Title/Author: *Grandma’s Chocolate* by Mara Price

Suggested Time to Spend: 5 Days (Recommendation: at least 30 minutes per day)

Common Core Grade-level ELA/Literacy Standards: RL.K.1, RL.K.2, RL.K.3, RL.K.4, RL.K.7, RL.K.10; W.K.2, W.K.8; SL.K.1, SL.K.2, SL.K.5, SL.K.6; L.K.1, L.K.2, L.K.4 along with RI.K.1, RI.K.2, RI.K.3, RI.K.4, RI.K.7; RI.K.8

Lesson Objective:

Students will listen to an illustrated read-aloud of *Grandma’s Chocolate* and use literacy skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to demonstrate their understanding of the Big Idea.

Teacher Instructions

**Before the Lesson**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis below. **Please do not read this to the students**. This is a description to help you prepare to teach the book and be clear about what you want your children to take away from the work.

Big Ideas/Key Understandings/Focusing Question

What does Sabrina learn about the Aztec and Mayan\* cultures from her visit with her grandma? Where does chocolate come from?

Sabrina learns about the music, clothing, traditions, and rituals of the Aztec and Mayan people from the stories of her grandma. She learns about the importance of the cacao seed, the seed that chocolate comes from.

Note for teachers: The author of the text uses “Mayan” as an adjective and noun in the book; however, the correct term is “Maya” except for when referring to the language of the culture. To stay true to the text, we’ve kept references as “Mayan” throughout this lesson.

Synopsis

In this picture book, a little girl named Sabrina spends precious time with her grandma, who is visiting from Mexico. Grandma teaches Sabrina about the Aztec and Mayan history of her family. Grandma brings Sabrina colorful ribbons, a whistle, a drum, a blouse and some Mexican chocolate. Grandma talks with her about the music, clothing, traditions, and rituals of her ancestors. Sabrina is full of questions about her ancestors and their way of life. Grandma teaches her that chocolate comes from the cacao seed. She teaches Sabrina about the importance of the cacao seed in the Aztec and Mayan economy, and she shows her how to make chocolate from the seeds. They enjoy a cup of hot chocolate together.

1. Go to the last page of the lesson and review “What Makes this Read-Aloud Complex.” This was created for you as part of the lesson and will give you guidance about what the lesson writers saw as the sources of complexity or key access points for this book. You will of course evaluate text complexity with your own students in mind and make adjustments to the lesson pacing and even the suggested activities and questions.
2. Read the entire book, adding your own insights to the understandings identified. Also note the stopping points for the text-inspired questions and activities. *Hint: You may want to copy the vocabulary words and activities over onto sticky notes so they can be stuck to the right pages for each day’s questions and vocabulary work.*

The Lesson – Questions, Activities, and Tasks

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Questions/Activities/Vocabulary/Tasks** | **Expected Outcome or Response (for each)** |
| FIRST READING:  Read aloud the entire book with minimal interruptions. Stop to provide word meanings or clarify only when you know the majority of your students will be confused. | The goal here is for students to enjoy the book, both writing and pictures, and to experience it as a whole. This will give them some context and sense of completion before they dive into examining the parts of the book more carefully. |
| SECOND READING:  This reading will focus on unpacking the elements of Aztec and Mayan culture that the author is teaching the reader. Most of the questions and activities will focus on building background knowledge of these ancient cultures.  \*Teacher should explain before reading that Mayan and Aztec are the two groups that Grandma talks about in this story. They are not from the same region (Aztec from the central region of Mexico, Mayan from the south region of Mexico), but both lived in Mexico and had similar customs. The way both are discussed in the text might be confusing for students.  Reread pages 1-2.  Where does Sabrina’s grandma live?  How do you know?  Reread pages 3-4.  What was inside the suitcase?  What does Grandma mean when she says, “‘Open it carefully. It’s so full of gifts it might explode! . . . .’”?  Why does Sabrina compare the suitcase to a treasure chest?  Reread pages 5-6.  Why do you think Grandma bring Sabrina a drum and a whistle?  What was the whistle shaped like?  Why is the whistle shaped like a dove?  The authors says the birds “are the messengers from the earth to the sky.” What is a “messenger”?  Activity: \*Think pair share: What do you think it means when Grandma says the “birds sing the songs of the clouds and they are messengers from the earth to the sky?”   * EL Note: This is crucial for English learners. The more opportunities they have to listen and speak about the text, the greater their understanding will be.   Does Sabrina enjoy her grandma’s visit? How can you tell?  What did Grandma do with the colorful ribbons she brought Sabrina?  Why do you think the colors of the ribbon are red, green, and white?  How did Sabrina know what a Mayan princess looked like?  Reread pages 9-10.  What is a *huipil*? What in the book helped you know what the word was when you did not know?  Pronunciation:  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nl3Mvl3xrw>  What words in the text would help us picture what a *hiupil* looks like if we did not have an illustration?  The author calls the *hiupil* a traditional blouse. What does “traditional” mean?  Why do princesses wear them?  Teacher will show video displaying the traditional music and clothing of Mexican ancestors.  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSkGyuumzI8>  \*Activity: Teacher will conclude by adding the *hiupil* and traditional Aztec or Mayan clothing to the circle map. Students will use the circle map to write one sentence about the ancient cultures.   * EL Note: Writing from the circle map will provide EL students with an appropriate scaffold for the writing task. | \*While reading, teacher and students will create a circle map around ancient Aztec and Mayan culture. Teacher will need to explicitly teach the vocabulary word “ancient” when explaining the purpose for today’s reading. The teacher and students will add to the circle map throughout subsequent readings.   * EL note: EL students would benefit from work with the vocabulary before the second reading. See attached vocabulary chart for vocabulary and definitions.   Sabrina’s grandma lives in Mexico.  In the text it says, “I took her hand and led her to the room where she stays when she visits . . . ‘Surprises from Mexico, Sabrina.’”  Grandma brought her colorful ribbons, a whistle, a drum, some chocolate, and a blouse.  Grandma is being dramatic and hinting to her granddaughter that the suitcase is very full of exciting things. The writer most likely includes this detail to get the reader excited about what is happening in the story. The suitcase is not really going to explode. \*Teacher should highlight the author’s use of descriptive language (hyperbole/exaggeration) here to create the connection to the students’ writing.\*  She compares it to a treasure chest because a treasure chest is full of treasures, games and things from Mexico, which are treasures to Sabrina.  Grandma is teaching Sabrina about the ancient cultures. Music was an important part of the ancient cultures.  \* At this time, teacher will lead students in a shared writing activity where they will add to their circle map about ancient cultures. They will add music (drums and flute) to the circle map.  The whistle is shaped like a dove because her grandmother always liked birds, and the birds make music and sing songs like Sabrina and her grandmother were doing.  A messenger is someone who delivers a message.  \*Have students participate in a turn and talk where they take turns with a partner sharing their ideas. Teacher will circulate and listen in to students’ conversations.  Grandma is referring to the ancient belief that birds are sacred, special animals. In the ancient cultures, the people believed in gods.  \*At this time, teacher and students will add to their circle map about ancient cultures. They will add “believed in gods” to the circle map.  Sabrina is so excited and happy to have her grandma visiting. Teacher will direct students to illustration. Looking at the illustration, we can see that she is happy and having a great time playing music with her grandma. Sabrina also tells her grandma she likes playing with her in the text.  Grandma took the ribbons and wove them into Sabrina’s hair. She braided her hair to look like a Mayan princess.  The ribbons were red, white, and green, which are the traditional colors of the Mexican flag.  Teacher will show students a picture of the Mexican flag. This site also talks about the importance/significance of the colors.  https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-do-the-colors-and-symbols-of-the-flag-of-mexico-mean.html  \*Teacher and students will add the Mexican flag/colors to the circle map.  Sabrina knew what a Mayan princess looked like because her grandma had talked with her about the Mayan princesses when she came to visit.  A *huipil* is a traditional blouse worn by Mayan and Aztec women.  The words blouse, woven, and embroidered, help the reader visualize a *hiupil*.  \*Teacher may show students a picture of a real *hiupil* so they can see what embroidered and woven look like.  Traditional is something that has been done a certain way for many years. It is the handing down of a culture's beliefs and customs from parents to children over many years.  Each region had a special design so you could tell which region the princess was from based on the kind of *huipil* she was wearing. |
| THIRD READING:  The author helps the reader understand the cacao seed and its importance to the ancient Mexican cultures through questions Sabrina asks and her grandma’s response. We’ll re-read the text today to see what Sabrina learns from her grandma in answer to her questions.  Reread pages 11-12  What question did Sabrina ask about her ancestors?  What did Sabrina learn about her ancestors by asking about Mayan princesses?  Why does Sabrina have black hair and dark eyes like the Mayan and Aztec princesses?  Read the sentence, “Many years ago, our ancestors had palaces of gold, and great plantations of cacao.” Who is Grandma talking about? What are ancestors?  What is a “plantation”?  What is “cacao”?  Where do cacao seeds grow?  Reread pages 13-14.  What questions did Sabrina ask Grandma?  Why were cacao seeds so important to the Aztec and Mayan people?  What would happen if they did not grow cacao trees?  Reread pages 15-18.  What did Sabrina learn about chocolate from the question she asked Grandma?  Earlier in the text, Grandma says “they had palaces of gold and great plantations of cacao.” Looking at the illustrations on page 18, do you think the Aztec and Mayan ancestors had little or a large amount of riches? Why or why not?  Activity:\*Teacher will lead students in a think pair share around this question.   * EL Note: This is crucial for English learners. The more opportunities they have to listen and speak about the text, the greater their understanding will be.   Reread pages 19-20.  What is a *jarro*?  How did the Mayans make hot chocolate?  What is a *metate*?  Show students video of metate:  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6lSqXOhtRM>  What is a “ritual”? What ritual did Sabrina learn about?  Do you have any rituals in your family? If you do, what are they?  Why do you think Sabrina says, “Chocolate is perfect for a Mayan princess?”  Activity:  Students will create their own circle map of cacao. They will include pictures and words to demonstrate their new learning of cacao seeds from the text. (see attached template)   * EL Note: The thinking map will help students organize their learning. For EL learners, providing a few visuals to help them get started is an appropriate scaffold. | \*Teacher will create chart together as a class of all the questions Sabrina asks Grandma about her ancestors in an effort to capture the knowledge she gained about ancient cultures, specifically the information about the cacao seed.  The chart may look like this:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Sabrina’s question | Grandma’s answer | |  |  |   Were there really Mayan princesses?  She learned that the Mayan princesses had black hair and dark eyes like Sabrina had. She learned that they had palaces and gold and great plantations of cacao.  Sabrina looks like the princesses because she has Mayan/Aztec ancestors.  \*Add to question chart  Grandma is talking about their relatives that lived in the past.  A plantation is a large home where they grow a crop to sell.  Cacao are seeds from a small tree, from which cocoa, cocoa butter, and chocolate are made.  Cacao seeds grow on trees.  Sabrina asked Grandma if the Mayan princesses had money.  She also asked what she could buy with cacao if she was a Mayan princess.  The cacao seeds were so important because they were used as money.  \*Add to question chart.  They would not been able to use cacao to buy the food and items they needed.  Sabrina asked her grandmother if princesses had chocolate ice cream. The emperor, or king, would pour chocolate over bowls of snow from the mountains.  \*Add to question chart.  In the illustration, they are heavily decorated with many jewels, signifying their riches from the cacao seeds. The Aztec people had big plantations where they grew cacao to use to buy things, which is why they had palaces of gold and a large amount of riches.  A *jarro* is a clay cup that they drank hot chocolate from.  They ground up the cacao seeds on a hot *metate* and mixed the paste with water. They sweetened it with honey and flowers and topped it with foam.  A *metate* is a stone tool used to crush seeds.  A ritual is a ceremony that usually follows a certain order. Sabrina learned about the ritual of serving hot chocolate with foam on top.  Have students turn and talk about the rituals they have in their families.  Cacao was important to the Aztec people for both business and for eating. |
| FOURTH AND BEYOND:  Day 4 will focus on the relationship between Sabrina and her Grandma and how they both felt when Grandma was leaving.  Reread pages 21-22.  What was the last thing that Grandma brought Sabrina in the yellow suitcase?  Why do you think the author wrote the words “clack, clack” when Grandma was breaking the chocolate?  Reread pages 23-24.  What does Grandma do with the chocolate pieces?  How do they make hot chocolate?  \*Activity: Think Pair Share: Have the students turn to a partner and together retell how hot chocolate is made in the story.   * EL Note: This is crucial for English learners. The more opportunities they have to listen and speak about the text, the greater their understanding will be.   What is a *molinillo*?  How is Grandma’s way of making hot chocolate different than the Aztec ancestors’ way of making hot chocolate?  Reread pages 25-26.  Read the sentence: “As we savored the chocolate, we toasted our ancestors . . . .” What does “savored” mean?  What is a “toast”? Why do Sabrina and her Grandma and mother toast to their ancestors?  Read the sentence, “And we toasted the great discovery of chocolate.” What does the word “discovery” mean?  Why did Sabrina call chocolate a great discovery?  Reread pages 27-28.  What do you think the purpose of Grandma’s visit was? How do you know?  How is Sabrina most likely feeling about her Grandma leaving?  What makes Sabrina feel better about her Grandma leaving?  Activity: \*Think Pair Share: Do you have family that lives far away that you miss? What makes you think of your family?   * EL Note: This is crucial for English learners. The more opportunities they have to listen and speak about the text, the greater their understanding will be. | Grandma brought her chocolate from Mexico.  The author included “clack! clack!” to make us better visualize what is happening. It makes the text more fun to read.  Grandma makes hot chocolate with Sabrina.  First, Grandma heats up the milk. Then she drops in the chocolate and stirs it to keep it from burning.    A *molinillo* is a tool that Grandma is using to make foam in the hot chocolate. Show students a picture of a real *molinillo* and let them practice rubbing their hands together to pretend they are using a *molinillo*.  The Aztec ancestors poured the hot chocolate back and forth from cups to make the delicious foam. Grandma used a *molinillo* and also pours the chocolate back and forth.  Savored means to enjoy something completely.  A toast is when people raise their glasses and drink together to honor a person or a thing. Sabrina and her family are honoring their ancestors as they drink hot chocolate.  A discovery is something that you find unexpectedly.  Sabrina says that chocolate is a great discovery because now that she knows the history behind how chocolate is made, it is more special to her and she appreciates it more.  Grandma came to spend time with her granddaughter and teach Sabrina about her Aztec ancestors and their culture. She shares stories and a lot of information with Sabrina to help her better understand her own culture.  Sabrina is sad that her Grandma is leaving.  They decide they will think of each other always, especially when they are drinking hot chocolate.  Students will share with a partner about their own family. |

FINAL DAY WITH THE BOOK - Culminating Task

Culminating Task:

Why was cacao important to Sabrina’s Aztec ancestors? Students will use pictures and words to describe the important role that cacao played in ancient Aztec and Mayan culture. They may write about cacao seeds being used as money, or they may write about the ritual of making chocolate from cacao seeds. *See standards on page 1-2 for more information about expectations for student writing.*

Sample Response:

Cacao was important to the Aztec and Mayan cultures because they used it as money. They used also used the cacao seeds to buy the food and things they needed. They made chocolate from the cacao seeds.

Español:

La tarea final:

¿Por qué era importante el cacao para los ancestros aztecas de Sabrina? Los estudiantes usarán imágenes y palabras para describir la importancia del cacao en la antigua cultura azteca y maya. Pueden escribir sobre las semillas de cacao que se usan como dinero, o pueden escribir sobre el ritual de hacer chocolate con semillas de cacao.

Ejemplo:

El cacao era importante para las culturas azteca y maya porque lo usaban como dinero. También utilizaron las semillas de cacao para comprar los alimentos y las cosas que necesitaban. Hicieron chocolate a partir de las semillas de cacao.

Vocabulary

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| **These words merit less time and attention.**  (They are concrete and easy to explain, or describe events/  processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to your students. ) | **These words merit more time and attention.**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part  of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes or experiences that most of your student will be unfamiliar with.) |
| Page 5 - messenger - someone who delivers a message  Page 9 – woven – to weave pieces of thread together crossing each piece over the next piece  Page 9 – embroidered – to decorate a piece of cloth by sewing designs on it  Page 9 – region – an area of a country  Page 10 – *huipil –* a traditional blouse  Page 11 – cacao- seeds from a small tree, from which cocoa, cocoa butter, and chocolate are made  Page 11 – plantation - a large area where people live and grow a crop to sell  Page 17 – emperor – a powerful ruler  Page 19 – *jarros* – small clay cups used to serve hot chocolate  Page 19 – *metate* –a stone tool used to crush seeds  Page 19 – bitter – sharp taste, not sweet  Page 23 – *molinillo* – a tool used to stir hot chocolate and make it foamy  Page 25 – aroma – a particular smell, usually pleasant  Page 25 – savor- to enjoy completely | Page 9 – traditional - something that has been done a certain way for many years  Page 11 – ancestors - relatives that lived in the past  Page 19 – ritual - a ceremony that usually follows a certain order  Page 25 – discovery - something that you find unexpectedly  Page 25 – toast - when people raise their glasses and drink together to honor a person or a thing |

Fun Extension Activities for this book and other useful Resources

* Home-School Connection: Have students ask questions to their parents about their ancestors and bring in something to share with the class about their ancestors.
* Locate Mexico on a globe/map.
* Locate where their ancestors are from on a map.
* Have students conduct a research project on their ancestors using the internet and relatives as resources. Have the students share with the class about their ancestors to promote cultural awareness and a stronger classroom community.
* Math: Use “cacao seeds” as manipulatives to count/add/subtract/etc.
* Cooking/Science: Make hot chocolate, showing students how to make the foam by pouring from one container to another.
* Videos and Music:

Video on where chocolate comes from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJdeQABAc_w>

Video of a woman making a *hiupil*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ux2dyq03kX0>

Note to Teacher

* *If you have students who have similar backgrounds as Sabrina and her family, this is a great opportunity for them to spend some time sharing with the class about their culture. Allow them to teach the class about the different tools and concepts if they have a good deal of background knowledge. Tap into these students’ knowledge and experiences during the reading of this text if applicable.*

**What Makes This Read-Aloud Complex?**

1. **Quantitative Measure**

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your read-aloud in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.

Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band 420-820L

4-5 band 740-1010L

640 L

1. **Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension\*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

There is a dual purpose to this text, which is implicit throughout the story. The most literal meaning is that this is the story of a young girl’s relationship with her Grandma. The second purpose is to help readers understand the origins of chocolate.

“The cacao is a tree and its seeds give us the chocolate we enjoy today. The Olmecs and Mayas were the first to make chocolate.”

Illustrations support meaning making.

This text which is set up as a realistic fiction story, has hybrid elements of informational text interwoven into the storyline.

“Yes, Sabrina, there were both Mayan and Aztec princesses with black hair and dark eyes like yours,” she said. “Many years ago, our ancestors had palaces and gold…”

Hyperbole: exaggerated phrase to get reader’s attention

“‘Open it carefully. It’s so full of gifts it might explode!’ she said laughing.”

Domain specific vocabulary: cacao, *huipil, jarros, molinillo*

Aztec and Mayan culture and history

Trading/Commerce

“You could buy a turkey or a rabbit with 100 cacao seeds.”

**Meaning/Purpose**

**Structure**

**Language**

**Knowledge Demands**

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

The implicit purpose of this text and the knowledge demands around the Aztec and Mayan cultures will be a challenge for students. Build background purpose of the text through activities, recall, discussions, examples related to directly to students.

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

Students will learn about the Aztec and Mayan cultures and history. They will also reflect on their own family history and culture.

1. **Grade level**

What grade does this book best belong in? Kindergarten