

HOLIDAY HOUSE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



MY FRIEND MI AMIGO

by René Colato Laínez • illustrated by Nomar Perez



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ABOUT THE SERIES

Perfect for preschoolers, kindergarteners, and first and second graders who are learning to speak or read English and Spanish. A delightful reading experience for bilingual families.

René Colato Laínez, a teacher in a bilingual kindergarten classroom, has crafted an ingenious story that authentically and naturally uses conversation to introduce children to English and Spanish. The fun friendship story engages children, while simple words, short sentences, and a glossary reinforce learning.

Nomar Perez, illustrator of best-selling children's books as well as greeting cards, has a bright, bold, colorful, kid-pleasing style that invites readers to befriend the characters in this book.

PRAISE FOR THE SERIES

★ “Laínez’s bilingual teaching background shows through in this well-constructed story, and the simple text works for those learning either language. . . . A fantastic addition to any early childhood classroom.” —*Booklist*, Starred Review for *Let’s Be Friends*

“Colorful artwork and detailed pictures keep readers engaged. . . . a simple story with delightful characters for beginning readers or those learning a new language.” —*School Library Journal*, Starred Review for *Let’s Be Friends*

“The bilingual sentence repetition . . . creates a realistic and seamless narrative that young children can easily follow while developing both English and Spanish skills. The illustrations are vibrant. . . . A bright, sweet story about friendship, teamwork, and the joy of soccer.” —*Kirkus Reviews*, Review for *We Play Soccer*



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#MyFriendMiAmigo



Let's Be Friends Seamos Amigos

by René Colato Laínez
illustrated by Nomar Perez

MY FRIEND MI AMIGO

ABOUT THE BOOK

Hi! ¡Hola! A friendship story in English and Spanish! ¡Un cuento de amistad en inglés y español!

Rene Colato Lainez, a teacher in a bilingual kindergarten classroom, has crafted an ingenious series that authentically and naturally uses conversation to introduce children to English and Spanish. The fun friendship stories engages children while simple words, short sentences, and a glossary reinforce learning.

It's the first day of school and two students who speak two different languages, Joe and José, meet for the first time. As the two get to know each other, whatever Joe says in English, José says in Spanish. The students learn to paint together, embracing both their similarities and differences along the way in this bilingual picture book.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Study the front cover of the book. Which boy's native language is English? Which boy speaks Spanish? Theme is what the book is about. Consider the title of the book, and discuss the theme of the story.
- What does the illustration on the back cover reveal about what Joe and José enjoy doing? What are the items on the end pages? How do these things connect to the back cover art?
- Joe and José meet in their classroom at school. Look closely at the first double-page spread. How are the boys friendly to one another in spite of their cultural differences? Describe their teacher. How does she react to the boys greeting one another?
- Joe introduces himself in English, and José in Spanish. Study the hand motions of both boys throughout the story. Explain how their hands help communicate what they are saying to one another.
- Why do you think the boys are wearing aprons? Explain why each boy has only three colors of paint. Name the colors in English and Spanish. What is so important about red (rojo), yellow (amarillo), and blue (azul)?
- Joe says that he needs green. How does this give both boys an idea? Explain how they make green. What color does yellow and red make? How do the boys make purple?
- Study the last double-page spread. How are Joe and José's pictures alike? How are they different? Name all the colors in their pictures. What is the purple object in Joe's painting? Why do you think José put an airplane in his picture? Explain how the pictures show how each boy sees the world around them.
- Joe and José are from different cultures. They each paint a sun (sol), a house (casa), sky (cielo), and flowers (flores). How does art unite the two cultures?
- Look at the last page. What does a high five mean in both languages?



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We Play Soccer *Jugamos al Fútbol*

by René Colato Laínez
illustrated by Nomar Perez

MY FRIEND MI AMIGO

ABOUT THE BOOK

Joe speaks English. He loves soccer. José habla español. A José le gusta el fútbol. This story is in English and Spanish!

Two boys, an English speaker and a Spanish speaker, are on the same soccer team. They have their uniforms and their cleats. They can both juggle the ball. At first, the boys must wait on the bench. But when the coach lets them in the game, both Joe and José score goals. “We win,” says Joe. “Ganamos,” says José.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discuss the front cover illustrations and the book title. What do you notice about these words? (point to the red words, *jugamos al fútbol*) You might not recognize these words because they are Spanish, not English. Explain that “jugamos” means “we play” and “al fútbol” means soccer. The game of soccer is called football in other parts of the world.
- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What happens at the beginning? What happens in the middle? How does the story end?
- How do the boys feel? Why? How do you know?
- José and Joe speak different languages. How can they be friends?

ABOUT THE CREATORS



René Colato Laínez is the author of several bilingual picture books, including *Senor Pancho Had a Rancho*, *¡Vamonos! Let's Go!*, and *Playing Lotería*, which was nominated for the Tejas Star Book Award, the K–6 bilingual counterpart to the Texas Bluebonnet Award. He lives in California, where he teaches a bilingual kindergarten class. Through his work as both an author and an educator, René hopes to help all children develop positive self-images.



Nomar Perez grew up in Ponce, Puerto Rico, where “an amazing array of colors, sounds, and flavors” influenced his artistic life. He is the illustrator of two bestselling books: *All Day Long, God Loves Me* and *Everywhere I Go, God is With Me*. He is also a staff artist at American Greetings. Nomar currently lives in Cleveland, Ohio.

Photo Credit: Farah Perez



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#WePlaySoccer