



DRUM DREAM GIRL

AUTHOR: MARGARITA ENGLE

ILLUSTRATOR: RAFAEL LOPEZ

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Drum Dream Girl](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

Girls cannot be drummers. Long ago on an island filled with music, no one questioned that rule —until the drum dream girl. In her city of drumbeats, she dreamed of pounding tall congas and tapping small bongós. She had to keep quiet. She had to practice in secret. But when at last her dream-bright music was heard, everyone sang and danced and decided that *both* girls and boys should be free to drum and dream. Inspired by the childhood of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga, a Chinese-African-Cuban girl who broke Cuba's traditional taboo against female drummers, *Drum Dream Girl* tells an inspiring true story for dreamers everywhere. ([Goodreads.com](#))

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Margarita Engle (born in Pasadena, California in 1951) is a Cuban American poet and author. Most of Engle's stories are written in verse and are a reflection of her Cuban heritage and her deep appreciation and knowledge of nature. She became the first Latino awarded a Newbery Honor in 2009 for *The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom*.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Rafael López is an award-winning, internationally recognized children's book illustrator and artist who won the 2016 Pura Belpré medal from the American Library Association for his illustrations for *Drum Dream Girl*. Born to architect parents and raised in Mexico City, Rafael López was immersed in the rich visual heritage, music and surrealism of his native culture. ([rafaellopez.com](#))

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- I'm wondering what this book might be about.
- Thumbs up if you think this book is fiction. Thumbs down for nonfiction. Sideways if you're not sure. What makes you think that?
- This story takes place in Cuba. Let's find it on our globe (or map).

DRUM DREAM GIRL

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Gender equality
- Follow your dreams

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

- This award, the Pura Belpré, is given for books that celebrate Latino/Latina culture. Let's read, and find out why.

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content:

- (p. 5) Why do you think only boys can play drums?
- (p. 9) What is imaginary music? Why do you think she makes imaginary music?
- (p. 17) Look at this illustration? I wonder why the illustrator drew the picture in this way?
- (p. 21) The girl dared to play drums. Do you think she was brave? Why or why not? What is a timbale?
- (p. 25) How do you think she felt when her sisters asked her to join the band? What about the picture makes you think that?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read:

- After reading the book, do you think it's fiction, nonfiction or not sure? Why?
- Then read the paragraph at the end of the book? Now what do you think?
- How did Drum Girl change music?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- (p. 23) I am going to clap a rhythm. Listen carefully because you're going to repeat it after me.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- (p. 27) Turn to a neighbor and talk about why you think the father refused to let the girl play the drums. If you were the girl, what would you do? Share back with the groups

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- Do a picture walk and have students retell the story.
- Why do you think the author wrote this book? What did she want us to learn? Why is this an important message?
- How did the girl keep her dream alive? How was practice important in helping her achieve her dream?
- Have you had a dream? Something you wanted to do? Did you do it? Why or why not? If not, how could you keep your dream alive?
- Do you think there are things that girls should not be allowed to do? What? Why or why not?
- Do you think the rule was fair? If a rule isn't fair, how can you change it?
- Why did the father change his mind about letting his daughter play the drums?
- What are some words you would use to describe the girl? What makes you choose these words?

Suggested Optional Activity:

- Download and print out pictures of different types of drums from the internet. Spread out for students to look at. Find ways they are all similar. Then look for ways they differ.
- Look back at the illustrations in the book to see if you can identify some of the types of drums.

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

- Record in writing what is event you think is the most important in the story. Write a sentence or two about why you chose this event. Draw a picture to illustrate your choice.

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Have children look around the room to discover items they could use to make a rhythm. Have them write a list or draw pictures of the items. If there is an opportunity, gather some of these items and have children make a rhythm to a song they sing or play on a CD or computer. Examples: pencils, paint brushes, hands on table, blocks, etc.

COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RL. 1.1, 1.2,1.3,1.7