

TALKING POINTS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: TOMÁS AND THE LIBRARY LADY

Show & Theater Company:

- *Tomás and the Library Lady* by Childsplay

Art Form:

- Musical Theater (a play with songs)

Context:

- Based on the book written by Pat Mora
- Author Pat Mora grew up in El Paso, Texas, in a bilingual home. She is an award-winning poet and author of books for adults, teens, and children. *Tomás and the Library Lady* was Pat Mora's first children's book.
- This play tells the story of Tomás, a young boy whose family moves from Texas to Iowa for the fruit picking season and who falls in love with reading when he discovers a library.
- The show is based on the true story of Tomás Rivera, an author, poet and educator who went on to become the first Mexican American Chancellor for the University of California (at U.C. Riverside).

Main Concepts:

- Moving to a new place: Tomás and his family move between Texas and Iowa.
- The power of reading: Tomás is inspired by the books he finds at the library.
 - ? Can you think of a book that made you excited?
- Bilingual families: Tomás speaks English and Spanish, and he teaches Spanish words to the Library Lady. The show has songs in both English and Spanish.
 - ? What are some words that you know in both English and Spanish?
 - ? Why can it be helpful to know more than one language?

Special Things to Look for:

- The actors in the show play multiple characters, and they use multiple tools and techniques to change from one character to another, including their bodies, their voices, and their clothes.
 - ? What clues help you tell which character the actors are at a specific time?

Theater Etiquette:

- Respect the theater, one person to a seat, limit bathroom breaks, do not kick the seats, no food or drink in the theater (bottled water okay), and turn off cell phones/no texting.
- ? How is watching live theater different than watching a movie or TV?
 - We can't pause, rewind, or fast forward with live theater.
 - Live theater is exciting because each performance is unique.
 - Students are in the same room as the performers. Moving around and making sounds can affect the performers and other members of the audience.