**Los Dichos Lesson #6**

***Calling the Doves***

By Juan Felipe Herrera

**Dicho:** “The higher you go, the better the view.”

**Asset Category:** Support

#1 Family Support #2 Positive Family Communication #3 Other Caring Adult Relationships #4 Caring Neighborhood

**Introduction**

*(Instructions: Read one paragraph or question in Spanish. Pause and let the teacher or volunteer read the same in English. Continue in the same way until done with the lesson script.)*

Hello boys and girls!

The story I will be sharing with you today is about the early life of the author, Juan Felipe Herrera. He was an important Mexican-American poet, actor, musician, and former professor of the California State University Fresno. In the story, Juan Felipe reminisces about his childhood as the much-loved son of farm worker. His family had to move from place to place following the harvest of fruits and vegetables.

Farm workers perform a labor intensive job. Migrant farm workers are additionally challenged because they receive low wages and do not remain in one place long enough to qualify for government aid. Furthermore, they do not have stable homes, often living in poor housing, and lack adequate health care. Some male migrant workers travel by themselves and return to their families after the harvest season. Others travel with their families, such as Juan Felipe Herrera’s family.

Juan Felipe Herrera could have seen his childhood as being tough, but instead he decided to focus on the positive memories. He remembers his childhood pleasantly; traveling picking up crops in California with his loving family. He recalls sleeping under starry skies, bathing in a gigantic tin bucket, eating meals cooked over an open fire, and celebrating at fiestas with other farm families. He also recalls his mother’s songs and poems, and his father’s bird-calls.

**Read the Story**

*Read the book in Spanish a page at a time and have the teacher or volunteer read the same page in English. Remember to show the illustrations,*

**Discussion Questions**

1. What sort of work did Juanito’s parents do?
2. How would life be for you as a migrant farmworker student? Do you think it would be easy or difficult to constantly adjust to new homes, neighbors, schools, and friends?
3. Have any of you ever had to travel with your family as part of your parent’s job? Did you enjoy that?
4. Was Juanito happy when he was growing up? How do you know?
5. Name a special talent or skill of Juanito’s mother.
6. Name something that Juanito remembered about his father.
7. What was something that Juanito learned as a child that helped him as an adult?
8. Why is it important to remember good memories?

**Activities**

**Option 1.- Good Memories**

Close your eyes and think of a super good day you had in the past. What was the weather like? Where were you? What were the colors around you? Who were you with? What were you doing? Why was that moment so special? Now, open your eyes slowly and in a small piece of paper, make a tiny drawing to remember that moment. If you want, share it with the class. Otherwise, put that paper in your pocket. Smile!

**Option 2.- Paper Dove**

Juanito’s dad made bird calls by putting his hands on his mouth and whistling deeply as if he had a clarinet inside the palms of his hands. Juanito’s father would say that the sound imitated how doves trill.

A bird would fly in and perch itself on a nearby tree after he made a bird call. Today, we will be making doves out of paper plates to post on your classroom wall or you can take them home to hang from the ceiling.

**Materials:** paper plates**,** pencils**,** scissors**,** black and orange marker pens**,** glue**,** string or ribbon for hanging (optional)

**Instructions:**

1. Draw lines on the paper plate to divide the paper plate into thirds. The outside pieces become the wings, and the middle becomes the body of the dove.
2. Use a pencil to draw the shape of a dove's body on the center of the paper plate. The dove’s body should resemble the shape of a snowman.
3. Cut on the lines you drew on the paper plate. You should have the body of the dove and the outside pieces of the plate are the wings.
4. Cut out the body of the dove.
5. Assemble like a dove with the big wings on each side.
6. Secure the wings on the back of the dove with tape.
7. Draw on some simple feet, a beak, and 2 eyes with markers.
8. To create a flying dove, attach string or ribbon to the dove’s head.

For video instructions please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wn89nZ-y_g>

*(Note: To reduce activity time pre-cut the dove’s body and wings before going to class. Have students assemble the dove and draw the feet, beak and eyes.)*

**Adaptation:** Let students decorate the attached dove template.

**Closure**

“I has been a pleasure to learn about the life of Juan Felipe Herrera together. He didn’t have an easy childhood but he chose to rise above his difficult circumstances. He chose to prioritize what was most important. He successfully implemented the advice in our saying (Dicho): “*The higher you go, the better the view.”*

If you find yourself in the middle of a difficult situation today, I hope that you will remember to hold in your heart all that is beautiful in your life. See you next month!”

**Dove Template**

