



# IN MY FAMILY EN MI FAMILIA



Hands-on exhibit inspired by the works of nationally acclaimed artist and author  
**Carmen Lomas Garza**



Carmen Lomas Garza uses paintbrushes and words to tell joyful stories about everyday events and special celebrations in the rich cultural traditions of her Mexican American family.

**EN MI FAMILIA** brings to life 4 scenes to:

- Spark recognition and pride in Mexican American cultural heritage
- Invite students to compare cultural traditions and reflect on how their own family builds their unique personal and cultural identity
- Boost English language learners' literacy skills with linguistically and culturally relevant activities and narratives that connect meaningfully to their lives
- Demonstrate the power of family narratives and source materials to build sense of self and cultural pride



## Supports standards

### PreK Guidelines

Social Awareness – Differing perspectives and feelings of others 1.D.1-2  
Motivation to Read Skills - Pre-reading and reading-related activities III.A.1

### TEKS (Draft Revisions July 2009)

Family customs and traditions K.12A-B  
Community beliefs, customs, language and traditions 1.15A  
Stories, paintings and other examples of local cultural heritage 2.15A-B  
Ethnic and cultural celebrations in the local community 2.16A-B  
Individual writers and artists such as Carmen Lomas Garza whose works contribute to the cultural heritage of communities 3.15B



# Exhibit Experiences

In each area, students can

- Touch, see, hear and even smell the activities depicted in Carmen's paintings and bilingual storybooks
- Hear Carmen herself tell the story of her family and its heritage in Spanish and English
- Define themselves through similarities and differences between Carmen's family traditions and their own
- Get the cultural backstory on traditional foods, music and celebration

## Beds for Dreams

*"My mother was the one who inspired me to be an artist. She made up our beds to sleep in and have regular dreams, but she also laid out the bed for our dreams of the future."*



Beds for Dreams / Camas para sueños

- Discover photos and objects** in Carmen's bedroom that help tell her story.
- Listen** to Carmen talk about how her family helped her accomplish her childhood dream of becoming an artist.
- Make** a wish and draw a picture of your own dream for the future.



## La Tamalada

*"In some families just the women make tamales, but in our family everybody helps."*



Making Tamales/La tamalada

- Practice** making tamales to see how the family assembles traditional ingredients.
- Take in the smells** of a family kitchen.
- Watch a video** of a grandmother passing on the tamale-making tradition to her grandson.
- Examine objects** that help tell the ancient history of tamales as a cultural food tradition.

## Dance at El Jardín

*"I learned to dance from my father and grandfather. To me, dance means fiesta, celebration. You have the music, the beautiful clothes, and all the family members dancing together."*



Dance at El Jardín / Baile en El Jardín

- Join the band** by putting on a costume and choosing an instrument.
- Learn some dance steps** and watch yourself move to the rhythm.
- Examine an accordion** and other objects to learn that *conjunto* music shares roots with other cultures.

## Birthday Barbecue

*"This is my sister Mary Jane's birthday party. She's hitting the piñata that my mother made. My mother also baked and decorated the cake."*



Birthday Barbecue / Barbacoa para cumpleaños

- Assemble puzzles** of traditional *papel picado* designs.
- Fill the piñata** with treats and watch them spill out.
- Pretend** to help out with the barbecue by cooking steaks and hamburgers.
- Explore** the history of piñatas.
- Discover** how family celebrations often include traditional crafts, rituals and food.



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