StoryMakers

Marvelous Cornelius'

John Parra

A Student Viewing Guide

This student viewing guide is designed for students in first through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

This Viewing Guide focuses on "listening and observing" questions which relate directly to the KidLit TV episode and are designed to engage students through the viewing of the episode of study through comprehension and prediction questions, and one or two written activities.

All activities were created in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts in Speaking and Listening and other relevant content standards.

John Parra has illustrated multiple books for early and bilingual readers. He is a two-time recipient of the Pura Belpre Honor which recognizes a Latino/Latina writers and illustrators whose work affirms and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in children's literature.

Marvelous Cornelius: Hurricane Katrina and the Spirit of New Orleans isn't typical of the books John Parra has illustrated in the past. The picture book, written by Phil Bildner, is a recount of life post-Hurricane Katrina. Real-life New Orleans, Louisiana sanitation worker Cornelius Washington serves as the jubilant focal point of the story. Parra captures Cornelius' callouts and tricks through his vivid and bold painting style. The infectious spirit and *waterproof soul* of Cornelius Washington, as interpreted by Phil's prose and John's illustrations, solidifies *Marvelous Cornelius: Hurricane Katrina and the Spirit of New Orleans* as a strong modern-day folktale.

Watch to find out why Rocco's favorite book illustrated by John is *Round Is a Tortilla*, what publishers John will illustrate for next, and to get familiar with diverse books that will enhance the lives of young readers whether they are your children or students.

Storymakers episode available at:

http://kidlit.tv/2015/12/storymakers-marvelous-cornelius-john-parra/

Standby

Before Viewing

You are about to watch an interview with illustrator John Parra.

- Do you know what an "interview" is? If so, explain in your own words. If not, look up the definition in a dictionary.
- Do you know what an "illustrator" is? If so, explain in your own words. If not, look up the definition in a dictionary.

John Parra has illustrated several books.

If possible, create a classroom library of John's books prior to viewing the Storymakers episode. Share a few of the books with the class.

Discuss the following:

- What are some questions that you think host Rocco Staino will ask John Parra? Create a list.

Lights, Camera…

While You (and Your Class) Watch

Please Note that some students might find it necessary to watch the Storymakers episode more than once. Repeated viewings should be encouraged.

<u>What do you see?</u>

- Pause the video.
- Create a list of everything that you see.

<u>What do you hear?</u>

- Watch the video, paying close attention to everything that you hear.
- Whenever something is said that you think is important, write it down on a piece of paper. This is called "taking notes."
- OR, as a class, whenever something is said that you think is important, raise your hand so the teacher can pause the video and jot down notes.

<u>Fast Quiz</u>

- How did Rocco and John first meet?
- What color bowtie is Rocco wearing in the video?
- Explain what *Marvelous Cornelius* is about in your own words.
- Where did the author, Phil Bildner, get the inspiration to write *Marvelous Cornelius*?
- Name two or three other John Parra books.
- What is the Pura Belpre Award that John Parra has received? How many has he received?
- Who else in John Parra's family is an artist?
- What was wrong with John's baseball illustration? Who caught the mistake?
- Name one of the three publishers John is about to work with on future books.
- How can someone purchase a piece of John Parra's artwork?

Action!

After Viewing Acitivites

<u>Further More—Additional Research and Questions</u>

- What is one thing that you learned from the video that you didn't know before?

- Look closely at the list of questions you created before the viewing. Did Rocco ask any of the questions you predicted he would? If not, what do you still want to know?
- Visit http://www.johnparraart.com/ for further research and to see if your outstanding question(s) was answered there.
- If you could interview John Parra what is one question you would ask?
- Compile your questions and send them to John, either through the Contact page on his website, http://www.johnparraart.com/or via his Twitter feed at @johnparraart. Be sure to use #kidlittv in your Tweet.

Dear Cornelius, Thank You

Marvelous Cornelius is a book about a real-life garbage man from New Orleans and his experience in Hurricane Katrina and the clean up afterward.

You can view a video interview with the real Cornelius Washington at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33TEd_D7uJw. (WARNING: This video does include some language and is rated PG).

You can view the official book trailer at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvhY8sN4iFs.

Using Cornelius Washington as inspiration, write a thank you letter to someone in your neighborhood or town who takes time to be kind and help others. Some examples would be a crossing guard, teacher, bus driver, or postal worker.

The letter should include:

- a brief re-cap of what this person has done to show kindness
- a thank you
- a closing

Then, using John Parra's illustrations as inspiration, create a piece of artwork for your thank you letter.

As a class, invite these special people to the class for a party and present the thank you notes to them.

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