

PS 39 Diversity and Inclusion Book of the Month: June
Theme: LGBTQ+

Book Title: Antonio's Card/La Tarjeta de Antonio
By Rigoberto González

Grade Level: 4th / 5th

Book Summary:

Antonio loves words, because words have the power to express feelings like love, pride, or hurt. Mother's Day is coming soon, and Antonio searches for the words to express his love for his mother and her partner, Leslie. But he's not sure what to do when his classmates make fun of Leslie, an artist, who towers over everyone and wears paint-splattered overalls. As Mother's Day approaches, Antonio must choose whether — or how — to express his connection to both of the special women in his life. Rigoberto González's bilingual story about a nontraditional family resonates with all children who have been faced with speaking up for themselves or for the people they love. Cecilia Concepción Álvarez's paintings bring the tale to life in tender, richly-hued detail.

Discussion Questions:

- Why does Antonio blush when Leslie comes to pick him up?
- How does Antonio's viewpoint about Leslie and the makeup of his family change throughout the story?
- What theme(s) do you think Rigoberto González develops in Antonio's Card/La Tarjeta de Antonio? What makes you think that?
- Why do you think Rigoberto González wrote the story in both English and Spanish?
- What elements of diversity do you find in this story? How are they diverse? What does that mean to you?
- Why do you think Antonio suggested that Leslie didn't need to meet him after school to his mother?
- Rigoberto González uses similes for effect. One of them is "The school empties out like a spilled bag of marbles." What other similes or interesting descriptions can you find? When does the author use these in the story? Why?
- Why is Antonio embarrassed by Leslie? What are the different pieces of evidence that demonstrates his feeling towards her? How do they change?
- In what ways is spelling a recurring event in the story?
- Why do you think Antonio's hand freezes on his card?
- The day of the display, why isn't Antonio in the mood for word games?
- What makes Antonio realize how much Leslie means to him?
- What other story does Antonio's Card/La Tarjeta de Antonio remind you of? Why?

- Why do you think Mami lets Antonio decide what to do about the card and the display? Do you think this was the right choice?
- What role does art play in this story?
- How do Antonio, his mother, and Leslie take care of one another?
- What is the purpose of Mother's Day? How does this story demonstrate that?
- How would this story change if it was told in first person? Why do you think Rigoberto González chose 3rd person?
- Most of the images are at the ground level, but the image on page 28 is more of a birds-eye view. Why is this significant given the text? How does the shift in imagery mirror the shift in Antonio's thinking?
- If you were Antonio, would you make the same choices he did in Antonio's Card/La Tarjeta de Antonio? Why or why not?
- How do you think the story would change if Antonio did not put his card on display?
- What does it mean to be a family? What are the different qualities that make up a family?