

YANA WANA'S LEGEND OF THE BLUEBONNET

An indigenous one-act play for young audiences

BY Maria F. Rocha & Roxanne Schroeder-Arce

with music by Héctor Martínez-Morales | Directed by Rudy Ramirez

Produced by Indigenous Cultures Institute & Teatro Vivo | First commissioned and produced by Dallas Children's Theater



Dear Teachers,

We are delighted to present this resource guide to you, developed by Academia Cuauhtli, a language and culture revitalization project, located at the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center in Austin, Texas.

Within these next few pages, you will find pre-show and post-show activities that we invite you to incorporate into your lesson plans. All of these activities are TEKS-aligned with young people in mind. We look forward to meeting you and your classes at the presentations of *Yana Wana's Legend of the Bluebonnet*. For more information, please visit our website at www.IndigenousCultures.org.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Thirteen-year-old María is having trouble in school, so her mom sends her to stay with her Coahuiltecan grandmother in distant Laredo for discipline and perspective. There, María is told an ancient story of young Yana Wana who followed a revered deer to find water and save her people. Yana Wana's story exposes an amazing and unknown ancestral connection to the bluebonnet that gives María a renewed sense of self and family pride. You may have read one version in school; now we invite you to come see the legend through the eyes of Yana Wana. A beautiful, original play that illustrates the power of heritage and the value of your people's story – especially one as ancient as the petroglyphs of Texas.



Photo provided by Dallas Children's Theater

This play was written by Coahuiltecan Maria Rocha and her daughter, Roxanne Schroeder-Arce, in response to the need for authentic representation of, and stories about the heritage of Texas students historically misidentified as Hispanic/Latino. "The majority of Hispanic students in our public schools are indigenous; but their history has been erased and they are unaware of the stories of their ancient ancestors," says Rocha. 'Yana Wana' is the story of how their ancient Coahuiltecan ancestors first saw the bluebonnets of Texas, a land where their families have lived for hundreds, indeed thousands of years." The more than 200 bands of Coahuiltecan who populated Texas and northern Mexico for more than 13,000 years, were the first people that the Spaniards encountered when they invaded this area. More commonly known as Mission Indians, these people gradually blended into the Spaniard and then Mexican identity for survival, and eventually became the majority of Texas citizens now known as Hispanics and Latinos.



PRE-SHOW

BLUEBONNET PROJECT

Final Product: Students will complete an art and writing project. Students will use their fingerprints to paint bluebonnets. Students will write a free verse poem or they can write a paragraph of what makes them unique.

Teacher shares with students that they will be going to see a play called, “Yana Wana’s Legend of the Bluebonnet”.

Discussion with students:

What do you know about bluebonnets? Where have you seen bluebonnets? Where do they grow? Where have you seen them near where you live? Are you familiar with any legends regarding the Bluebonnets?

Discussion with students:

Teacher will tell students that fingerprints are unique. Teacher can give more facts about fingerprints to the students.

After talking about how unique our fingerprints are teacher asks the students to talk about what else makes them unique.

Writing and art project:

Students will work on a writing project where they will write about what makes them unique. The students can write a free verse poem or they can just write a paragraph. After they complete the writing piece about themselves they will copy the writing piece on white paper and they will use their fingerprints to paint bluebonnets.

POST-SHOW

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

Final Product: Poster

Discussion with students:

What is our responsibility in taking care of our environment? What is our responsibility in taking care of our water? Why is it important? What can we do?

Discussion with students:

Discuss how Maria and Abuela talk about the lack of water in the “colonias”. Where did they get their water? Abuela says, “the water is contaminated.” Why do you think it is contaminated? What contaminates water? What do they do to get clean drinking water?

Discussion with students:

Read information to the students about the “water protectors / protesters” at Standing Rock, North & South Dakota. Discuss why that was important, why it is still

important, and discuss why it’s important to all of us. Discuss ways that we can conserve and protect water.

Poster project:

Create a poster of awareness or a poster for a demonstration / protest. Students should ask themselves, “what is my role and what can I do” and “what do I want to say and be heard”.



POST-SHOW

ABOUT MY ANCESTORS PROJECT

Final product: A letter to my Ancestors

Students will talk to their families to investigate and inquire about their family history, specifically their ancestors. Using the information that they learned about their ancestors, students will write a letter to them. In that letter, students can ask questions that they would like to have answered. They can ask about their lives, about traditions and celebrations, and anything else they want to inquire about or share.

Discussion with students:

Discuss why Maria thinks “all Native Americans are dead”. What was Abuela’s reaction to what Maria’s teacher said that “Native Americans are all dead”? How many of you know the history of your family? What do you know about your family? Why is it important to know the history of your family? What are some things you would like to know about your ancestors?



POST-SHOW

MY COMMUNITY TREE PROJECT

Final product: Community tree

Students will use their hand prints to form the branches and leaves of a tree which represent all the people in the community that surround them and their family. The hand prints can be made with different colored paints or traced on different colored paper. Students will write on the hand prints those in the community who are important to them and their family.

Discussion with students:

Abuela tells Maria that community is very important. What does Abuela tell Maria that indicates the importance of being part of a community? Discuss why it is important to be part of a community. Discuss who is part of your community.

Community Tree:

Students could be given a take-home assignment to collect information with the help of their families and create the tree in the classroom (see example on page 4). The purpose is for students to think about their own family and surrounding community.

POST SHOW

POETRY PROJECT

Final product: Poem

Discussion with students:

Read and discuss Ofelia Zepeda's poem – CARRYING OUR WORDS. <https://poets.org/poem/carrying-our-words>

CARRYING OUR WORDS

We travel carrying our words.
We arrive at the ocean.
With our words we are able to speak
of the sounds of thunderous waves.
We speak of how majestic it is,
of the ocean power that gifts us songs.
We sing of our respect
and call it our relative.

What is this poem about? What does this poem make you think about? How do you use your words? Was Maria able to use her words to tell her mother why she was having trouble with school? Why or why not? What helped Maria to take action to help her community? In the Yana Wana story what words did Abuela use to describe the sacred springs?

Writing the poem:

Invite the students to talk about the story of Yana Wana and how she got water for her community. How did Maria get water for her community? Ask the students to use their words to describe water by writing a poem. The following stems can be used.

Our words say water is _____ and _____
Water speaks with sounds like _____ and _____
Water helps us to _____
Our words say that water is _____
Water is sacred because _____
I am grateful for the water because _____

POST-SHOW

COAHUILTECAN SONG PROJECT

Final product: Students will learn and sing a song in the Coahuiltecan language

The song below was sung by Consuelo and is a lullaby.

Tzamōxu, (Xagú pā ānua) (Sleep, together with the moon)

Tzamōxu, xagú pā ānua, tzamōxu
(Sleep, together with the moon, sleep)
Tzamōxu, xagú pā ānua, tzamōxu

apaxlē tukuaxām (When it sings [or cries])
nakpakuānē napasā (I shall always be with you there)

Tzamōxu, xagú pā ānua, tzamōxu
Tzamōxu, xagú pā ānua, tzamōxu

Martínez Morales

Tzamōxu, (Xagú pā ānua)

Lullaby ♩ = ca 60

small frame drum (optional)

Tza - mó - xu xa - gú pā ā - nua Tza - mó - xu a - pax - lē tu -

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kua - xām nak - pa - kuā - ne na - pa - sā Tza - mó - xu xa - gú pā ā - nua Tza - mó - xu



COMMUNITY TREE



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TEKS RESOURCES

3rd grade Social Studies TEKS

1st 20 days ** Builds on 2nd grade TEKS for "How has our Identity changed over time?"

Talking about the Past; (2) History around you; (3) Finding out about your family history

2nd grade TEKS 2.2 A,B,C; 2.3 A,B; 2.17 A,B;

What is community?

Community structures & functions

TEKS 3.2 C; 3.4D, E; 3.9 A-D

(2) History. The student understands common characteristics of communities, past and present. The student is expected to:
(C) compare ways in which various other communities meet their needs.

(4) Geography. The student understands how humans adapt to variations in the physical environment. The student is expected to:

(D) describe the effects of human processes such as building new homes, conservation, and pollution in shaping the landscape; and

(E) identify and compare the human characteristics of various regions.

(9) Government. The student understands the basic structure and functions of various levels of government. The student is expected to:

(A) describe the basic structure of government in the local community, state, and nation;

(B) identify local, state, and national government officials and explain how they are chosen;

(C) identify services commonly provided by local, state, and national governments; and

(D) explain how local, state, and national government services are financed.

Map Skills

Adaptations to the Human and Physical Environment

TEKS 3.2 C; 3.4 A-B

(2) History. The student understands common characteristics of communities, past and present. The student is expected to:
(C) compare ways in which various other communities meet their needs.

(4) Geography. The student understands how humans adapt to variations in the physical environment. The student is expected to:

(A) describe and explain variations in the physical environment, including climate, landforms, natural resources, and natural hazards;

(B) identify and compare how people in different communities adapt to or modify the physical environment in which they live such as deserts, mountains, wetlands, and plains;

4th grade Social Studies TEKS

Native Americans of Texas: First People in Texas

Texas Indians

TEKS 4.1 A-D; 4.19A

(1) History. The student understands the origins, similarities, and differences of American Indian groups in Texas and North America before European exploration. The student is expected to:

(A) explain the possible origins of American Indian groups in Texas and North America;

(B) identify American Indian groups in Texas and North America before European exploration such as the Lipan Apache, Karankawa, Caddo, and Jumano;

(C) describe the regions in which American Indians lived and identify American Indian groups remaining in Texas such as the Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, Alabama-Coushatta, and Kickapoo; and

(D) compare the ways of life of American Indian groups in Texas and North America before European exploration.

(19) Culture. The student understands the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to Texas. The student is expected to:

(A) identify the similarities and differences among various racial, ethnic, and religious groups in Texas;

5th Grade Social Studies TEKS

Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to:

5.8(B): Explain the geographic factors that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population in the United States, past and present

3rd grade : Language Arts TEKS

(7) Response skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts. The student responds to an increasingly challenging variety of sources that are read, heard, or viewed. The student is expected to:

- (A) describe personal connections to a variety of sources, including self-selected texts;
- (B) write a response to a literary or informational text that demonstrates an understanding of a text;
- (C) use text evidence to support an appropriate response;
- (D) retell and paraphrase texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order;
- (E) interact with sources in meaningful ways such as notetaking, annotating, freewriting, or illustrating;
- (F) respond using newly acquired vocabulary as appropriate; and
- (G) discuss specific ideas in the text that are important to the meaning.

(12) Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful. The student is expected to:

- (A) compose literary texts, including personal narratives and poetry, using genre characteristics and craft ;
- (B) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft;
- (C) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft; and
- (D) compose correspondence such as thank you notes or letters.

4th grade: Language Arts TEKS

(7) Response skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts. The student responds to an increasingly challenging variety of sources that are read, heard, or viewed. The student is expected to:

- (A) describe personal connections to a variety of sources, including self-selected texts;
- (B) write responses that demonstrate understanding of texts, including comparing and contrasting ideas across a variety of sources;
- (C) use text evidence to support an appropriate response;
- (D) retell, paraphrase, or summarize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order;
- (E) interact with sources in meaningful ways such as notetaking, annotating, freewriting, or illustrating;
- (F) respond using newly acquired vocabulary as appropriate; and
- (G) discuss specific ideas in the text that are important to the meaning

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- (B) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft;
- (C) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft; and
- (D) compose correspondence that requests information.

5th grade: Language Arts

(7) Response skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts. The student responds to an increasingly challenging variety of sources that are read, heard, or viewed. The student is expected to:

- (A) describe personal connections to a variety of sources, including self-selected texts;
- (B) write responses that demonstrate understanding of texts, including comparing and contrasting ideas across a variety of sources;
- (C) use text evidence to support an appropriate response;
- (D) retell, paraphrase, or summarize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order;
- (E) interact with sources in meaningful ways such as notetaking, annotating, freewriting, or illustrating;
- (F) respond using newly acquired vocabulary as appropriate; and
- (G) discuss specific ideas in the text that are important to the meaning.

(12) Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful. The student is expected to:

- (A) compose literary texts such as personal narratives, fiction, and poetry using genre characteristics and craft ;
- (B) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft;
- (C) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft; and
- (D) compose correspondence that requests information.