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# SATURDAY SANCOCHO

Author: Leyla Torres

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## THEME:

Throughout history, people have traded goods and services, but knowing how to determine the *value* of what is being traded is essential to striking a good bargain.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY:

It's early in the morning as vendors at the neighborhood "Swap and Flea Market" set up. Hints of "swapping" — trading coffee for strawberries — set the stage for *Saturday Sancocho*. LeVar explores the fun of collecting and trading treasures — and how it's based on the ever-changing nature of value. All the while he is classifying, estimating, bartering, trading, collecting and figuring out trade- and monetary-values.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Invite students to share their experiences attending garage or yard sales, flea markets, auctions, outdoor markets, and the like. Discuss features that these events have in common. How are they different?

Ask students if they have ever traded an object of their own for something that belonged to someone else. What did they trade? How did they and the other individual decide if it was an "even" trade?

Invite students to share an activity they especially enjoy doing with a grandparent.

For many people, Saturday is a favorite day of the week. Discuss with students how they spend their Saturdays.

## CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

On a large piece of mural paper, have the students make a map of the marketplace where Maria Lili and Mama Ana did their trading. Have them label each of the stalls, that they visited, with the name of the person it belonged to.

Have the students make a "key" to accompany the map that tells the nature of the exchanges that took place. They will need to assign a number to each stall Maria Lili and her grandmother visited. For example, Don Eugenio and Sebastian's stall is "1." On a chart, next to number 1, have students complete the sentence frame, "They traded \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_" (e.g., "They traded six eggs for a bunch of green plantains."). They do the remainder of the key in the same way by completing the sentence that describes the trade at each stall.

The story refers to a number of foods that might not be familiar. Have students research plantains, cilantro, cassava, and cumin. What type of food is it? Where does it grow? How is it prepared or used in cooking? Are there some more familiar foods that it is similar to?

Make a Venn diagram that compares shopping in an outdoor market with shopping in a supermarket or grocery store.

Invite students to bring samples from their collections to put on display. (The owner of the collection sets the rules about touching items.) Provide time for students to talk about their collections. Discuss questions that the class might ask the owner, such as "How did you get started with your collection?"; "What is your favorite piece?"; "What is the most unusual story behind a piece in your collection?"; and the like. (Having a variety of questions will avoid the inevitable, "How much did it cost?")

Have a simple "swap meet" in the classroom. Have each student bring in an inexpensive item to swap. Objects might include toys students no longer want, books they have read, puzzles, games, etc. (A signed consent from parents on the item might be appropriate.) The teacher should bring something too and model the thought process of determining equal value by examining several of the available items at the swap meet and comparing them to his/her own. After everyone has something "new," have students talk about their trades.

With the assistance of the library media specialist, have students research the practice of bartering. Why did people barter? What types of items did they barter? Does bartering still take place today?

Bring a selection of vegetables for some mathematical exploration of the concept of weight. Possible objects for weighing include: a potato, an onion, a few carrots, a tomato, some green beans, and an ear of corn. Have students predict the weight of individual vegetables. Record their predictions on a chart and then weigh the items. Discuss whether their predictions were higher, lower, or just right. Pose some problems, such as "How many carrots will equal the weight of one ear of corn?" (Ask students to suggest problems, as well.) Again, have them predict before they weigh and discuss the accuracy of all predictions.

Enlist the aid of some parent volunteers and use the vegetables from the above math activity to make vegetable soup, the class's own version of "sancocho."

## RELATED THEMES:

money concepts  
cooking  
grandparents

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**RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:**

Program #57 — Stay Away From The Junkyard!

Program #118 — How To Make An Apple Pie And See The World

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Leyla Torres' books exemplify multicultural themes. *Saturday Sancocho* is her second book. Originally from Bogotá, Colombia, she now lives in Brooklyn, New York.

**BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:**

MAMA PROVI AND THE POT OF RICE

by Sylvia Rosa-Cassanova, illus. by Robert Roth (Atheneum)

THE PIRATE COOK BOOK

by Mary Ling, designed by Karen Lieberman (DK Publishing)

MAMA BEAR

by Chyng Feng Sun, illus. by Lolly Robinson (Houghton Mifflin)

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

THE TABLE WHERE RICH PEOPLE SIT

by Byrd Baylor, illus. by Peter Parnall (Scribners)

GRANDMA WENT TO MARKET

by Stella Blackstone, illus. by Bernard Lodge (Houghton Mifflin)

MARKET DAY

by Eve Bunting, illus. by Holly Berry (HarperCollins)

JOSEPHINA, THE GREAT COLLECTOR

by Diana Engel (Morrow)

SATURDAY MARKET

by Patricia Grossman, illus. by Enrique O. Sanchez (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

ARTHUR'S HONEY BEAR

by Lillian Hoban (HarperCollins)

FARMER'S MARKET

by Paul Brett Johnson, (Orchard)

JASMINE'S PARLOUR DAY

by Lynn Joseph, illus. by Ann Grifalconi (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

THE PUDDLE PAIL

by Elisa Kleven (Dutton)

MARKET!

by Ted Lewin (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

OH, NO, TOTO!

by Katrin Hyman Tchana & Louise Tchana Pami, illus. by Colin Bootman (Scholastic)

