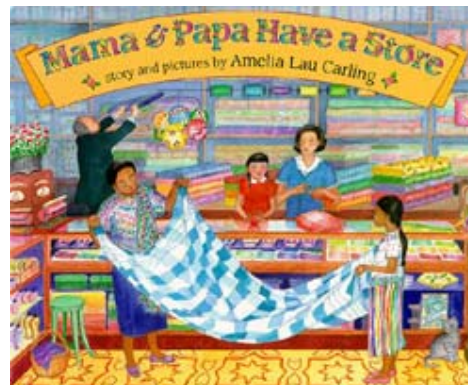


"Clip, clop, clop. I hear the milkman and his mule cart. He rings our bell and leaves two bottles at the door. Clip, clop, clop. The mule goes down the street. The church bells ring, the roosters crow. My brother and sisters leave for school. The day begins like this."

Amelia Lau Carling



### **Mama and Papa Have a Store**

Amelia Lau Carling

HarperCollins Children's Books 1998

#### **Grade Levels**

K-3

#### **Curriculum Areas**

Art • Language Arts

#### **National Art Education Standards**

#### **NA-VA.4 UNDERSTAND THE VISUAL ARTS IN RELATION TO HISTORY AND CULTURES**

##### **Grades K–4**

Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationship to various cultures.

Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places.

Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art.

#### **National Language Arts Standards**

##### **NL-ENG.K-12.7 EVALUATING DATA**

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems.

They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources [e.g., print and non-print texts, and artifacts].

##### **NL-ENG.K-12.8**

##### **DEVELOPING RESEARCH SKILLS**

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

#### **Objectives**

Students may draw upon the ethnic, popular and folk symbols and myths of their cultural heritage for their work.

To provide a range of culturally diverse literature meeting students' needs to understand themselves, understand worldviews and other cultures.

To provide opportunities to read meaningful, authentic vocabulary in a variety of contexts; language in a cultural context.

#### **Overview**

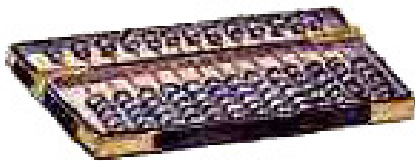
In the heart of Guatemala City, a Chinese immigrant family owns a specialty store where they sell fabric, buttons, thread, and ribbons, in addition to a small selection of Chinese imports. The events of a typical busy day are recounted as seen through the eyes of the family's youngest daughter who is not yet old enough to attend school. We hear the voice of a young child in her first-person narration and see what she sees in the delicately detailed watercolor paintings that accompany the story: the sounds, the colors, the anticipation of her older siblings' return at midday for the large family meal they'll share, and her interest in the Maya customers who have an affinity for the store owners due to a shared sense of style and color. Through the details of everyday life, we see how cultures peacefully co-exist and enrich each other in this dazzling autobiographical picture story.

**LOOKING EXERCISE #1:**  
**Mama & Papa Have a Store**  
**Amelia Lau Carling**  
**Illustration and Text Page 8**



From the clip, clop of the milkman's mule in early morning to the clic, clac of her father's abacus at night, a young girl tells about a day in her family's store and home in Guatemala City.

What is going on in this picture? Describe everything you see. What are the people in this illustration doing?



Papa at his desk adds and subtracts with his abacus. How is an abacus used?

**Activity**

Introduce the abacus. It is a mechanical aid used for counting; it is not a calculator in the sense we use the word today.

The Abacus Introduction

<http://www.ee.ryerson.ca:8080/~elf/abacus/intro.html>

**LOOKING EXERCISE #2:**  
**Mama & Papa Have a Store**  
**Amelia Lau Carling**  
**Illustration and Text Pages 11-12**



Santiago and Maria and their daughter Elsita are here today. They've come in a bus from an Indian village far away. I've hear them tell Mama that they, like their parents and grandparents before them, live on the edge of a lake surrounded by three volcanoes.

What is going on in this picture? Describe everything you see. What are the people in this illustration doing?

**Activity**

Antigua was the nation's capital from 1543 until 1776, when the capital was moved to the east to the present site of Guatemala City. Set amid three magnificent volcanoes - Agua, Fuego and Acatenango - its sturdy colonial buildings have weathered 16 earthquakes and numerous floods and fires. Antigua is beautiful during Semana Santa, when the streets are carpeted with elaborate decorations of colored sawdust and flower petals.

Guatemala's many Mayan ruins and colonial buildings are its most impressive architectural attributes and glorious landscapes has made Guatemala a tourist destination.

One of the most intriguing cultural aspects is the infinite and striking variety of the handmade, traditional clothing of Guatemala's Maya population. The design of the women's colorfully embroidered tunics, capes and skirts dates back to pre-colonial days. Certain details of garment and design identify the wearer's group and village, and can also have multiple religious or magical meanings. Music and

traditional dance also feature in many Mayan religious festivals.

Introduce to students that art often utilizes symbols unique to the culture in which it was created, providing a way of communicating and preserving historical events in visual form.

**LOOKING EXERCISE #3:  
Mama & Papa Have a Store  
Amelia Lau Carling  
Illustration and Text Page 12**

Every day customers of many heritages speaking Spanish, Chinese, and Maya come to buy cloth, buttons, and thread in colors like 'parrot green' and 'mango yellow,' and dozens of other items.



She will weave deer, birds, rabbits, and jaguars into new clothes.



Learn about Maya weavers and the symbols that they use in their woven huipils.

Maya-Symbols in Maya Textiles  
<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/maya/maya7.htm>

**Activity**

Here are some common colors to introduce in English, Spanish and Chinese

yellow	amarillo	huángsè
orange	anaranjado	chéngsè
blue	azul	boalan
white	blanco	baise
brown	marrón	hèsè
black	negro	heisè
purple	púrpura	zise
red	rojo	hongsè
pink	rosado	fenghonegse
green	verde	lùsè

**Activity**

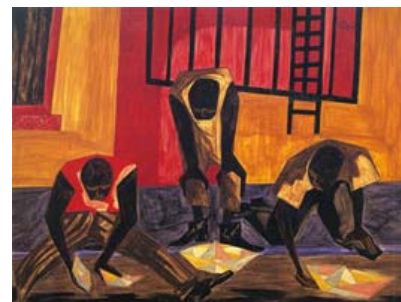
While the girl's parents and their friends talk about their hometown in China from where they emigrated many years ago, she and her siblings play games on the rooftop terrace, float paper boats, and make shadow puppets under the glow of flashlights. When the store closes, the girl dances to celebrate her day.

**LOOKING EXERCISE #4:  
Mama & Papa Have a Store  
Amelia Lau Carling  
Illustration and Text Page 25**



Dark, dark clouds sweep in quickly, taking the sun away and letting large raindrops fall hard on the tin roof...When my brothers and sisters come home from school, we make paper boats and float them down the street.

Compare this painting to the painting of Paper Boats by the African American artist, Jacob Lawrence.



**Paper Boats**  
Jacob Lawrence 1949  
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

At the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, vibrant colors and social overtones shade Jacob Lawrence's painting, Paper Boats. At first glance, the scene appears playful - three men sailing paper boats on a street. But a closer

look suggests another scenario. The men are slumped over and their faces express sadness or hopelessness. Lawrence grew up in poverty and was largely self-trained in the arts. But he achieved fame at age twenty-one, using bold colors and angular forms to depict scenes of African-American history. In *Paper Boats*, he celebrates familiar surroundings and routine activities. Lawrence stated, "My pictures express my life...so I paint the American scene." [Art Treasures of Nebraska Website [http://mynptv.org/nat/artists/nat\\_lawrence\\_jacob.html](http://mynptv.org/nat/artists/nat_lawrence_jacob.html)]

## Resources

Carling, Amelia Lou. *Alfombras de Aserr/Sawdust Carpets*. Douglas and McIntyre Publishing Group. 2005.

Carling, Amelia Lou. *Mama and Papa Have a Store*. HarperCollins Children's Books. 2000.

Castañeda, Omar S. *Abuela's Weave*. New York: Lee and Low Books. 1993.

Fox, Jeffrey Jay. *The Maya Textiles Tradition*. New York: Harry N. Abrams. 1997.

Montejo, Victor. *Popol Vuh: A Sacred Book of the Maya*. Toronto, Canada: Groundwood Books. 1999.

Sola, Michele. *Abuela Weaves a Dream: The Story of a Young Maya Artist*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children. 1996.

## Internet Websites

Abacus Introduction  
<http://www.ee.ryerson.ca:8080/~elf/abacus/intro.html>

Colors in Spanish Language  
<http://spanish.about.com/library/beginning/aa-beg-vocabulary-colors.htm>

Colors in Ting Chinese  
<http://hua.umf.maine.edu/Chinese/stories/xinxin/saving/colorc.html>

Images of the Maya-Symbols in Maya Textiles  
<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/maya/maya7.htm>

Jacob Lawrence Painting-The Paper Boats  
[http://mynptv.org/nat/artists/nat\\_lawrence\\_jacob.html](http://mynptv.org/nat/artists/nat_lawrence_jacob.html)