



Pat Mora

Book Fiesta!
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Book Fiesta! author Q&A

1. What is Children's Day/Book Day, and why do you feel it is important?

El día de los niños/El día de los libros, Children's Day/Book Day, Día, is a family literacy initiative whose main goal is to link all children to books, languages, and cultures. We say that every day is Día, and culminating celebrations of this year-long commitment are held across the country on or near April 30. **2. Why do you feel it is important to introduce children to different cultures through books?** We live in such an incredibly diverse country. About one in every five children in the U.S. speaks a language other than English at home. Think of all that wonderful cultural and linguistic wealth! As we heard repeatedly during our recent election, the face of our country is changing. It's very important for children to see themselves and their culture in children's books, since that validates what they are, that they are part of our ideally united country. It's also important for all of us, children and adults, to learn about other cultures not only through social studies or the social sciences but also through reading for pleasure. **3.**

Book Fiesta! is written in both English and Spanish. Why should parents and children read bilingual books? We often read for pleasure, information, ideas, and inspiration. Picture books can meet all of those goals. Bilingual books assist monolingual speakers of either English or Spanish to enjoy a book in their own language and to practice learning a new language. Of course, bilingual readers enjoy such books in both languages, and if a parent or teacher speaks only one language and the child speaks both, the parent/teacher and child can take turns reading the book. **4. The illustrations in your new book, *Book Fiesta!*, are beautiful. Were you familiar with Rafael López's work before you worked together, and how do you think he represented your words through his pictures?** Rafael López is a well-known and respected Latino illustrator. This is actually our second book together. I love Rafael's use of color and his amazing imagination. I am honored that he illustrated this book. **5. What is your favorite thing about being a children's book author?** This is a difficult question, since there are so many things I like about writing for children. I coined the word bookjoy because I believe it conveys the private pleasure that true readers know. I love to read. It's a thrill to think that my books let children experience bookjoy. (I like the smiles and hugs from kids too!)