

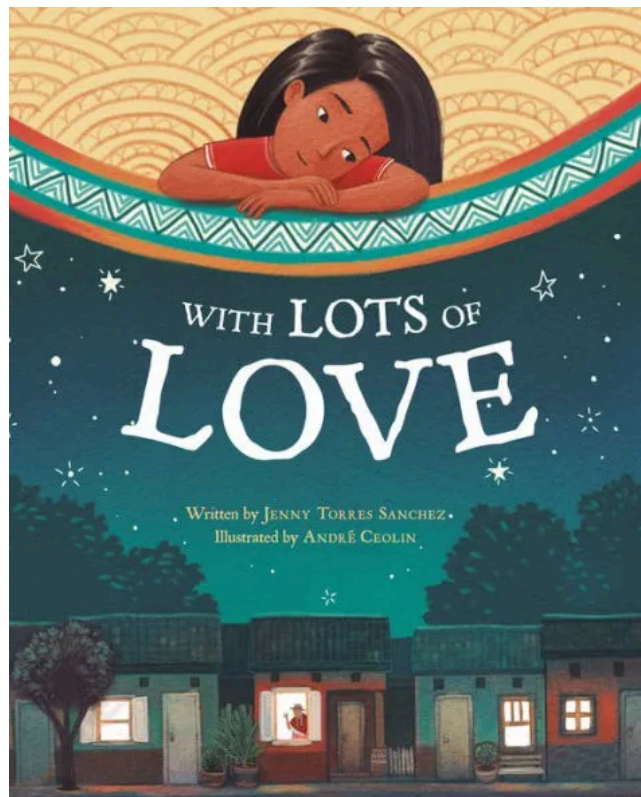
# JOLLE@UGA<sup>®</sup>

JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

## Review of *With Lots of Love* Written by Jenny Torres Sanchez

**Adult/ Educator Reviewer:** Ngan Bich Vu,  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

**Child/ Student Reviewer:** Lexani Hernandez, Kindergarten  
Ari I. Velasquez, 2nd Grade Student



Jenny, S. (2022). *With Lots of Love*. Penguin Young Readers Group.

ISBN: 978059320500

### **Adult's Review:**

"Con mucho amor" translated as "With lots of love" written by Jenny Torres Sanchez and illustrated by André Ceolin (2022) is an endearing children's book. Its lyrical language and heartwarming illustration capture Rocio's layers of emotions. Rocio has to move to the United States and leave her home in Central America and the people whom she holds dearly in her heart. The story unfolds with Rocio's missing Abuela's small grocery store filled with freshness, invoking many hearty sensory memories. And, above all, she misses Abuela and all the simple precious time and things they shared, such as Abuela's unique piñata made especially for Rocio or their bedtime moments. On the night before her birthday, she seeks for the brightest star which resembles Abuela's unique piñata, and makes a wish. Just as if Abuela hears the wishes traversing space, Rocio is filled with happiness when receiving Abuela's 'con mucho amor/with lots of love' package the next morning. Rocio knows that Abuela is always with her no matter how far apart they are, and hence Rocio, with lots of love, kisses Abuela good night.

While the book is ideal for young readers, readers of all ages can find parts of themselves in Rocio's emotional journey as Rocio moves across spaces; and, for adult readers, it can open their hearts and minds to carefully listen to the children's stories and border crossing experiences. With vivid details written in imagery languages, the book awakens readers' senses in order to touch, smell, taste, hear, and see what Rocio misses about her everyday life with Abuela in Central America. As if, readers are invited to share the space in Rocio's memories, longing, and happiness. The delicate illustrations add depth and liveliness to the lyrical written words, which bring Rocio and her family members closer to us, the readers. In addition, the choice of illustrative color makes the story relatable, wishful, and warming. Equally important, the book is accessible in Spanish and English language, making it an appealing resource for all children to explore diverse life experiences. In the English-translated version, many words are deliberately kept in Spanish which honors the everyday life of her beloved communities and Rocio's unique life events traversing different spaces whether the spaces are bounded or unbounded by geographical borders. Therefore, the combination of crucial and relevant social themes and charming illustrations makes "Con mucho amor" an important text for readers of all ages and various backgrounds to engage in and reflect on the physical, emotional, and metaphorical border crossings.

It is important to approach discussions on movement across borders with sensitivity since the discussions can evoke vulnerable personal emotions, especially for children whose voices are sometimes unheard. In addition, as each person's life experiences differ, it is essential to build a supportive community among readers/students so that everyone can practice listening and communicate their ideas and emotions about movement across borders with respect and compassion. As one way to incorporate "Con mucho amor" in the classroom with care, the children should have opportunities to voice their thoughts and emotions in meaningful multimodal ways to capture their holistic experiences. And, teachers should ask the children for their opinions on which way they would like to share or whether they would like to share their stories publicly because some children might feel hesitant and vulnerable.

**Students' Review:**

Nuestra parte favorita es cuando sus primos, tíos, y abuelos le dieron los regalos a Rocio. Rocio recibió una piñata y unas tortillas. Rocio se despertó en la mañana con las mañanitas que-le cantaron su mamá, papá, hermana y hermano.

Our favorite part is when her cousins, uncles, and grandparents send Rocio gifts. Rocio received a piñata and tortillas. Rocio woke up in the morning to las mañanitas that her mother, father, sister, and brother were singing to her.

