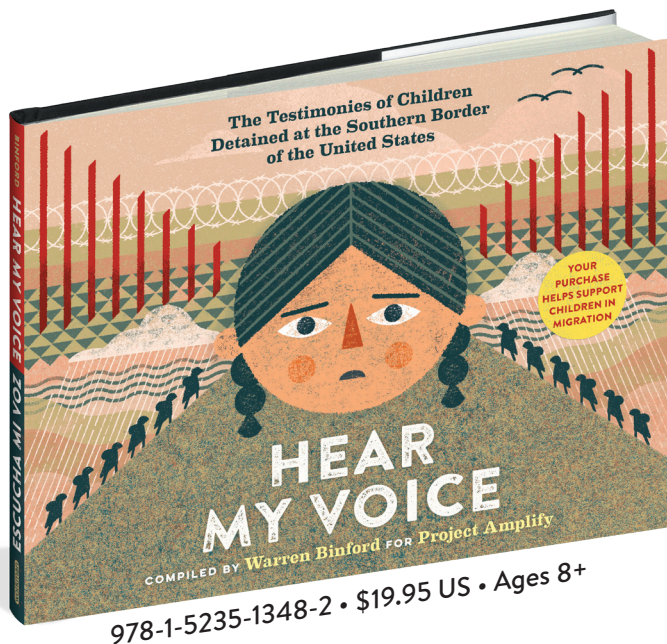


HEAR MY VOICE

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Created by Amy Jurskis



“In Spanish and in English, a devastating first-person account of children’s experiences in detention at the southern U.S. border . . . A powerful, critical document only made more heartbreaking in picture-book form.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

“Hard-hitting, movingly illustrated book . . . Each illustration—whether fantastical or realistic, bold or delicate, vibrant or muted—powerfully complements the accompanying testimony, underscoring the children’s humanity and the individuality of each perspective. This is a heartrending but vital work. Includes a reader’s guide.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

Art by: Cecilia Ruiz • Yuyi Morales • Juan Palomino • Paco Santoyo • Adriana Campos • Salomón Duarte Granados • Flavia Zorrilla Drago • Bayo Flores • Edith Valle • Gloria Félix • Mirelle Ortega • María Lumbreras • Addy Rivera Sonda • Beatriz Gutierrez Hernandez • Daniela Martín del Campo • Dominique Arce • Raúl Gonzalez III

WARREN BINFORD is an internationally recognized children’s rights scholar and advocate. She has collaborated with numerous domestic and international NGOs, including the International Red Cross, the International Criminal Court, the Japan Red Cross, the Croatia Red Cross, and the Dutch National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking and Sexual Violence against Children. She is one of only a handful of private citizens in the country selected to inspect facilities where children in migration are being detained by the US government, and she is the founder of Project Amplify.

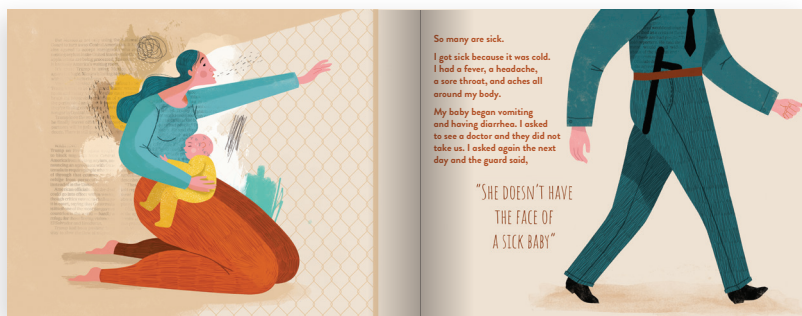
MICHAEL GARCIA BOCHENEK is senior counsel to the Children’s Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, focusing on juvenile justice for refugees and children in migration. He has researched and reported on criminal and juvenile justice systems and prison conditions, the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, the exploitation of migrant workers and other labor rights issues, the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, and rights violations in armed conflict, including the use of children as soldiers. From 2006 to 2015, he was director of policy and then director of law and policy for Amnesty International’s secretariat in London, where he oversaw strategic litigation, among other responsibilities. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Michigan State University and a law degree from Columbia University. In addition to English, he speaks Spanish and Portuguese. Michael lives in New York.

PROJECT AMPLIFY IS A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO ESTABLISH LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN DETAINED BY THE GOVERNMENT SO THAT THE BRUTALITY DISCOVERED ON THE BORDER NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN.

Art (c) María Lumbreras

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz is a work of nonfiction. It contains the first-person accounts of children in migration separated from their family members and detained by the United States government in a detention facility along the Southern border of the US, with stories and illustrations that encourage reflection, connection, and ultimately action. It is a book designed to deepen understanding and empathy. *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz* includes reflection questions for young readers and suggests ways for students to help create change. The text is also well-suited for older readers, and this guide is designed to help middle-grade students use the text as a starting point for further research and reflection.



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. The book begins with a list of redacted names, followed by the statement: “I declare under penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection.” Why is it important to establish that these are the actual testimonies of children detained at the border (a work of nonfiction instead of fiction)? How does this knowledge change the way you experience the book? Why do you think the book is presented in both English and Spanish? Why do you think they chose not to include full names of the children they interviewed?
2. Because this book contains the testimonies of children detained in government facilities, it is considered a primary research source. Why is it important to look at primary sources to understand history or contemporary events? How do you think the story would change if it was written as a secondary source? How do you think it would change if it was a work of fiction?
3. The first illustrations in the book portray the children realistically, but these are followed by illustrations that depict them as birds. Explain what the comparison of the children to birds might symbolize. Examine other illustrations that contain symbolic elements and explain what the symbols represent.
4. Why do you think the children were separated from other members of their family when they entered the United States? What did you find the most upsetting about the descriptions of the conditions in the detention center?
5. The statements the children hear—“You don’t belong here. / Go back to where you came from. / You are pigs. / You came here to ruin my country.”—reflect attitudes that some people have toward immigrants. Why do you think the topic of immigration causes so much anger and fear? How do you think reading a book like *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz* could change the way people think about immigration?
6. The narratives in the text are illustrated by many different Latinx artists: “Every illustration is intended to help bridge the humanity between the children whose collective stories are told and the child who is trying to understand what is happening to children forced to move across national borders.” For example, the illustration about being held in a crowded cage shows people of many different ages and nationalities behind bars, allowing readers to find someone who looks like them in the cage. Choose another illustration that you believe achieves this goal and explain what makes it particularly effective.
7. The book ends with an illustration that asks: “Did you vote?” How do you think voting can make a difference in issues like immigration? Can you think of other ways that a person can influence the decisions that their senators, representatives, and other elected officials make?
8. The foreword to *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz* says: “This book, a story for children by children, wasn’t easy to tell and isn’t easy to hear.” Why is it important to document things that are hard to hear? Why is it important to hear these stories?

9. Michael Garcia Bochenek of Human Rights Watch writes that *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz* is “not only a story of adults’ cruelty and neglect; at the end of the day, it’s also a story of children’s strength, courage, and hope.” Explain how the narratives in the book reflect strength, courage, and hope.
10. There are many words that can refer to people who move to a country other than the country they were born in, such as immigrant, refugee, asylum-seeker, migrant, and expatriate. What are the different meanings of each one of these words? Which word or words do you think best describes the children in this book? Explain your answer.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. In one of the book’s testimonies, a child describes crossing the Rio Grande on a raft. Research what is involved in crossing the Southern border of the United States. What dangers do people encounter? Why are they willing to risk their lives to enter the United States? Research the countries that the children are from (Honduras, Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Ecuador). Explain the social and economic conditions in these countries that contribute to families and children seeking asylum in the United States?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

2. In 1959, the United Nations adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. Look up the rights that this declaration promises children. Based on the testimonies in *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz*, craft a persuasive essay about whether or not these rights are being protected.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

3. At the end of the book, the section “Giving Children a Voice” explains how the author became involved in documenting the harrowing experiences of children in detention facilities. They reference the lawsuit *Reno v. Flores* because they work with a team of lawyers ensuring that children’s rights in detention are protected. Research the case *Reno v. Flores*. What was the outcome of this case? Based on *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz*’s testimonies, are detention facilities like the one in Clint, Texas, following the law?



Art (c) Juan Palomino

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

4. In the foreword to *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz*, Michael Garcia Bochenek alludes to “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus, the poem on the base of the Statue of Liberty. Analyze this poem’s imagery and theme and write an essay that compares and contrasts the poem with the testimonies in *Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz*.

The New Colossus

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

5. The section “Giving Children a Voice” explains the impact on public opinion of the decision made by lawyers on the Flores team and representatives of Human Rights Watch to go to the Associated Press with accounts of children being neglected and abused in detention. How were journalists able to influence the way people thought about immigration policy? Older students may wish to look up some of the stories (Example: <https://tinyurl.com/35tzdzfm>) published about the crisis, or listen to a podcast (Example: <https://tinyurl.com/h2x4qrsc>). Why are first-person and eye-witness testimonies important sources for journalists? Why is it important to have a free and independent press?

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

6. This book is a work of collaboration with Project Amplify (<https://www.project-amplify.org/>). What does it mean to amplify something? Why do we need to ensure that the voices of children are heard? Brainstorm ways that you and your classmates can help amplify the voices of children in detention centers. You can use the ideas in the book’s afterword or ideas on Project Amplify’s website for inspiration.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

