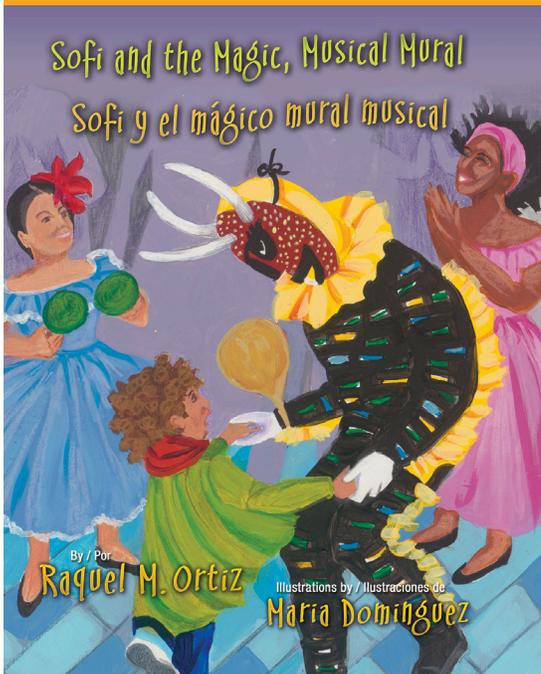


Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural / Sofi y el mágico mural musical

written by Raquel M. Ortiz / illustrations by Maria Dominguez



When Sofi walks through her *barrio* she always passes a huge mural with images from Puerto Rico: musicians, dancers, tropical flowers and—her least favorite—a *vejigante*, a character from carnival that wears a scary mask. One day, on her way home from the *bodega*, Sofi stops in front of the mural. Is one of the dancers inviting her to be his partner? “Okay, let’s dance,” Sofi giggles and suddenly she’s in Old San Juan. Surrounded by dancers and musicians she begins to dance and sing with her new friends. But, her pleasure turns to fear when the *vejigante* shows up and spins her around and around! What does he want from her? How can she get away?

This Caregiver Guide will help you and your child have fun learning about Puerto Rican culture while reading *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural*. This guide includes:

- questions and prompts
- additional activities
- vocabulary exercises
- Centro teaching resources
- think aloud strategies
- internet resources

BEFORE-DURING-AFTER

Increase your child’s reading comprehension by using a before-during-after approach. This helps your child comprehend more and learn quicker.

BEFORE

General Introduction

Help your child understand the story they’re about to read. Read the title of the book with your child. Then take a few minutes to explore each of the following concepts:

Magic

- Ask your child to define magic. Then ask him or her to give examples of magic.

Musical

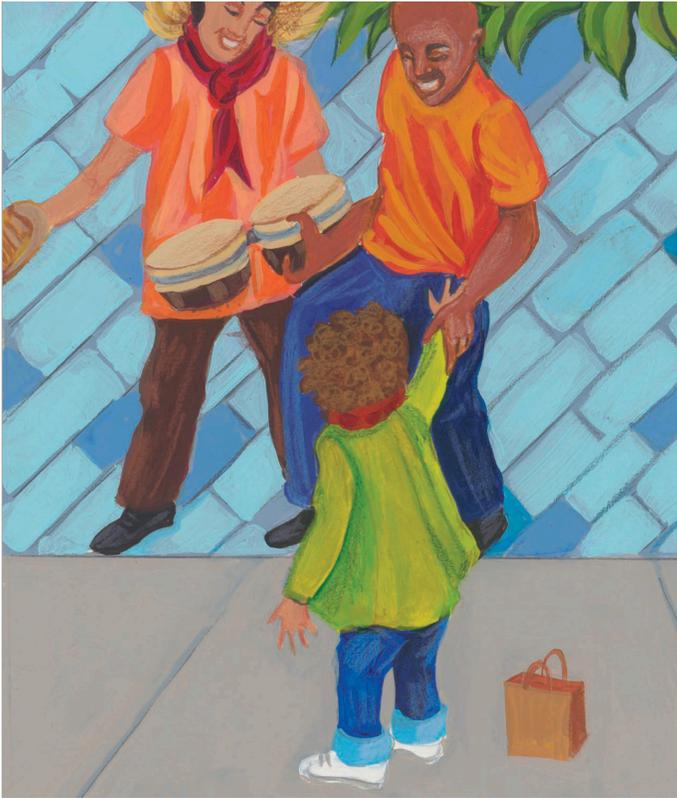
- Ask your child to define musical or music. Ask what we can use to make music. Point out the instruments on the cover. At this time you can introduce the following instruments: *maracas*, *bongos*, *güiro* and *pandereta*.

Mural

- Ask your child to explain what a mural is, what a mural is made out of, and how it’s made.
- Have your child describe murals that he or she has seen.

Scary Vejigante?

- Point out the characters on the cover. Talk about occasions when your child wears a mask (Halloween).
- Introduce the masked figure of the *vejigante*. Explain that the *vejigante* is a trickster from Carnival. Explain that Carnival, a celebration of the cycle of life, is celebrated annually by many countries all over the world. Explain that the African traditions of parading and moving in circles through villages in costumes and masks is an important aspect of Caribbean Carnival celebrations. Share that the mask in this book is the style used in Loíza Aldea, Puerto Rico.
- Watch *Vejigante Talk*, a 3 minute video by educator Humberto Soto that gives an overview of *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural* and explains what a *vejigante* is. <https://vimeo.com/282887736/e6e13f82a1->



DURING

Read *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural* together. Talk about what's happening in the story as you're reading. Take time to:

- Look at and discuss the illustrations.
- Stop to explain any interesting or tricky vocabulary words (amapola, bodega, bongos, güiro, plena, vejigante).
- Use the glossary in the back of the book to define these words.

Talk about surprising or sad passages. Help your child understand these parts of the story:

- Sofi's fear of the vejigante
- Sofi getting pulled into the mural
- Sofi turning into a vejigante
- Sofi realizing she's no longer a vejigante

Brainstorm what might happen in the story. Ask: "What do you think will happen next?"

- when Sofi is standing in front of the mural
- when Sofi is about to plunge into the Caribbean Sea

Discuss part of the story that may be confusing. Stop and reread parts of the story if necessary. Ask: "Do you understand what's happening here?"

AFTER

Help your child reflect on what he or she has read. Do some or all of the following:

- Ask your child to summarize the story.
- Do a "picture walk" and have your child tell you the story as you page through the book, using the illustrations as clues.
- Ask your child to share his or her favorite part of the book. Then have him or her explain why.
- Have your child rate the book on a scale from 1 to 10. Then have him or her explain why they like or dislike the story.
- Have your child reread his or her favorite part of the story or act it out.

Predicting

Look at the book cover with your child. Ask your child:

- What could this book be about?
- Where might this story take place?
- What could make the mural musical?
- What could make the mural magical?
- What things may happen to Sofi?

Book Walk

Take students on a book walk and draw attention to the following parts of the book: front and back covers, title page, introduction, English and Spanish text, illustration, backmatter, dedications, author's note, author's biography, illustrator's biography, and glossary.

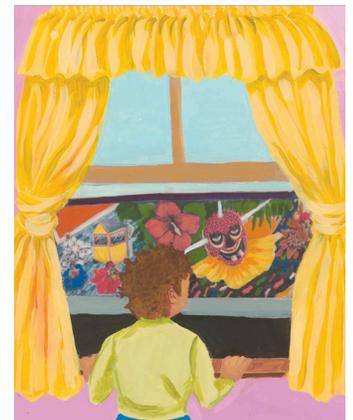
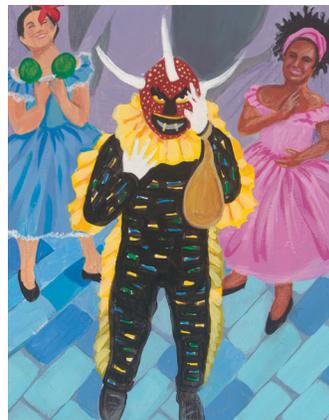
Fun With Words

Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural has a glossary in the back of the book that defines the words listed below. Before or after the reading look at these words and explain their meaning to your child.

amapola	bongos	plena
bodega	vejigante	güiro

Below are a list of words that your child can act out. Invite your child to act out these words as you read the story to make the reading more dynamic.

gurgling	plunged	scream
sneaky	chatter	inviting
shocked		



THINK ALOUD

Children learn when they make connections between what they hear and what they know. A Think Aloud helps your child to expand his or her learning and to improve reading comprehension.

Connect the book to your child's own life experience.

- EXAMPLE: "We have a mural in our neighborhood also."

Connect the book to other books he or she has read.

- EXAMPLE: "This story reminds me of Alice in Wonderland. Both stories are about entering into a different world and going on an adventure. Do you know any other stories about children going on adventures?"

Connect the book to big ideas/lessons.

- EXAMPLE: This story helps me understand that sometimes we are scared of things we don't understand. But, once we understand the vejigante, it doesn't scare us anymore.

Think –Share–Pair Questions

1. How does Sofi feel in the beginning, middle, and end of the story?
2. How can you tell that Sofi was very fearful of the vejigante?
3. If you were Sofi, what would you have done different?
4. If you had a chance to create your own mural, what would your mural look like?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Study the geography of Puerto Rico. Locate the three places that Sofi visited. Map Sofi's voyage and notice all of the municipalities that Sofi flew over during her adventure. Now plan a trip. Where will you go? Use a map or globe to plan your route.
- Design and create a mural using images that celebrate Puerto Rican culture and traditions.
- Create paper bag or stick puppets then read the reader's theater version of *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural*. https://artepublicopress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/TG-Sofi-and-the-Magic-Musical-Mural_Play.pdf
- Invite your child to create their own story about going on an adventure with Sofi. Looking at a globe, map, or atlas find some place in the world he or she would like to visit. Together research the county to identify fun, extraordinary things to do with Sofi once they are there.

CENTRO TEACHING RESOURCES



Watch *Plena with Doctor Drum* a 7 minute video by teaching musician José Ortiz AKA Dr. Drum who explains plena and teaches the songs in the story.



Watch *Vejigante Talk*, a 2 minute video by educator Humberto Soto that gives an overview of *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural* and explains what a *vejigante* is.



Watch *Sofi Songs* a 2 minute video with author Raquel M. Ortiz, teaching musician Dr. Drum, and second graders from Public School 250 and Public School 257 sing the three songs found in the *Sofi* picture book.



Watch *The Art and the Artist, María Domínguez* a 2 minute video by Artist María Domínguez who explains the creative process behind illustrating the *Sofi* picture book.



Watch *Teaching Sofi to Teachers, Educators, and Parents* a 13 minute video with author and educator Raquel M. Ortiz and teaching artist Dr. Drum sharing pre and post reading activities for *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural*.



Watch a 10 minute documentary about María Domínguez, her work, and her mural creation process with 8th graders in El Barrio.



Puerto Rican Voices

Watch a six minute segment on the Sofi book, showing a reading and interviews with the author and the illustrator. *Documentary, Memories on the Wall: Education and Enrichment through Community Murals*, Directed by Raquel M. Ortiz Rodriguez, 2013.



Timeline of Puerto Rican History Booklet

The Puerto Rican Heritage Poster Series



- History: A Cartography, Part II, Puerto Rican Migrations to the United States and the Caribbean, 1898 - 2012
- Maps: V. Educational Struggles and Institution Building and New Traditions (1960s - 2010s)

CONNECT WITH THE INTERNET

Blick Art Projects

- **We Puppets** <https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/wee-puppets/>
- **Storybook Theater** <https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/storybook-theater/>

National Geographic

- <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2014/07/25/genographic-project-dna-results-reveal-details-of-puerto-rican-history/>
- **MapMaker 1-Page Maps:** <http://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/mapping/outline-map/>
- **MapMaker Interactive:** <http://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org/?ls=000000000000>

Smithsonian

OurStory: American History Stories and Activities You Can Do Together!

- **A Puerto Rican Carnival:** <http://amhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/puerto/>
- **Make Your Own Carnival Mask:** http://amhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/puerto/carnival_mask.pdf
- **Lesson Plan: Plena, the People's Newspaper: Puerto Rican Music for the Classroom:** <https://folkways.si.edu/plena-peoples-newspaper-puerto-rican-classroom/music/tools-for-teaching/smithsonian>
- **Artist Spotlight: Tito Matos Puerto Rican plena drummer:** <https://folkways.si.edu/tito-matos-puerto-rican-plena-drummer/latin-world/music/article/smithsonian>
- **Artist Spotlight: Los Pleneros de la 21: Afro-Puerto Rican traditions:** <https://folkways.si.edu/los-pleneros-de-la-21-afro-puerto-rican-traditions/latin/music/article/smithsonian>

Additional Online Literacy Resources

Colorín colorado!

<http://www.colorincolorado.org>

National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)

<https://www.familieslearning.org>

Reading is Fundamental

<https://www.rif.org>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



RAQUEL M. ORTIZ was born and raised in Lorain, Ohio. Her parents are from the island of Puerto Rico. She has been making art, singing songs, and telling stories ever since she was a little girl. She is the author of the bilingual picture book, *Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural / Sofi y el mágico mural musical* (Arte Público Press, 2015) and other educational materials for children. She loves all kinds of art and has worked at The Brooklyn Museum, the Allen Memorial Art Museum, and El Museo del Barrio. Currently, she creates educational material for the Puerto Rican Heritage Cultural Ambassadors Program for the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College. For more information please visit <https://colorespublishing.wordpress.com/about/>

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



MARIA DOMINGUEZ moved from Cataño, Puerto Rico to New York City when she was five years old. She began her artistic career as a muralist with Cityarts in 1982; that first experience with public art showed her that people can create art together for their community. Over the past twenty-five years, Maria has created over twenty public art murals and worked with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of New York City, Artmakers, Inc. and Brooklyn Connect. The recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York Foundation for the Arts, she has also headed El Museo del Barrio's Education Department.

The Center for Puerto Rican Studies (Centro) is the nation's leading university-based institution devoted to the interdisciplinary study of the Puerto Rican experience in the United States. Centro is dedicated to understanding, preserving and sharing the Puerto Rican experience in the United States. Centro invites Centro Voices contributors to make use of the extensive archival, bibliographic and research material preserved in its Library and Archives.

The Centro Library and Archives is devoted to collecting, preserving and providing access to resources documenting the history and culture of Puerto Ricans. The Centro Library and Archives was established in 1973 as a component of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. The collections include books, current and historic newspapers and periodicals, audio, film & video, manuscripts, photographs, art prints, and recorded music. The Library and Archives provides services and programs to the scholarly community as well as the general public. Constituents are diverse and come from the United States and abroad. The Library and Archives facilitates access to information on its holdings through the City University's online public catalog or CUNY+. It also provides research and information assistance via phone and email.

Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, CUNY

695 Park Avenue, New York, NY | 212-772-5688 | centropr.hunter.cuny.edu

