

# The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Collection

## Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

### Spanish Is the Language of My Family by Michael Genhart

SEL Competencies:

1. **Self-Awareness:** Understanding one's own heritage and identity through language.
2. **Social Awareness:** Appreciating cultural diversity and the role language plays in family connections.
3. **Relationship Skills:** Building and maintaining supportive family relationships and appreciating shared cultural elements.
4. **Responsible Decision-Making:** Recognizing the importance of family traditions and choosing to embrace them.

#### Background

"Spanish is the Language of My Family" by Michael Genhart is a heartwarming story that explores a young child's journey to understanding and embracing their cultural heritage through language. The book highlights the significance of the Spanish language in the child's family, offering insights into cultural connections and the pride that comes with bilingualism.

#### Before You Read

1. What languages are spoken in your family?
2. Why do you think language is important for families?
3. How do you feel when you learn new words in a different language?
4. Can you think of a time when speaking a different language helped you or someone else?
5. What do you think "heritage" means?

#### While You Read

##### Guiding Questions

1. How does the main character feel about speaking Spanish at the beginning of the story? (*Self-Awareness*)
2. What are some activities the family does together that involve speaking Spanish? (*Relationship Skills*)
3. How does the main character's view of Spanish change throughout the story? (*Self-Awareness*)
4. What does the main character learn about their family's history? (*Social Awareness*)
5. How do the illustrations show the family's emotions when speaking

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	<p>Spanish? (<i>Relationship Skills</i>)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Why is it important for the main character to learn Spanish? (<i>Responsible Decision-Making</i>)</li><li>How does the main character's relationship with their family change by the end of the story? (<i>Relationship Skills</i>)</li><li>What role does Spanish play in the family's traditions? (<i>Social Awareness</i>)</li><li>How does the main character feel about speaking Spanish at the end of the story? (<i>Self-Awareness</i>)</li><li>What lessons can we learn from the main character's journey? (<i>Responsible Decision-Making</i>)</li></ol>
After Reading	<p><b>Grades K-2 Activity: Family Language Tree</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Students will create a "Family Language Tree" to explore and share their own family heritage through language.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Materials Needed:</b> Construction paper, markers, crayons, glue, and pictures of trees.</li><li><b>Instructions:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students draw a large tree on construction paper.</li><li>On each branch, write a word or phrase that is important to their family in any language spoken at home.</li><li>Decorate the tree with leaves and pictures related to their culture.</li><li>Share their tree with the class, explaining each word and its significance.</li></ul></li></ol> <p><b>Grades 3-5 Activity: Heritage Language Journal</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Students will create a journal entry exploring their cultural heritage through language.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Materials Needed:</b> Journals or notebooks, pencils, and art supplies.</li><li><b>Instructions:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students write a journal entry about a family tradition involving a language other than English.</li><li>Include a short story or dialogue using words or phrases from that language.</li><li>Illustrate the entry with drawings or symbols from their heritage.</li><li>Share their journal entry in small groups, discussing the importance of language in their family.</li></ul></li></ol> <p>These activities encourage students to connect with their own cultural backgrounds while fostering an appreciation for diversity and language.</p>

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