

PS 39 Diversity and Inclusion Book of the Month: January

Theme: Socioeconomic Diversity

Book Title: A Day's Work
by Eve Bunting

Grade Level: 4th / 5th

Book Introduction:

Francisco is trying to find work for his grandfather, or Abuelo, who has just arrived from Mexico. He acts as a liaison between Abuelo, who doesn't speak English, and Ben, who wants to hire a gardener for a day's work. Eager to earn the badly needed pay, Francisco assures Ben that his grandfather is a skilled gardener. Returning at the end of the day, Ben is shocked to discover that Francisco and Abuelo stripped his field of the plants and left the weeds. Abuelo is also angered, learning only now that Francisco had lied to Ben, and refuses payment until they have done the job correctly. Recognizing the older man's integrity, Ben rewards Abuelo and Francisco with the promise of "more than just one day's work."

This book addresses the core value of integrity and honesty, while also touching on the economic situation of many immigrant day laborers.

Discussion Questions:

Before Reading:

Children may be unfamiliar with the concept of day laborers. Before reading this book, it may be useful to discuss this idea.

- What difficulties might day laborers have? For example, you might discuss that they may not be certain that they will find work each day or know how much money they might make in a given day.
- What difficulties might you have looking for work in a country where you do not speak the language?

While and After Reading:

- Why are Francisco and his grandfather waiting by the side of the road?
- Why does Francisco accompany his grandfather?
- On page 6, the author writes, "when there was money to spare, they'd get him a jacket like Francisco's." Later Francisco thinks about how the \$60 will impact his family. What does this tell you about Francisco and his grandfather's economic situation?
- What was the lie that Francisco told Ben? Why did Francisco lie?
- What was the "price of the lie"?
- What did Francisco learn from his grandfather?