

# Story – Nacho and Lolita

**Description**      **This lesson is designed for:**

- 40 – 50 minutes
  - 25-30 students
  - Spanish, Social Studies, or Reading class
  - Grade K-5
  - Country of Origin: United States and Mexico
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**Objectives**      **As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:**

- Orally demonstrate comprehension of the story, *Nacho and Lolita* by Pam Muñoz Ryan.
  - Practice new Spanish vocabulary.
  - Describe the mythical bird from Mexico known as the “pitacoche” (pee-tah -COH-cheh).
  - Explain the idea of being unique or different.
  - State opinions and support those opinions orally with facts from the story.
  - Tell what makes them unique or different.
  - Create and color a pitacoche bird that shows their unique qualities or abilities.
  - (Optional) Compare the idea of losing cultural identity (assimilation) versus embracing a new culture while maintaining the original cultural practices (acculturation).
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**Vocabulary**

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|------------------|---------------|
| • El pájaro      | Bird          |
| • Alta           | High/Upper    |
| • Baja           | Low/Lower     |
| • El Pitacoche   | Mythical bird |
| • Las Golodrinas | Swallows      |
| • La Familia     | Family        |
| • Fantástico(a)  | Fantastic     |
| • El Arullo      | Lullaby       |
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## Materials

### Related Files Provided with this Lesson

- Drawn pictures of a pitacoche and tail feathers.

### Teachers Need to Provide

- Map of Mexico and the United States
- 1 or various copies of *Nacho and Lolita* by Pam Muñoz Ryan
- White/black board or chart paper
- Dry erase markers / Broad point markers
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons for student use
- Student scissors (optional)

**Note to the Teacher:** This activity may be done in English or in Spanish depending on your classroom needs and level of your students.

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## Activities

### Introduction

- Show Mexico on a map. Point out the Yucatan.
- Show San Juan Capistrano in California.
- Identify these places as setting of the book.
- Share information about the pitacoche (from the author's note in the book).

5 min.

### 15 min. *Nacho and Lolita* by Pam Muñoz Ryan

- Read the story, *Nacho and Lolita* by Pam Muñoz Ryan aloud to students. Or, divide them into groups to read it to each other.
- Have students summarize the story and/or answer comprehension questions.

7 min.

### Vocabulary Activity

- Using a poster (or list on the board) of the Spanish vocabulary words from the book, read each having the students repeat after you.
- Give the meaning as gleaned from the book. Reread the sentence with the word.

20 min.

### Make a Pitacoche

- As a class, discuss Nacho as a pitacoche. What makes him unique? How is he different from the other birds?

- Brainstorm ideas of what makes the students unique. If the activity is used as part of a Spanish lesson, the teacher might limit the words to nouns, adjectives, or verbs. Creating a common list on the board or chart paper is important when working in Spanish.
- Ask students to choose five things that make them special or unique. Have students write the Spanish/English word for, or draw a picture of, one thing on each tail feather of the pitacoche and then color the bird and its tail.
- If there is time and interest, students can cut out the tail feathers individually and glue them on the colored bird. Otherwise, attach the entire tail to the bird picture.
- Share the colored pictures with a partner and/or the class as time permits.

### **Optional Lesson Extension**

- Define cultural assimilation and acculturation, for younger students you might want to avoid using the actual terms. (See the background information and resource web sites for more information.)
- Using the pitacoche that the children colored, have them consider what it would be like to give up what is on their feathers as Nacho gave up his colorful feathers. List times they might be willing to do so. Examples: Nacho gave up his colors to bring color (flowers) to the world around him. Some people might give up playing drums if it made a parent's migraine headaches worse. Also, brainstorm times when students would not be willing to give up what is special to them.
- Compare this giving up of what makes people special with assimilation.
- List ways the "feathers" might change if people were being acculturated, that is, modified, but not completely eliminated or changed.

### **3 min. Wrap Up**

- Ask students to summarize the ways that Nacho and Lolita showed that they were friends who helped each other.
- Allow for any final questions students have.

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## **Background Information**

- Assimilation refers to a process by which a something, or someone, becomes more and more similar to something, or someone, else until it becomes totally absorbed and loses its own identity.
- Acculturation is the process by which a person acquires the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and behaviors that make him/her functioning participant of a new “host” culture. However, acculturation does not necessarily result in the new culture traits completely replacing the old ones. The new traits may be blended with, or worked into, the old cultural patterns.

## **References**

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## **Websites**

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