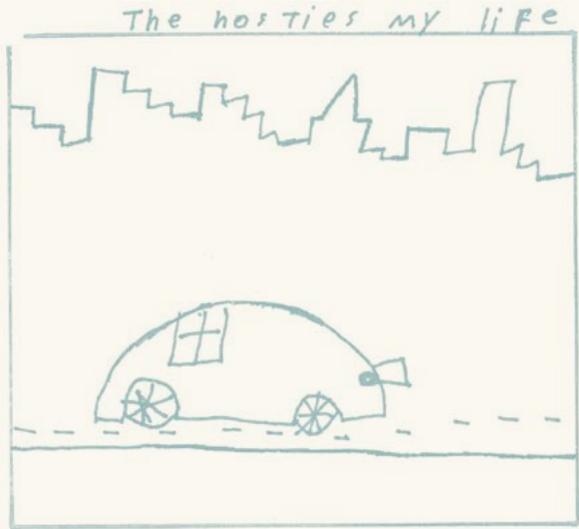
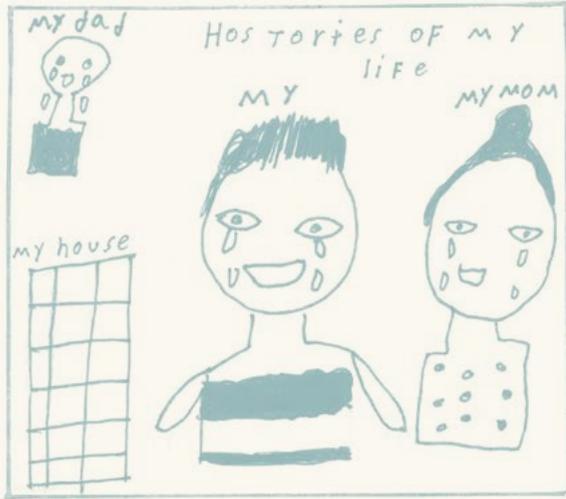
They show that there are more opportunities here than in other countries, and when immigrants come to the US they think they can have a better job here than at home. And they also believe that here they can earn more money than in their country, perhaps that is why they leave their countries, they also leave so that their children can study better while they work to pay their school fees.

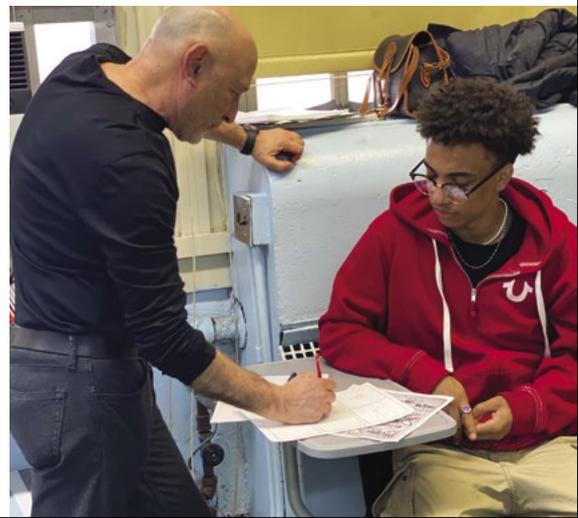
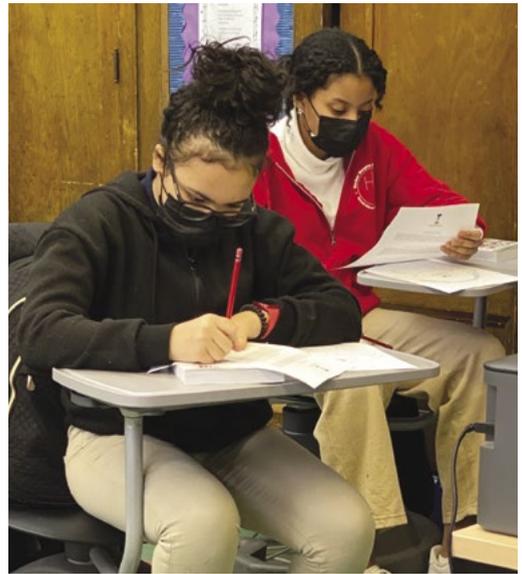
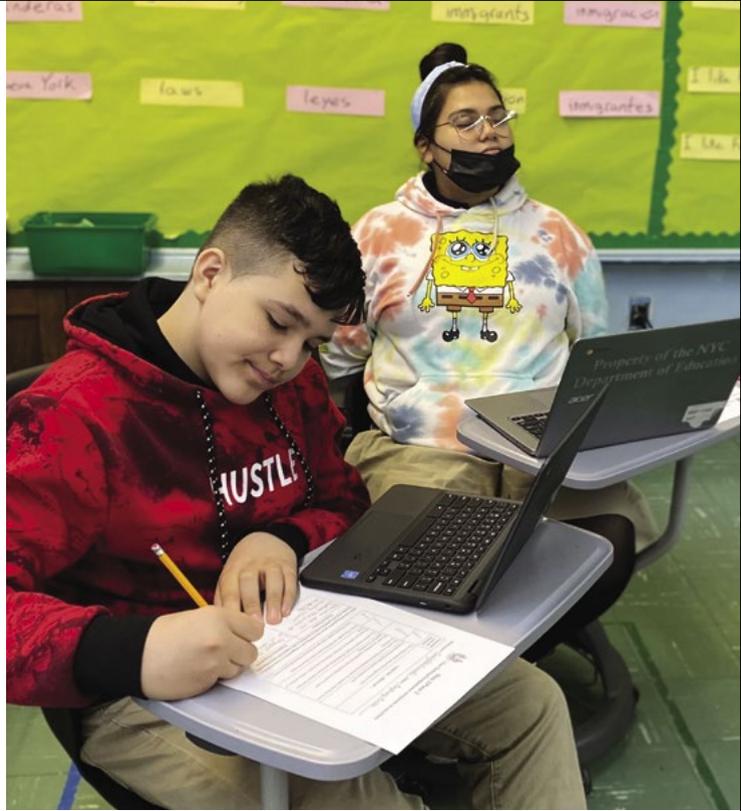
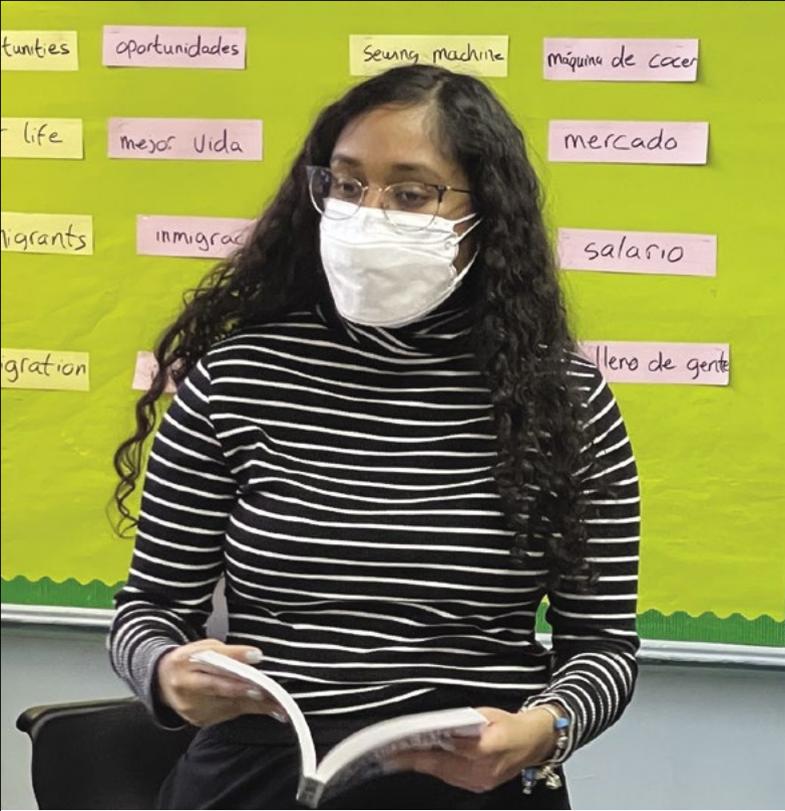
Because it may be that they have a history related to that of Rosa and Selena, also their history may be related to ours and how they get along in the country after a while, and also how they relate in another country that they do not. It is your country.

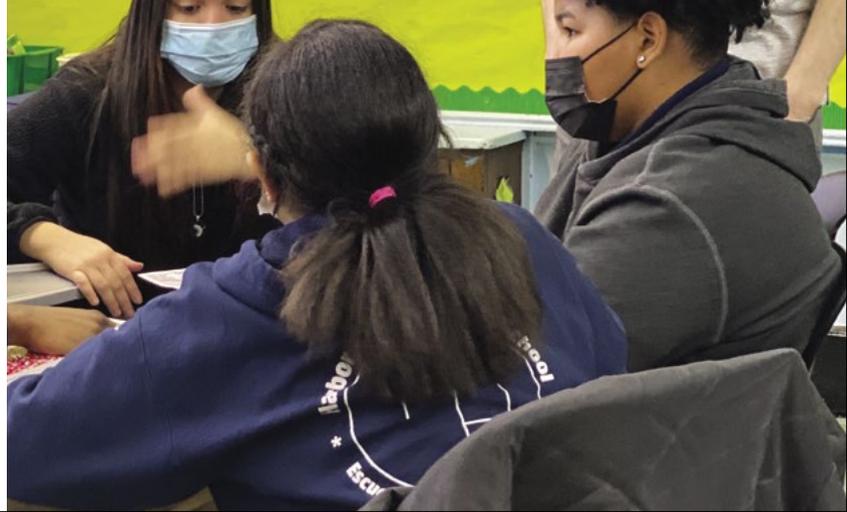
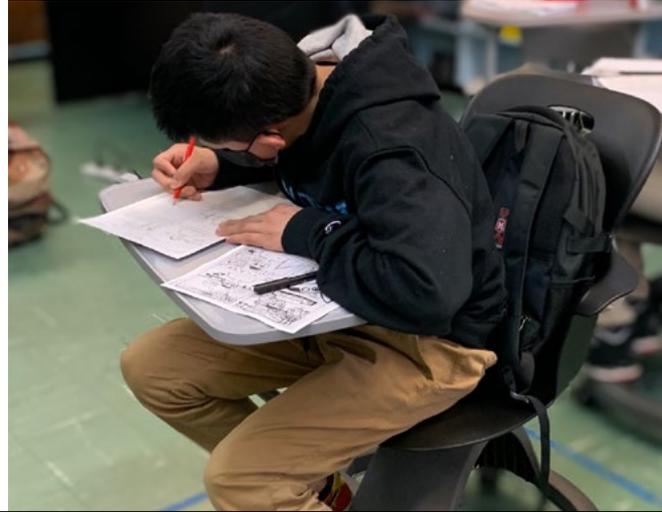
Sincerely,

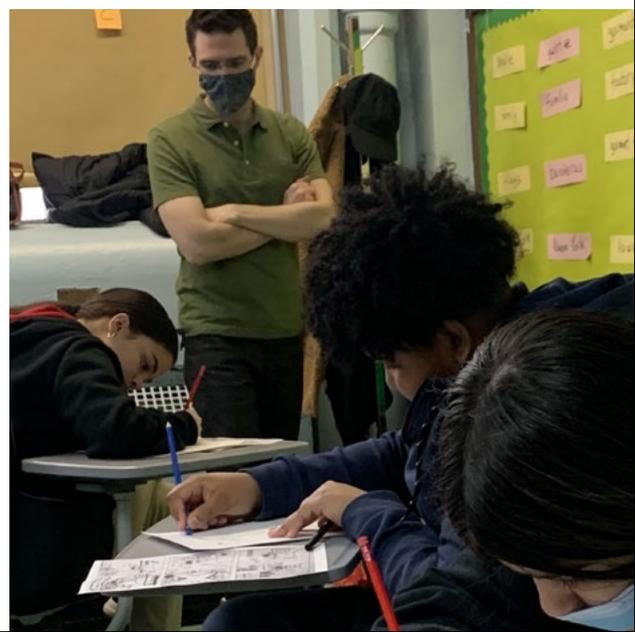
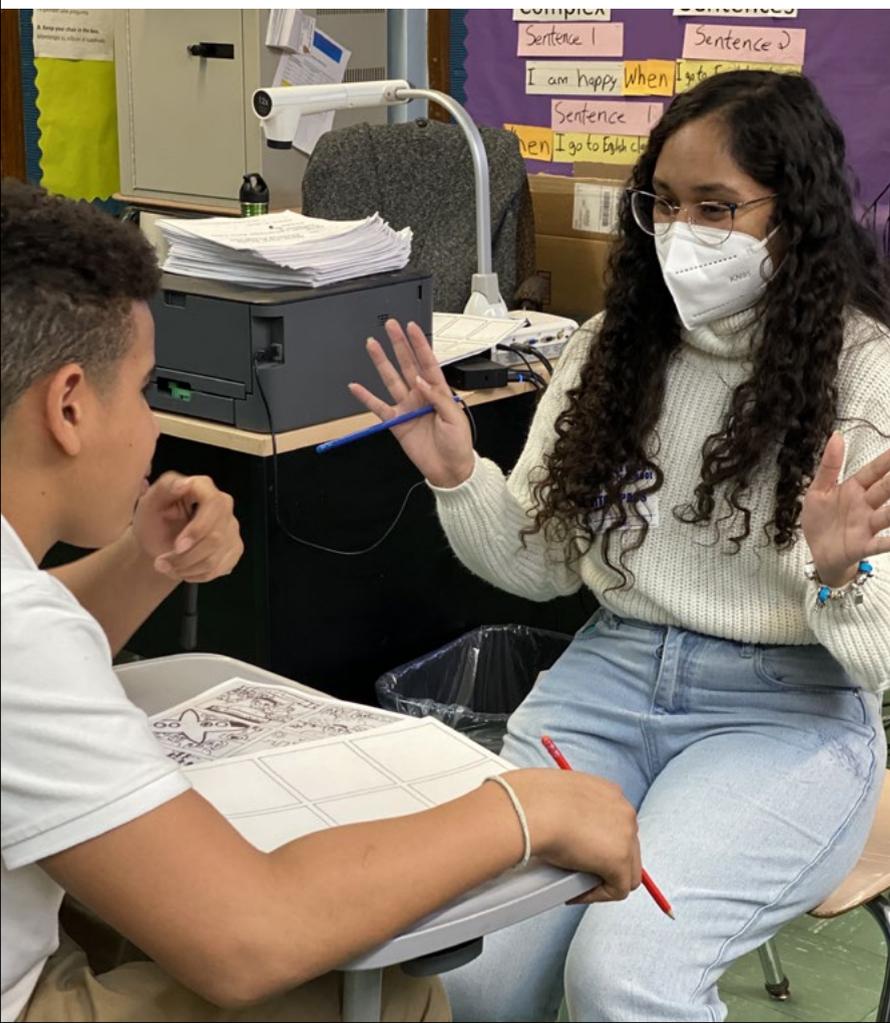
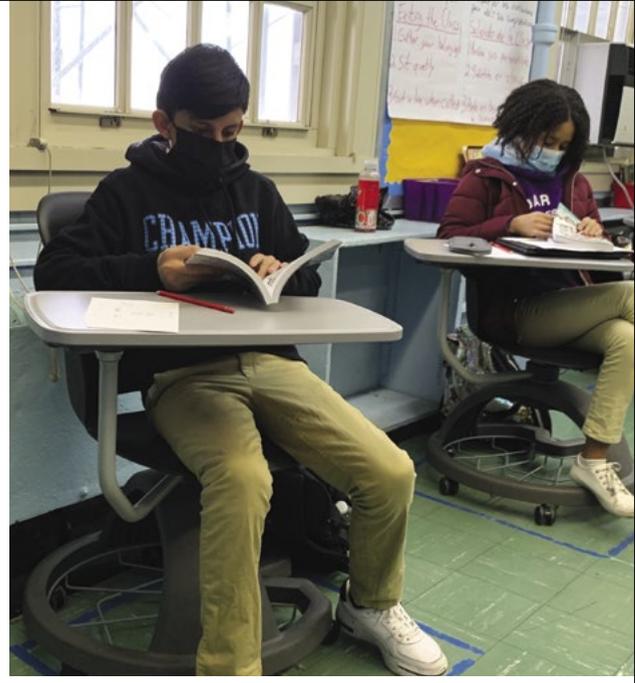
Axel

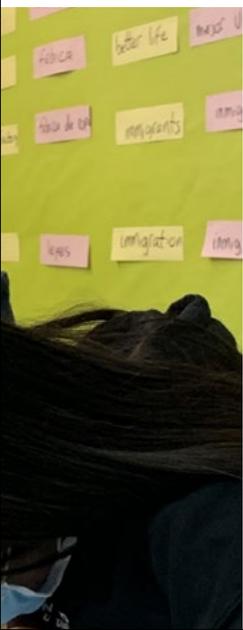
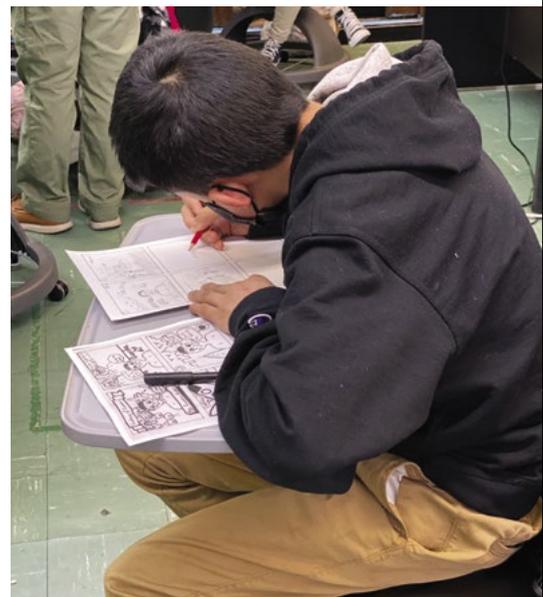
AXEL











ABOUT THE VISITING AUTHORS

The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) is a nonprofit based in Washington D.C. that offers a variety of programs to low-income youth of all backgrounds. Their mission is to empower a diverse population of young people to achieve a successful transition to adulthood, through multi-cultural, comprehensive, and innovative programs that address young people's social, academic, and career needs.

Rosa is 23 years old, and is originally from Guatemala. She graduated from Trinity Washington University with a B.A. in Health Services and a minor in Community Education. She is now pursuing her Masters in School Counseling at George Washington University.

Selena is 24 years old and a junior at the University of the District of Columbia, and is originally from

Guerrero, Mexico. She likes to paint, read, and write, as well as spend time with her little sister. She has published two books with Shout Mouse Press, including *Voces Sin Fronteras*, and is in the process of writing her third.

Shout Mouse Press is a nonprofit organization dedicated to centering and amplifying the voices of marginalized youth (ages 12+) via writing workshops, publication, and public speaking opportunities. The young people they coach are underrepresented—as characters and as creators—within young people's literature, and their perspectives underheard. Their work provides a platform for them to tell their own stories and, as published authors, to act as leaders and agents of change. Learn more at shoutmousepress.org



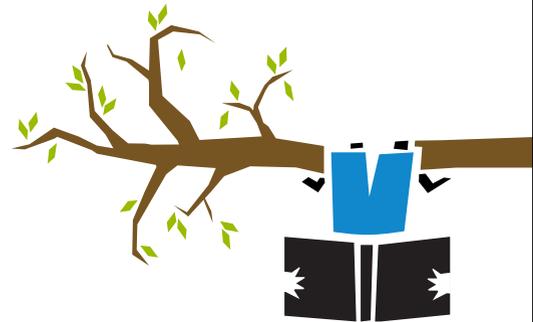


ABOUT THE STUDENT AUTHORS

We are the two 8th grade classes of Harbor Heights Middle School, 2021-2022. We represent many different Spanish-speaking countries: the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Colombia, and we are proud to be from immigrant families. This book contains our collective experiences with life in other countries as well as the United States.

ABOUT BEHIND THE BOOK

Behind the Book brings authors and their books into classrooms to build literacy skills and foster a community of lifelong readers and writers. Working with classes from Pre-K through 12th grade, our series of workshops is designed to bring books to life and inspire students to reach their full potential. Behind the Book is embedded in the class curriculum, nurtures critical thinking, creativity, and self-confidence in New York City public school students. All programs meet the Next Generation Learning Standards.



NEXT GEN LEARNING STANDARDS ADDRESSED

8R1: Cite textual evidence to strongly support an analysis of what the text says explicitly/implicitly and make logical inferences.

8R2: Determine one or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; summarize a text.

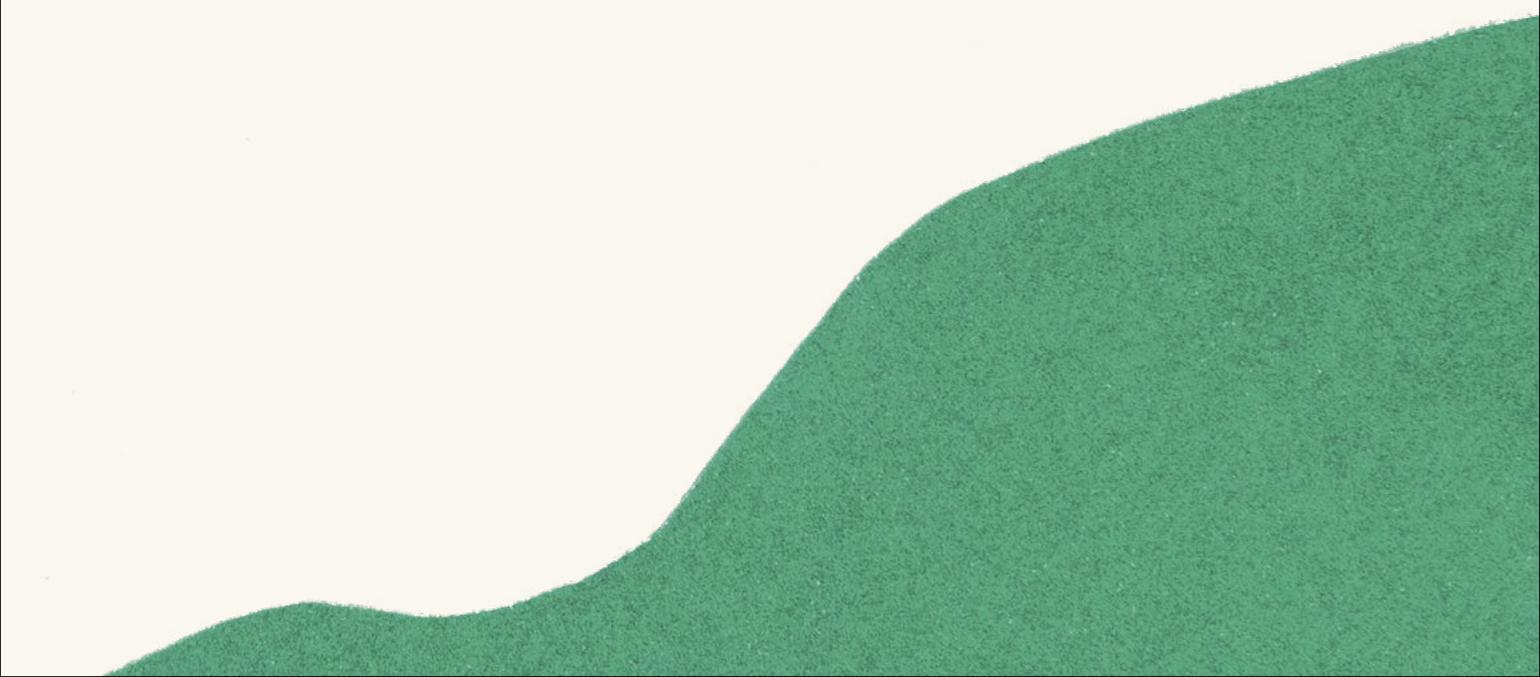
8R3: In literary texts, analyze how particular lines of dialogue or events propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

In informational texts, analyze how individuals, events, and ideas are introduced, relate to each other, and are developed.

8W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

8W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, relevant descriptive details and clear sequencing.

8W4: Create a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme or personal experience; explain divergences from the original text when appropriate.



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creativity, and self-confidence in our students.

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