

'Sometimes, to be in a classroom with all Anglo students,' Guadelupe Moreno says, 'it's hard — they get a little shy and don't want to raise their hands. But in a classroom with all Hispanic students, their confidence gets better.'

wondering what she was doing, but others picked up the cue and began to sing along, giggling and pointing at each other.

To learn more English, older kids might look at books such as *Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English* by Alma Flor Ada. Each letter begins a short poem, accompanied by illustrations of work in the fields or Mexican cultural heritage. In the library, there are also books like *Doble Fudge* and *Las Aventuras del Capitán Calzoncillos*, even *Harry Potter y la Orden del Fénix*.

Older kids complete projects that fit with state standards. Last year, in Bartlett's third and fourth grade class, each child researched a historical or contemporary Latino figure like Dolores Huerta or Pancho Villa. The class created a timeline for their famous people, and traced and colored portraits, writing a few sentences of information under the portrait. This year, who knows? With geography as the focus, they might create a huge map of Mexico, helping them see where many of their parents came from, the places their grandparents and cousins call home.

On June 5th, 4-year-old Judy Cervantes ran up the aisle between the tables in Westmoreland Elementary School's gym. Her black patent shoes tapped the floor; her face beamed as she accepted her "diploma" for participating in MEP during the school year. Just a few minutes before, she and 18 other small-to-medium-sized kids lined the front of the gym to sing about *elefantes* who kept doing something silly and losing some of their cohort, very like the counting song in English about the little bear who said, "I'm crowded, roll over!"

Suddenly, it was time for *las mamás y los papás* to accept their certificates for completing a course in English or a computer course. The parents — Rosio Diaz, Teresa

Figueiroa, Victor Ramos, and many more — blushed and smiled as the adults clapped and kids cheered. In Spanish, teacher Leticia Raspa said to the parents, "It's important to give an example to your kids. This is in order to give a better life to them." The kids ate ice cream and cake; older kids switched between Spanish and English or spoke Spanglish, a quick and easy mixture.

Josefina Cardenas, who comes from the state of Sonora, near Arizona, understands

much English but speaks mostly Spanish. Through an interpreter, she said that her 6-year-old son learned a lot in last year's summer school, not only about Mexican culture but also academic information that helped him continue to succeed in school. Olivia Hernandez, another mom, comes from Michoacán, an Atlantic state in central Mexico. All three of her kids have attended summer school, and she says learning about their own culture helps them when they go

to "regular" school. Hernandez came to the first day of summer school, accompanying the children and making sure things were running smoothly.

Nancy Bray is the director of the English Language Learning program for the Springfield School District. With about 80 students qualifying this year as migrants or kids of migrant parents, and after years of work in the Migrant



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