

## Botellas y Latas (Siempre Hay Esperanza)

By Andrés Guzmán

Illustrated by Joe Cepeda

Curriculum developed by Katy Eyberg



### OVERVIEW

#### Quick-Glance 10 Points for Usage Guide

<b>Student Population</b>	
Age/Grade-Level Appropriateness	* 13+/8th+
Genre/s	* Fiction * Short Story
Length	* 2,235 words (10-minute read)

Content Advisories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* References to alcohol</li> <li>* References to drugs</li> <li>* Reference to gang activity</li> <li>* The words “shit” and “fuck” are used</li> </ul>
One-Sentence Summary	A Salvadoran American girl finds unexpected inspiration to pursue her dreams while picking up cans and bottles in downtown Los Angeles.
<b>Lesson Planning</b>	
Topics & Key Themes Overview	<p><b>Topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Family</li> <li>* Money</li> <li>* Poverty</li> <li>* Culture</li> <li>* Ambition</li> <li>* Language</li> <li>* Immigration</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Future ambitions and hopes</li> <li>* Surviving to meet basic needs</li> <li>* The value of a strong work ethic</li> <li>* Persistence in the face of adversity</li> <li>* Immigrant challenges in the United States</li> <li>* Tension between native language and dominant language</li> </ul>
Historic Events/Time Period for Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Salvadoran diaspora in Los Angeles</li> <li>* César Chávez and the United Farm Workers of America</li> </ul>
Complementary Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Article: “How to Make Money Collecting Bottles and Cans” by Malia Wollan: <a href="https://nyti.ms/2Yh5auX">https://nyti.ms/2Yh5auX</a></li> <li>* Article: “U.S. Decision to End Salvadorans’ Status Reverberates Through El Salvador” by Nurith Aizenman: <a href="https://n.pr/2FI2VnQ">https://n.pr/2FI2VnQ</a></li> <li>* Video: “How Recycling Plastic Helps the Homeless Make Money” by NBC Left Field: <a href="https://bit.ly/2Czafp3">https://bit.ly/2Czafp3</a></li> <li>* Video: “Hull Man Raises \$100,000 Recycling Bottles and Cans” by CBS Boston: <a href="https://bit.ly/2HzvgR3">https://bit.ly/2HzvgR3</a></li> </ul>
Author & Artist Information	<p><b>Andrés Guzmán</b> is a writer and a hip-hop artist based in Los Angeles.  <b>Joe Cepeda</b> is an illustrator based in Southern California.</p>
Key Common Core Standards (found in detail following the curriculum)	<p>Grade 8 Common Core Standards:</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.1          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.4          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.5</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.5</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2.A          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2.B          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3          CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.B</p>

	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.4 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.7</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.1.B CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.2 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.C CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.6</p> <p>* Note: Questions recommended for assessment are marked with two asterisks.</p>
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### Author Biography

**Andrés Guzmán** was raised in Union City, New Jersey. He recently earned his BA in creative writing from the University of Southern California. He currently lives in Los Angeles. He is a voracious reader of Mexican American and African American history, and he loves hip-hop music. He is pursuing a career as a hip-hop artist and seeking work in hip-hop radio or in education to help low-income, first-generation students achieve their college degrees.

### Artist Biography

**Joe Cepeda** received his BFA in illustration from California State University, Long Beach and studied engineering at Cornell University. He is the illustrator of award-winning picture books, such as *What a Truly Cool World* (Scholastic), *Nappy Hair* (Knopf), *Mice and Beans* (Scholastic) and *The Swing* (Arthur A. Levine Books), which he also wrote.

He has illustrated books written by authors including Gary Soto, Pam Muñoz Ryan, Arnold Adoff, Monica Brown, Julius Lester, and Toni Morrison. He has also illustrated book jackets for several titles, including *Esperanza Rising* and Newbery Medal-winner *Merci Suárez Changes Gears*. He was selected to illustrate the cover of Reading Is Fundamental and Shaquille O’Neal’s *Biggest Children’s Book in the World*.

In 2000, he received the Recognition of Merit Award from the George G. Stone Center for Children’s Books. In 2002, he received an American Library Association Pura Belpré Award. His work has been accepted to the Society of Illustrators’ shows in New York and Los Angeles. In 2016, Joe was awarded a Capstone Fellowship in Children’s Literature. He is the president of the Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles. He lives in Southern California.

### SYNOPSIS

Saying they need extra cash to make ends meet, Lupe’s mother wakes her up early one Saturday morning to help collect cans and bottles for recycling. At first, this mortifies Lupe, and she reluctantly helps her mother, who scolds her for not speaking Spanish. They walk toward downtown Los Angeles, where they notice alleys filled with trash, beer cans, and bottles. Eventually, Lupe and her mother happen upon the University of Southern California, where Lupe finds hope and inspiration to achieve a better life.

## CURRICULUM

### Pre-Reading & Themes Activity Options

#### Topic

Mini-Research Project:

In groups of two to three students, pick one of the following topics to research:

- Poverty in Los Angeles
- Poverty in the United States
- Poverty in Latin America
- Poverty in Africa
- Poverty in Asia
- Poverty in Europe
- Poverty in Australia
- Poverty lines in Los Angeles, the United States, and across the world
- Relative poverty vs. absolute poverty

Using reliable sources, find five to 10 facts about your topic. Write them down, and note your sources. After 30 minutes, share what you have learned with the class.

Option One: Ask each group to write at least five of their facts on the whiteboard to create a gallery walk of information about poverty.

Option Two: Create an infographic combining facts, images, and graphs or charts to show at least five of the facts your group researched.

Note: You may wish to adjust group size and/or topics according to your class size.

#### Main Ideas

Journaling:

In a 10-minute journal entry, respond to the following questions:

- What do you enjoy doing? What are your strengths?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the future?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
- Do you think people should have hopes and dreams? Why or why not?
- Many students are told to “shoot for the moon” and that anything is possible. Is this good advice? Why or why not?

#### Passage-Specific Themes

Discussion:

Read the following passage from “Botellas y Latas (Siempre Hay Esperanza).” Discuss the questions below in small groups or as a class:

Lupe looked at the top of the palm trees, the sky, then looked down at her surroundings: the cracked sidewalks with debris, dirt, and dust. Scattered throughout the block were torn

mattresses, broken computer desks, tires, shattered glass. Cigarette butts were strewn over the concrete, with some tucked in the cracks. Broken bottle glass littered in the alleys. The neighborhood had a whiff of spoiled vegetables mixed with gasoline and smoke, a smell Lupe hated. On the corner of her block, two signs read “Florence Av” and “Figueroa.” Both words sounded Spanish to Lupe, words that she might have heard back in El Salvador.

Question One: Where does the story take place? How do you know?

Question Two: What does the story’s setting reveal about Lupe’s family?

Question Three: How do you think the story’s setting impacts Lupe’s life?

**Universal Themes**

Discussion & Journaling:

Imagine you are moving to a new, unfamiliar city, where most people do not speak your language or share your culture. You move to this city because it has opportunities that can give you a better life. With a partner, make a list of 10 items you need to survive and 10 items you want to have.

After you and your partner agree on your 20 items, remove five from each list. You and your partner must agree on the 10 items to remove.

After you and your partner agree on your 10 items to remove, take away two more items from each list. You and your partner must agree on the four items to remove.

With your partner, discuss the difference between needs and wants. In a five-minute journal entry, respond to the following questions:

- How did this exercise make you feel?
- Did you and your partner agree on the items to remove? Why or why not?
- What is the difference between needs and wants?
- What did you learn from this activity?

**Key Vocabulary**

Definitions are context-dependent. Make sure any definitions you look up or work from are the ones that most correctly fit in the context of the story.

Level One	Level Two	Level Three
hoisted	congregated	levántate
debris	inverted	chanclas
strewn	intimidated	casamiento
meditated	yearning	No me importa.
	enraptured	huelga
	disposition	Si se puede.
		botellas

		latas
		esperanza
		AFL-CIO

### Vocabulary Activity Options

1. Pick five Spanish words or phrases from the story. Translate and define them. Explain where they occur in the story and their significance. What is the effect of having so much Spanish in an English-language story? What do the two languages reveal or emphasize about the characters and their relationship? What is the significance of Guzmán's choice to sometimes use Spanish accents and sometimes not? Respond to these questions in a brief paragraph. Cite textual evidence to support your insight.

Optional: Alongside each Spanish word or phrase, translation, and definition, draw a picture illustrating its meaning.

2. Use a dictionary to define yearning. Write a brief paragraph in response to the following questions: What does this word mean? How does its definition differ from want, a more commonly heard word? What do you yearn for in your life? Next, create a collage showing your yearnings, and present it to the class.
3. Use a dictionary to define disposition. What does this word mean? Pick three people in your life and, in your journal, describe their respective dispositions in three to six complete sentences. Share your descriptions with two to three classmates. Compare your descriptions with those of your peers. How are they similar and/or different? Discuss in small groups.

### Post-Reading Class Discussion Options

1. Why does Lupe dislike picking up bottles and cans with her mother? If you were in Lupe's shoes, would you behave in a similar way? Why or why not?
2. At the breakfast table, why does Lupe's mother seem uninterested in Lupe's art and progress at school? Is Lupe's mother cruel, or is her mind on more urgent issues? What about Lupe's mother's experiences may cause her to appear uninterested in Lupe's art and progress at school? How important is a parent's support for a child's interests and hobbies?
3. In the face of adversity and difficulty in meeting immediate needs, do you think having long-term hopes and dreams is impractical and/or a waste of time? Why or why not?
4. At the end of the story, how does Lupe's mother respond to her daughter's question? Why do you think "a wave of concern passed over her face" after she praised Lupe's work?

### \*\* Text-Dependent Question Options

1. How does Lupe feel about speaking Spanish? How does her attitude change from the beginning to the end of the story? Cite textual evidence.
2. What is Lupe's mother's attitude toward Lupe's interest in art? How does it change from the beginning to the end of the story? Refer to the text.

3. In literature, symbols are objects with deeper meaning than their physical presence. This means they're more than just objects; they help reveal theme, conflict, and/or character traits. What is a symbol in "Botellas y Latas"? What does the symbol mean? What does it reveal about the story's theme, conflict, and/or characters? Cite specific textual evidence to support your answer.
4. Study the story's artwork. Why do you think the artist, Joe Cepeda, chose to illustrate the butterflies in Lupe's notebook? What might butterflies symbolize in the story?

## Writing Exercises

### Narrative

Option One:

Guzmán's story is about a mother forcing her daughter to help her collect botellas y latas. Throughout the story, the mother and daughter clash over their different priorities. Adults and adolescents often experience this conflict.

When have you experienced this? What happened? Who were the adult(s) in your life, and what were they pressuring you to do? What happened? How did you feel before, during, and after this experience?

Write a 500-word creative short story based on your own experiences.

Option Two:

A found poem is created by selecting words from a text and using only those words to write a poem. Select no more than five words from each page of the story. Use these words to write a found poem reflecting either Lupe or her mother's perspective in the story.

Read your poem aloud to a partner.

### Descriptive

Much of this story focuses on a built environment, the man-made features of Lupe's surroundings. Lupe's built environment lacks resources and greenspace, but it has culturally significant murals and, eventually, access to the University of Southern California.

Think about your built environment. Consider its contrasts, its assets, and its deficiencies. Explore your built environment with all your senses: What does it look like? How does it smell? What tastes or flavors do you associate with it? What noises do you hear in it? What textures do you feel in it?

Write a one- to two-page description of your built environment. Share your description with a partner. Compare your descriptions. How are they similar and/or different? Discuss.

### \*\* Analysis

Creative writers often incorporate contrasts into their writing. Readers can identify and analyze these contrasts by giving them formal names like juxtaposition, antithesis, or irony.

"Botellas y Latas" features many contrasts, or instances in which opposing ideas, statements, or details occur near each other. Re-read the story, and look for contrasts. Then, write a one- to two-page analysis, in which you discuss a contrast and its significance in the story.

### Complementary Text Option

Read the following article, which was written in 2016 by Malia Wollan and published in the *New York Times Magazine*. Complete the writing exercise below.

#### **How to Make Money Collecting Bottles and Cans** **By Malia Wollan**

“Kick the bag first so the rats run out,” says Eugene Gadsden, a self-described canner. After that, dig carefully: You might encounter shards of glass, dog feces or worse. The revulsion is the cost of independence. “In canning, you go where you want and do what you want,” Gadsden says. “You’re your own boss.”

Gadsden began gathering cans and bottles in his 20s, after moving to New York from Charleston, S.C., to be near his baby son. In the 30 some years since, he has mostly subsisted on New York’s 5-cent container deposits. Along the way, he has taught dozens of new canners, including a Catholic nun with whom he founded Sure We Can, a recycling-redemption center in Brooklyn. Gadsden encourages fellow scavengers to tidy up. If you open someone’s bags, retie them. “Leave it the way you found it,” he says.

Target a neighborhood and get to know the terrain. Research the city’s recycling-collection days. Be on the street soon after people roll out their refuse for pickup. “Being consistent at the same spot means you know where the cans are,” says Gadsden, who learned his trade in Midtown Manhattan and has considered it his territory ever since. First come first served is a basic canner tenet. Gadsden usually starts at 1 a.m. and works until about 7 a.m. In that time, he’ll collect 1,000 or more containers, worth \$50 or so.

To make any money, you need to be in one of the 10 states where glass, aluminum and plastic containers are worth 2 to 15 cents each. You’ll also need a shopping cart. Find one that rolls smoothly and fits your stature and style. Fill the main compartment with evenly distributed glass; off-kilter and heavily loaded carts tip over easily. Put lighter aluminum and plastic in large trash bags and hook them to the outside of your cart using sticks.

In the beginning, prepare to feel ashamed, humiliated. People might yell at you: Stop digging through the garbage. Or, Get a real job. Don’t listen. “Hold your head up,” Gadsden says. “You’re not hurting anybody. It’s honest work.”

#### **\*\* Writing Exercise**

Journaling:

In a 10-minute journal entry, explore the following questions:

In literature, tone is an author’s attitude.

In “Botellas y Latas,” what is the author’s tone in regards to the act of picking up bottles and cans from the street for money? In “How to Make Money Collecting Bottles and Cans,” what is the author’s tone regarding this same activity?

Compare and contrast these tones. How are they similar and/or different? Use specific evidence from both texts to support your answer.

Optional: Ask students to write a one- to two-paragraph response, in which they cite textual evidence, to support their analyses.



## Activity Options

### Classroom Activity One

In small groups, select and research a specific immigrant population in Southern California. Assign one or more group members the following roles:

- Content Manager: the lead researcher who ensures the group finds enough reliable information
- Designer: the artist who leads the team in designing the poster
- Presenter: the speaker who leads the class presentation
- Citation Manager: the researcher who compiles appropriate citations for all outside sources

Part One: As a group, select one specific immigrant population in Southern California. Research where this population lives, how it came to settle there, and why.

Part Two: Compile the most important information to sufficiently answer the above questions. Don't shy away from complexities; instead, embrace them. Distill this information into clear, concise components for a poster presentation.

Part Three: Assemble your poster with your research. Be sure to include compelling headings, bulleted information, graphics, and citations.

Part Four: Present your poster to the class. Answer questions from your teacher and peers.

Five-Minute Quickwrite:

In your journal, reflect on the experience of working with your group. How well did you work together? How did you contribute to the project? Did the division of labor through specific roles help your group? Why or why not? If you were to do this project again, what would you do differently? Why?

### Classroom Activity Two

Imagine Lupe's reaction to her mother's response at the end of the story. In one to two pages, write her reaction and a different ending to the story.

When you finish rewriting the story's ending, read it aloud to the rest of the class. Ideally, everyone in the class will have an alternative ending to share.

Five-Minute Quickwrite:

Once you hear your classmates' alternative endings, write a brief reflection in your journal. Which ending did you most prefer? Why?

### Home Activity

Observe your surroundings. Pay close attention to your built environment. What surrounds your home? Do you live near major roads or highways? Do you have a local park or other greenspace?

Using one piece of blank paper, make a map of your home and its surrounding area. Create a map key to identify landmarks that are a part of your built environment. Turn your map into your teacher.

### Guest Speaker

Option One: Invite the author, Andrés Guzmán, to speak to the class about his story and his experience studying creative writing at the University of Southern California. Ask him to lead a writing workshop.

Option Two: Invite the artist, Joe Cepeda, to speak to the class about his inspiration for creating the story's artwork, as well as his path to becoming an illustrator. Ask him to lead an art workshop.

Note: *Literature for Life* helps coordinate and facilitate author and artist visits.

### Field Trip

Visit the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach (628 Alamitos Avenue). MOLAA is the only such museum in the United States.

Plan your visit here: <https://bit.ly/2FifBWc>

Onsite Writing Activity:

Select one piece of artwork you think relates to “Botellas y Latas,” either through its appearance or backstory. In a 10-minute journal entry, response to the following questions:

- How does the artwork relate to the story?
- Why did you select it?

Share your ideas with a partner before discussing as a class.

## COMMON CORE STANDARDS REFERENCE

*This story and its exercises are appropriate for 8th grade and above. Eighth-grade standards are cited.*

### Pre-Reading & Themes Activity Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2.A: Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2.B: Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

### **Vocabulary Activity Options**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.5: Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4.C: Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

### **Post-Reading Class Discussion Options**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

### **Text-Dependent Question Options**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

### **Writing Exercise Options**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inference drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.5: Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

### **Complementary Reading Text (Comparative Writing Exercise)**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.5: Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inference drawn from the text.

### **Activity Options**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.B: Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.1.B: Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.2: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.4: Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen detail; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.5: Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.