



## **My Diary from Here to There/Mi diario de aquí hasta allá**

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A young girl describes her feelings when her father decides to leave their home in Mexico to look for work in the United States. Told in English and Spanish.

## **My Diary from Here to There/Mi diario de aquí hasta allá Details**

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Author : Amada Irma Pérez , Maya Christina González (illustrator)

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## **From Reader Review My Diary from Here to There/Mi diario de aquí hasta allá for online ebook**

### **Irma Dogic says**

This influential tale tells the story of a young girl by the name of Amanda who is about to take a major journey north to America. The story starts with Amanda overhearing her parents speak about moving their lives from Mexico to Los Angeles, where they hope to find new opportunity. Amanda is frightened, so she begins to records her thoughts, dreams, and fears in her diary. Among many things, she worries that she won't learn to speak English, and if she will ever return back to her beloved country of Mexico. I enjoy how the author bases this story off of her own life and up bringing into diary entries. Amanda's father lost his job in Mexico and decided it was best to take their chances and cross the border into the United States. Her family did what most do, and took a leap of faith. This book captures the unknown of a young girl as she transitions from a familiar life to an unfamiliar one. I also appreciate this book, because it gives incredible insight into the circumstances that lead families to leave their native country.

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### **R.J. says**

A powerful reminder to all who have made the journey from here to there that in our hearts we are never far from what we left behind.

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### **Kathryn says**

I really enjoyed My Diary from Here to There/Mi diario de aquí hasta allá. Though I can't claim a deep personal connection with Amada, I found her story of moving with her family from Mexico to the USA quite touching and interesting.

The story would probably have the most resonance for immigrants (especially those coming from Mexico to the USA, like Amada) but I imagine any immigrant would probably feel some connection. I also wonder if children who move from one area to another (state-to-state, region-to-region), leaving familiar people and places behind, would relate to some of what Amada experienced, albeit not on so huge a scale as leaving ones entire country behind. I remember when my childhood friend (from California) moved to Minnesota, it was quite the culture shock for her, everything from the snowy winters to the little variances in speech ("pop" instead of "soda"--especially when you're a kid, it's the little things that can make one feel like an outsider). I don't say this to in any way diminish the magnitude of true immigrants, but simply to say that perhaps the story would resonate with others who have undergone a move smaller though no less powerful in their own experience.

Though the illustrations aren't my personal favorite style, I appreciated them and felt they helped convey the story and emotions.

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### **Brenda Aguilar-Hernandez says**

"My Diary from Here to There" is a realistic-fiction book that is fascinating. It tells the story of a young girl named Amada who is moving to the U.S. with her family. Her siblings are excited for this new beginning, but she is not because she will miss Mexico and her best-friend. As she travels, she writes in her diary about her journey. In the end, Amada realizes she is a strong person in any place if she's got her family beside her. A big plus in this story is that the reader can also read the text in Spanish. The connection between this book and my chosen topic is immigration. Amada, who is a second generation immigrant, faces the immigration experience as she immigrates to the United States. The story is entertaining for children because it lets the reader think and question what Amada's next diary entry will be about from her journey experiences. This particular book is easier to read for children in the higher grades such as third grade. This story presents a plot that has Amada face the struggle of fear to new experiences in a new country and leaving Mexico. However, she overcomes her fears and realizes that even if she's far from Mexico, she has her diary entries to remind her of Mexico. The pictures are very engaging and clear to understand because they relate to the text very well. The pictures also give an extra sense of context. As far as considering culture in this book, the author appears as a member of the immigration community as this book is based on her own journey. Amada and other characters successfully use Spanish to represent their culture. As many children in classrooms often go through the same experience, it is a great book for children to connect and feel identified with!

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### **Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says**

An autobiographical story about a young girl whose family has to move to California so that her father can find work. I liked the descriptions of her family, especially her five brothers. The story is told in the form of diary entries, in which she reveals her feelings of apprehension about leaving Mexico. The text is in Spanish and English, and the book is a Pura Belpre Award honor book.

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### **Manybooks says**

This richly and evocatively illustrated dual-language picture book (with Maya Christina Gonzalez' brilliantly colourful, lushly descriptive accompanying illustrations truly being redolent of the colours, the very feeling of Mexico, of Latino/Latina culture in general) tells the story of author Amanda Irma Pérez' own journey from Mexico to the United States in the 1950s (except that when she and her family immigrated to the United States, Amanda was five years old, while in My Diary from Here to There, she is described as being rather older, more like nine or ten years of age).

The presented journal pages of My Diary from Here to There poignantly and truthfully show Amanda's fears, her initial reluctance towards the mere concept of immigrating (how her younger brothers are simply excited about moving to America and all of its "temptations" while she realises that immigrating means leaving family, friends, the familiar, for a different culture, a different language). And yes, I often feel as though I am reading my own diary, my own personal story here, because when we immigrated to Canada from Germany in 1976, it definitely did seem like my siblings and even my parents were nothing but excited and happy to be moving to Canada, while I was sad about leaving my friends, family members and worried about fitting in, about learning a new language, experiencing a hitherto unfamiliar culture.

Amanda's story, her and her family's journey of immigration is thus truly and basically both timeless and

universal (as the same questions, the same worries that Amanda confides to her diary pages are indeed in the hearts of many present-day immigrants, migrants and refugees and also were in the hearts of immigrants, migrants and refugees in both the recent and distant past). Recommended for anyone, however, My Diary From Here to There is particularly recommended for children facing the prospect of immigration, of moving (especially if they have questions, if they are worried about immigrating, about culture shock, having to learn a new language etc.).

And yes, I have also very much enjoyed and appreciated the fact that My Diary from Here to There is dual-language. I was pleasantly surprised at how much of the Spanish text I have been able to read and understand (and I was quite amazed how much of my university Spanish I actually remembered, but also how much of the Spanish I was able to deduce by simply comparing the English and the Spanish texts). This makes My Diary from Here to There not only a valuable and useful book for Spanish language instruction at the school level, I also believe it could be a great teaching tool for beginning Spanish courses at the college and university level. For when I took beginning Spanish courses at university, most of the assigned reading texts were dry, literary and often much too complicated for learners/readers with but a basic grasp of grammar and limited vocabulary. Making use of dual-language children's books would, in my opinion, make reading comprehension both easier and less frustrating, especially for language novices or those afraid or in awe of learning foreign languages (and anything that might make foreign language instruction more interesting and less frustrating for learners is in my opinion a very, very good thing indeed).

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### **Elizabeth Hendy says**

Summary: provides a realistic portrayal of the challenges faced by many Hispanics who migrate to the US. It is the story of two worlds, one rich with memories and the other filled with hope for a better tomorrow. The story is narrated through the eyes of a young protagonist Amanda who leaves her beloved country Mexico to begin a new life in the United States with her family.

Evaluation: I gave this book 5 stars. The story is told not only through a series of words, but also through its illustrations. Each page is filled with bright colors and expressive characters. The text is written in both Spanish and English to provide access to a broader audience of children and to share the beauty of the Spanish language.

Teaching Idea: I would use this in a Social Studies setting. Students would be split up into groups for a project after reading this book. Children would pick a time period that interests them and would find data and read about immigration during that time period in the United States. Students must know where the immigrants came from, why they decided to come to the United States, and how life changed for both America and for those people after moving.

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### **Mary Ann says**

Amada Irma Perez bases this wonderful picture book on her own life, following her family's journey from Mexico to the United States. This story is told in diary entries, and so we see the family's journey completely from the child's perspective. As the story begins, the young girl worries about her family's move from Juarez, Mexico, to Los Angeles. Will they ever return to Juarez? Will she be able to learn English? Will her father have problems finding work? She's full of worries, but her brothers can only think of the great big stores that

sell all kinds of toys. "Am I the only one who is scared of leaving our home, our beautiful country, and all the people we might never see again?" the young girl worries.

The story follows the family's anxious wait for their green cards, the long bus ride to San Ysidro, California and then to Los Angeles. Throughout the journey, the young girl's father reassures her that she is stronger than she realizes, her family supports her, and her diary allows her to express her thoughts and feelings. It makes a wonderful story to read aloud with younger children and older children alike.

Maya Christina Gonzales' vivid paintings sing with the warmth of family and the images of Mexico. As one reviewer, Gina MarySol Ruiz, wrote, Gonzalez "has this way of capturing the very essence of the beauty that is the Mexican women - grace, strength, determination, warmth and most of all the love for familia that shines out of their eyes. Each illustration has a mural like quality and with each look, you find more and more to amaze at."

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### **Andrew Jongeneel says**

My Diary From Here to There, written by Amada Irma Perez, with the genre of multicultural/realistic fiction, and illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez, is about a family that is forced to move to the United States because Amanda's father lost his job in Mexico. Even though this is a fictional story, Amanda shares her experiences of moving from her home in Mexico to the US. It is a story comprised of her diary entries and is full of emotion and sincerity. Her brothers, on the other hand, are very happy to leave, but she is not because she is leaving behind Michi, her best friend. They promise to always be best friends and never forget each other. Amanda and her family drive to their aunts home where they cross the border by "el coyote." First, her dad leaves and then her family taken to California. Amanda realizes that she is so much stronger than she thinks she is, and assimilates to living in California! This story relates to children of all ages who speak both English and Spanish because it is written in both languages. Children who are learning English/Spanish can be easily guided through the story with the help of their native language. The illustrations are colorful and full of detail; they help children really connect and understand with the story and the characters are expressive in the pictures, thus showing the children the excitement or worries the characters are portraying.

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### **L- Lisa says**

Amada Perez recounts through entries in her diary her family's relocation from Mexico to the United States when her father lost his job. The story weaves her feelings of fear, hope and dreams. Her words paint the picture that May Gonzales' amazing illustrations support. The colors in these illustrations are amazing, as they jump from the pages to weave through Amada's diary.

The author's message is that believing in oneself and the love of family is powerful, allowing you to do anything, no matter where!

This book is in Spanish and English. Each page places the text in various positions. This picture book is excellent for grades 5-9.

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### **Lauren Thompson says**

My Diary from Here to There is about a young girl from Mexico leaving her home, traveling to her relatives house, and finally crossing the border. She tells her story by writing in her diary. She expresses how she does not want to leave home, or leave her friends. She comes from a big family which made it difficult when staying with relatives because her brothers were always getting into something or doing something they were not supposed to be doing. The reason they stayed with relatives was so her father could go to America find a job and send back green cards for the whole family to be able to cross the border. Amada the young girl recounts how hectic it was crossing the border but eventually feels relief when she is able to be with her father and family in their new home.

The genre of this story is a mystery or suspenseful picture book. I think this book best fits with young readers in grades three through five. This story always keeps a child's interest because it provides so many thought provoking questions. The readers wonder if she will see her father again? Will she make it to America? What will her new home be like? The story shows many problems and conflicts but overall shows how they are fixed and how everything will be ok. The words are very simple and straightforward creating easier comprehension. The story is very convincing and gives an accurate depiction of a child's perspective on what it is like leaving home and moving to a new place. The illustrations correspond perfectly to what the text is portraying. They are beautiful and well thought out. They tell the story perfectly and a non reader would be able to understand the story just by looking at the pictures. Overall this story is well thought out, written, and illustrated. It truly portrays the authors personal experience.

I personally think all children would be able to relate to this story but it truly does show the troubles faced when people from Mexico immigrate to the United States. It shows how there are not many jobs and people leave their families to do their best to find a new job to be able to support their loved ones back home. It also accurately portrays how difficult and long the process can be.

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### **Iqrah says**

This story does a wonderful job in giving some insight into what some of the circumstances are that lead families to leaving their native countries. Amada Irma Perez, bases this story off of her own personal experience as an immigrant to the states from Mexico, making this story an accurate portrayal of immigration experiences. In this story, Amada's family is moving for greater opportunities and lack of jobs in Mexico. Amada doesn't take this news too well. Her journey is recorded in diary-format. Despite being an American citizen, her father starts off doing labor work at a farm to save money for his family to move to the states and to get their green cards. For a while, Amada and her family are separated from their father. This book highlights the struggle that many immigrant families endure when they first arrive to America. The descriptive language and colorful tones of the illustrations are particularly engaging.

Papa's letter to his family: "I have been picking grapes and strawberries in the fields of Delano...saving money and always thinking of you. It is hard, tiring work...So far, getting your green cards has been difficult, for we are not the only family trying to start a new life here. Please be patient. It won't be long before we are all together again."

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## **Maria Salinas says**

Main Characters: Amanda (author)

Setting: Mexico, California

POV: Amanda

Grade Level: 3-5

Reading Level: 3.5

Genre: multicultural/ realistic fiction

This book is about a family that is forced to move to the United States because the young girl (Amanda) father has lost job in Mexico. Amanda's brothers are very happy to leave but she is not because she is leaving so much behind including her best friend Michi. Her best friend and Michi promise to always be friends and never forget each other. The family drives to their aunts home where they will wait to be crossed by "el coyote." Their father leaves first and then has his family taken to California. At the end Amanda realizes that she is much stronger than what she thinks and assimilates to living in California.

I would use this book with any grades from 1st to 5th because the themes that are evident in this book are relevant to all children of all ages. I also like the fact that the book has the story in Spanish below the English version. Students who are learning English can easily be guided through the Spanish version.

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## **Sabrina says**

Summary: After her father loses his job in Mexico, he takes a job in the United States. In an effort to cope with the sudden change, Amanda records her thoughts in a diary. The diary records the journey from Mexico to the United States from the point of view of a little girl. She gives insights of her feelings of sadness, fear, hope and happiness along the way. It captures the transition from a familiar place to one that is unfamiliar.

Evaluation: This book does a great job of providing insight as to why a family might have to leave their country and the emotions that a child might go through in the process. It allows readers to put themselves in the girl's shoes and see things from her perspective. I love that this book is in both Spanish and English. It makes the book more accessible to second language learners.

Teaching Idea: I would have the students create their own diary entry. They would have to record how they would feel if they had to journey to another country. The students would be asked to include how they would feel, what would they bring and what country would they go to and why.

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## **Lizeth Matzir says**

The author of *My Diary from Here to There*, Armada Irma Perez, writes the book to depict her personal story of her journey from Mexico to the United States. Armada writes the story in diary form, both in English and Spanish, that depicts her thoughts and feelings as a young girl throughout the migration process. In the beginning, she was reluctant when her parents told her about moving from Juarez. She has various worries that she has such as her father leaving to find work, leaving friendships behind, and the difficulties she may

encounter in a new country like learning a new language. Her father leaves to the United States first in order to begin the green card process in order for Armada to successfully move to the California, United States. In the end, Armada realizes that as long as her family is together, everything will be fine regardless of where they're living. Armada's story mirrors many of the stories of other immigrants that have to leave their homes and come across the same worries. The illustrations by Maya Christina Gonzales do a great job at accompanying the story as a way to express the emotions that are happening in the story. Great children's book for them to gain empathy on the hardships that many immigrants have to endure. It will also allow for young immigrant children to feel comfortable about the issue of immigration and where they come from.

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