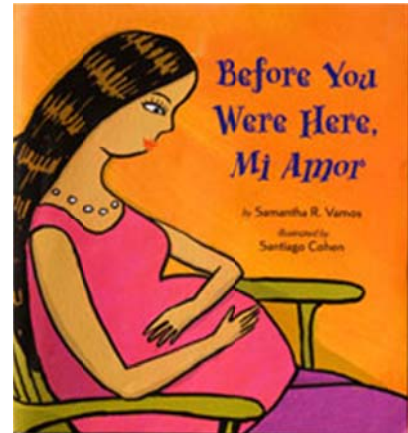


## Hosting a Successful Author Visit – Samantha R. Vamos

Schools and classrooms can build excitement about meeting an author as well as greater investment in the event by involving children in both preparation and promotion for the visit. Listed below are suggested ideas for enhancing and supporting an author visit specific to each of my books, followed by a list of general ideas applicable to both books.

### ***Before You Were Here, Mi Amor***

Read the book and familiarize students with the Spanish vocabulary. ***Before You Were Here, Mi Amor*** includes shapes, colors, animals, numbers, and family member titles in Spanish. To reinforce words, download the following activity sheets: Word Match and Word Search Puzzle.

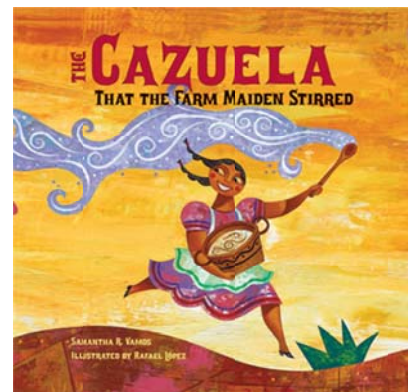


Download the activity sheet titled “**What Happened Before You Were Here?**” for children to utilize to interview their family members. Encourage students to record answers received in order to create their own story about what happened before they were born.

As the definition of “family” is an individual one, invite children to create a collage-style display of drawings and/or photos reflecting who constitutes their family.

### ***The Cazuela That The Farm Maiden Stirred***

Read the book and familiarize students with the Spanish vocabulary. Download the Discussion and Activity Guide, which includes illustrated vocabulary flashcards.



***The Cazuela That The Farm Maiden Stirred*** is a cumulative tale in which the action, characters, and language build and repeat, leading to a quick and abrupt climax. In a cumulative tale, generally one incident – in the case of ***The Cazuela That The Farm Maiden Stirred***, the farm maiden stirring the pot or *cazuela* – is the catalyst for a series of events. Cumulative tales also may be songs and include rhyming.

Discuss the meaning, rhythm, repetition, and often tongue-twisting nature of a cumulative tale. Introduce cumulative tales such as “This Is The House That Jack Built,” “The Gingerbread Man,” “There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed A Fly,” “The Napping House,” and “Bark, George.” Encourage children to try writing their own cumulative tales.

Download Activity sheet: Word Match.

Prepare the recipe for *Arroz con Leche*.

Invite students to write or videotape book reviews of either book for class use and/or online posting.

Create artwork (including, but not limited to, bookmarks, posters, placemats, banners, *etc.*) related to either book’s theme, story, or characters.

Discuss the structure of a picture book. Identify the book jacket including front cover, back cover, front flap with a paragraph summary of the story, and back flap with author and illustrator biographies. Identify the spine, title page, and back matter such as the glossary in *Before You Were Here, Mi Amor* or the recipe in *The Cazuela That The Farm Maiden Stirred*. Identify the author, illustrator, and publisher. Locate the publication date and inscription. Have children design a book jacket for a story they create.

Write a book jacket “biography blurb” of the visiting author with three facts about the author.

In advance of the author visit, ask students what they would like to know about the author. Encourage students to generate questions to pose to the author during a question and answer period.

Have visiting authors autograph and date a “guest book” recording school visits, and/or autograph a canvas director’s chair as the school’s “author chair.”

Celebrate students nominated by their teachers for exemplary reading, literacy, or other achievement, and arrange for a private meeting with the author.