

Separate Is Never Equal

A RIF GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

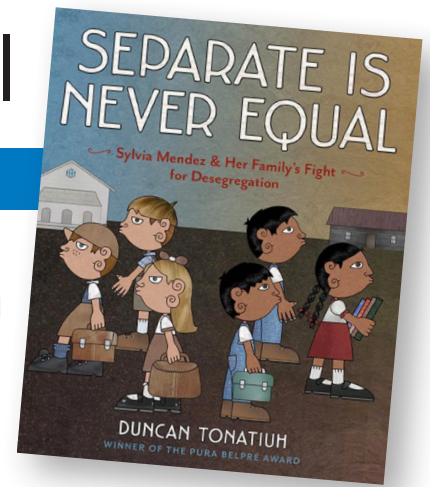
Themes: Civil Rights, Equality, Latino History

Grade Level: 1st to 4th grade

Book Brief: When Sylvia and her family moved from Santa Ana to Westminster in 1944, they were told that she and her siblings couldn't attend the school closest to them. Instead, they were sent to the "school for

Mexicans." This book tells the true story of Sylvia's fight for the right to attend her neighborhood school.

Author/Illustrator:
Duncan Tonatiuh



TIME TO READ!



Before reading, make predictions: Based on the pictures, where do you think the characters will go? What do you think will happen in the story? Have you ever heard of Sylvia Mendez?

While reading, ask questions:

- Why do you think Aunt Soledad was upset at school?
- What did Mr. Mendez do in response to the problem?
- How do you think the children felt about attending Hoover Elementary?
- Who took care of the farm while Mr. Mendez was traveling?
- Why did they go to court?
- How did Sylvia's story end?

After reading, summarize:

- What happened in the story? Retell the major events in your own words.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

TOMATO TREAT

Ingredients: 1 medium tomato, 1 bagel, shredded Monterey Jack cheese

Slice the tomato and cut the bagel into halves. Place a tomato slice on top of each bagel half. Sprinkle a bit of shredded cheese on top of the tomato. Place the bagel on a pan and bake at 350o until the cheese is melted and the bagel is browned. Let cool and enjoy!

IT'S NOT FAIR

The way that Sylvia's family was treated was very unfair. Write a letter to the principal in the story to persuade him why Sylvia should be able to attend the school she wanted. Then, make a list of things you feel are unfair at your own school, in your community, or in your city or state. How could these things be fixed or improved? With an adult's help,

write a letter to your teacher or principal explaining some of the problems and suggesting ideas to make them better. Be sure your tone is respectful and helpful!

SPREAD THE WORD

Materials: paper or poster board, markers or crayons

Mr. Mendez tried to get community support to integrate the schools. Is there an issue you feel strongly about that you want your community to get involved in? Make a poster or brochure that you can share to help raise awareness for your cause. Your art should be colorful, and remember that you need to include enough information that people know what they can do to help out! Hang or distribute your artwork somewhere lots of people will see it.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



OTHER BOOKS BY THIS AUTHOR

- **Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote: A Migrant's Tale (2013)**
- **Diego Rivera: His World and Ours (2011)**
- **Dear Primo: A Letter to My Cousin (2010)**