



Barrio Rising: The Protest that Built Chicano Park

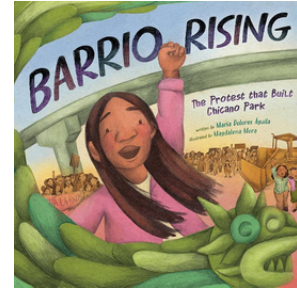
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Grades K-5

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Reading Guide by Stephanie Johnson, Southland Council of Teachers of English

Discussion Questions

1. Look at the pictures and the words on the front and back covers of this book. What kind of story do you think this book might tell? What gives you that impression, and why?
2. Notice the trees on the front and back covers, as well as throughout the book. Research what these trees are, and what they symbolize. What do they foreshadow about the events contained within the book?
3. What is the setting of this story? When and where does it take place? Have you ever visited this area in San Diego, or a place similar to it? List the things that made, and make, Chicano Park special. What made it worth fighting for?
4. The Spanish word *valiente* appears throughout the story. What does this word mean? How do the narrator, Doña Laura, Mami, and their neighbors show they are *valiente*?
5. When the narrator and Mami first see the earth movers, what do they hope is happening at the construction site? What do they realize is actually being built under the bridge?
6. How does Doña Laura “stand up” to the bulldozers? List the different ways that she and many others protest the construction.
7. What do the people of the barrio and their supporters do when Councilman Leon Williams announces what has been decided about the site?
8. In “A Brief History of Chicano Park,” author Maria Delores Águila recognizes several people for their efforts to build Chicano Park: Mario Solis, Laura Rodriguez, Salvador Torres, and Councilman Leon Williams. What did each of those four people do to create Chicano Park? How are they represented in this story?



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9. What does the story of Chicano Park teach us? What were the key factors that led to the community's success in creating it?
10. Not every place that people fight for ends up being saved, or turned into a place they want. Research a site in your city that people cared about that was ultimately demolished, or turned into something else. Compare that site to Chicano Park. What do the two sites have in common? What is different about them? Why was Chicano Park successful, while the site you selected wasn't?
11. Is there a park you enjoy? Do you know the history of that park? How can you learn more about the history of a park?

EXPLORE

Beyond This Book

The Historic Places in L.A. section of the L.A. Conservancy website features a wealth of information about even more parks in Southern California.

Many parks feature jacaranda trees. To learn more about this tree, celebrated as the official Urban Tree of the City of San Diego, see The City of San Diego website.

