

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa , CLT, Ch 6

Summary:

Aracelis Flecha Figueroa traces her journey from rural Puerto Rico to becoming one of the first Latina principals in Chicago Public Schools. Along the way, she faces sexism, racism, language barriers, and political retaliation, yet continues to move into leadership roles. She also supports bilingual education, works with community organizations, and remains active in civic life after retirement.

The memoir stands out for its mix of hardship, humor, and resilience. Personal stories are woven into larger issues such as Puerto Rican migration, segregated schools, urban poverty, and educational inequality. Aracelis writes in a direct style that keeps the memoir personal and engaging.

Several moments are both funny and ironic. Her mother initially believes she has a tumor, only to learn she is pregnant with Aracelis, inspiring the title *If You Survive the Teas, You Can Survive Anything*. As a child, Aracelis rubs her Black teacher's arm to see if the color will come off, and the teacher gently replies, "It doesn't come off, honey."

The memoir also exposes contradictions in education and politics. Schools keep "ghost students" to protect funding, and programs meant to help struggling students sometimes discourage improvement. Despite these setbacks, Aracelis remains determined. Her closing line sums up her outlook: "I learned to survive in my mother's womb."

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa

Chicago Latina Trailblazer, Timeline

Early Life & Education

- 1936 Born Aracelis Flecha Medina Beltrán in Collores de Humacao, Puerto Rico.
- 1940s Family moved to Juncos, Puerto Rico; attended school
- 1950 Moved to Chicago to live with siblings and attend high school.
- 1951–1953 Milkman helped her enter Lake View High School in Chicago.
- 1953 Returned to Puerto Rico and graduated from José M. Gallardo High School.
- 1956 Graduated with high honors from the University of Puerto Rico.

Teaching & Educational Leadership

- 1956 Began teaching at Central de Juncos Second Unit in Puerto Rico.
- Late 1950s Taught English and counseled veterans and teenagers at El Mango Second Unit.
- 1958–1959 Returned to Chicago and continued work in education.
- 1977 One of the first Latina principals in Chicago Public Schools at Avondale Elementary.
- 1977–1984 Led Avondale Elementary while advocating for fair treatment of Latinos.
- 1984- 1988 District Superintendent District 5 - Chicago Public Schools.
 - Planned and saw completed the building of Pablo Casals Elementary School and Christa McAuliffe Elementary.
 - Worked with school principals to increase funds for bilingual education and hiring Latino teachers, teacher aids, psychologists and Social Workers.
 - Worked with school engineers to advocate for hiring Latino maintenance workers.
- Post-Retirement Principal, West Town Academy; Program development specialist for Youth Connection.

Community Activism & Politics

- 1970s–1980s Organized parents and students to challenge unequal treatment in schools.
- 1970s–1980s Confronted the Thomas Keane 31st Ward political organization in Chicago.
- 1980s Cochaired Mayor Harold Washington's Task Force on Hunger.
- Later Years Board member, Humboldt Park Social Services and remained active in Chicago civic life.

Media & Cultural Work, Chicago

Served the Latino Community for several years:

Radio Programs - Produced and directed radio programs:

Atardecer Borincano WXRT-FM,
El Show Pan American WCIU-TV, and
Serenata en la Noche WEAU-FM

Television - Worked on:

Ama de Casa at WSNS-TV, Channel 44 and

Co-hosted: :

El Show Pan American at WCIU-TV, Channel 26 and
Oiga Amigo on ABC-TV



Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT

Vocabulary & Definitions, Ch 6

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class/Hour: _____

Vocabulary: Bureaucracy, Canvass, Cochaired, Exhorting, Exodus, Facilitated, Formidable, Gentrification, Hence, Incarcerated, Incompetency, Institutionalizing, Microbiology, Precincts, Prevailed, Runoff Election, Status Quo.

Bureaucracy – A system of government or organization with many complicated rules and offices.

Canvass – To go around asking people for support, votes, or opinions.

Cochaired – Served together as leaders or heads of a group or event.

Exhorting – Strongly encouraging or urging someone to do something.

Exodus – A large departure or movement of people from one place to another.

Facilitated – Made a process or action easier to accomplish.

Formidable – Very powerful, difficult, or impressive.

Gentrification – The process of improving an area, often causing poorer residents to be displaced by wealthier people moving in.

Hence – For this reason; therefore.

Incarcerated – Imprisoned or confined in jail or prison.

Incompetency – Lack of ability, skill, or qualification to do something successfully.

Institutionalizing – Establishing something as a permanent part of a system or organization.

Microbiology – The branch of science that studies microscopic living organisms.

Precincts – Districts or divisions used for voting or police administration.

Prevailed – Proved stronger or more successful; won in the end.

Runoff Election – A second election held when no candidate receives enough votes to win the first election.

Status Quo – The existing condition or current state of affairs.



Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT

Potential Teaching Suggestions for Vocabulary, Ch 6

1. Context Clue Challenge

Write a sentence from the reading that contains one of the vocabulary words.
Have students underline clues in the sentence that help reveal the meaning.
Students then write the definition in their own words.

Example:

"After months of debate, the committee finally *facilitated* the changes."

Student Meaning:

Clues I Used:

2. Vocabulary Four Squares

Students divide paper into four boxes:

- Definition
- Original sentence
- Synonym or antonym
- Small sketch or symbol

This strategy works especially well with abstract terms like *bureaucracy* or *status quo* because students connect meaning to visuals and examples.

3. Vocabulary Ranking Activity

Place students in small groups.

Ask them to rank vocabulary words from:

- Most powerful
- Most confusing
- Most important in society
- Most likely to appear in real life

Example discussion:

Which word sounds more serious: *formidable* or *incompetency*? Why?

This encourages academic conversation instead of memorization only.

4. Real-World Connections

Students connect vocabulary to current events, music, sports, social media, or school experiences.

Example:

- *Gentrification* → changes in neighborhoods
- *Runoff Election* → local or national elections
- *Incarcerated* → criminal justice discussions

Students remember words better when tied to authentic situations.

5. Speed Synonyms

Give students one minute per word to brainstorm:

- synonym
- antonym
- related phrase

Example: *Prevailed*

- won
- succeeded
- overcame

This builds word flexibility and improves writing skills.

6. Vocabulary Stations

Set up stations around the room:

- Matching definitions
- Sentence correction
- Drawing meanings
- Acting out words
- Using words in conversation

Movement helps maintain engagement for 9th grade students during longer class periods.

7. “Use It or Lose It” Writing Practice

Require students to use 3–5 vocabulary words in:

- journal entries
- short responses
- debates
- paragraph writing

Students should underline vocabulary words and use them correctly in context.

This reinforces long-term retention more effectively than isolated memorization.

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Vocabulary Definitions, Ch 6

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class/Hour: _____

Write the definition of each vocabulary word.

Vocabulary: Bureaucracy, Canvass, Cochaired, Exhorting, Exodus, Facilitated, Formidable, Gentrification, Hence, Incarcerated, Incompetency, Institutionalizing, Microbiology, Precincts, Prevailed, Runoff Election, Status Quo.

1. **Bureaucracy** _____
2. **Canvass** _____
3. **Cochaired** _____
4. **Exhorting** _____
5. **Exodus** _____
6. **Facilitated** _____
7. **Formidable** _____
8. **Gentrification** _____
9. **Hence** _____
10. **Incarcerated** _____
11. **Incompetency** _____
12. **Institutionalizing** _____
13. **Microbiology** _____
14. **Precincts** _____
15. **Prevailed** _____
16. **Runoff Election** _____
17. **Status Quo** _____

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Vocabulary Worksheet; Chapter 6

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class/hour: _____

Part I – Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer.

1. A runoff election is:

- A. an election held every four years
- B. a second election when no candidate wins enough votes
- C. a school election
- D. an election held by secret ballot

2. If someone prevailed, they:

- A. gave up
- B. lost quickly
- C. succeeded or won in the end
- D. moved away

3. Gentrification often results in:

- A. lower voter turnout
- B. wealthier residents replacing longtime residents
- C. more farms being built
- D. fewer buildings

4. To canvass means to:

- A. study bacteria
- B. ask people for support, votes, or opinions
- C. write new laws
- D. organize paperwork

Part II – Matching

Match each word with its correct definition.

_____ **5. Bureaucracy**

_____ **6. Exhorting**

_____ **7. Incarcerated**

_____ **8. Facilitated**

- A. Strongly encouraging someone to act
 - B. Made a process easier
 - C. Imprisoned or confined in jail
 - D. A system with many rules and offices
-

Part III – True or False

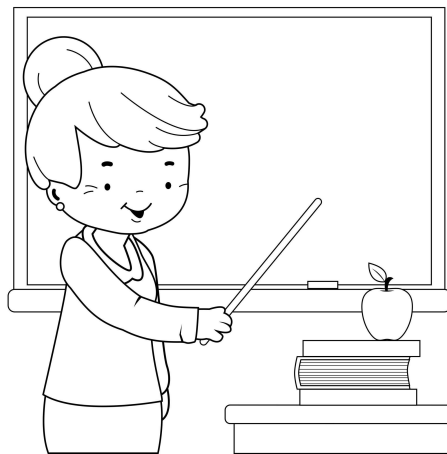
9. _____ **Status quo** means changing the existing system.

10. _____ **Microbiology** is the study of microscopic living organisms.

Short Answer

11. Write a sentence using **formidable** correctly.

12. Explain the meaning of **hence** in your own words.



Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Vocabulary Worksheet; Chapter 6
Answer Key

Part I - Multiple Choice

1. **B**
2. **C**
3. **B**
4. **B**

Part II - Matching

5. **D**
6. **A**
7. **C**
8. **B**

Part III - True or False

9. **False**
10. **True**

Sample Responses

11. *The team faced a formidable opponent but kept competing.* (Answers will vary.)
12. *Hence means "for this reason" or "therefore."* (Answers will vary.)

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Worksheet; Chapter 6

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class/Hour _____

Part I: Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer.

1. The details about “community organizations, parents, and school reform groups” help readers understand that reform means:
 - A. avoiding change
 - B. improving unfair systems
 - C. teaching history
 - D. creating new languages
2. Which statement best expresses a central idea of the chapter?
 - A. Political leaders ignored education.
 - B. Activism and education can create change.
 - C. Schools should avoid community involvement.
 - D. Leadership is only possible through politics.
3. The chapter suggests Flecha-Figueroa faced barriers because she worked in a system described as:
 - A. bilingual and equal
 - B. community-centered
 - C. white-male-dominated
 - D. student-controlled
4. Which word from the chapter is a cognate?
 - A. struggle
 - B. activism
 - C. challenge
 - D. schools

Part II: Matching

Match each literary term with the correct example. Write the letter on the line.

____ 5. Foreshadowing

____ 6. Opinion

____ 7. Irony

- A. Community members calling Flecha-Figueroa an important leader
- B. Early leadership work hinting she would later become a principal
- C. A Latina woman succeeding in spaces where she was not expected to belong

Part III: True or False

Write True or False on the line.

____ 8. The chapter presents Flecha-Figueroa only as a teacher and not as a community leader.

____ 9. The text shows that educators, parents, activists, and political leaders often interacted with one another.

Part IV: Short Response

10. Explain one challenge Flecha-Figueroa likely faced while working in education and leadership. Use evidence from the chapter.

11. How does the chapter connect schools with community activism?

Part V: Vocabulary and Context

12. What does the word “advocacy” most nearly mean as it is used in the chapter?

A. avoiding responsibility
B. speaking or working for a cause
C. organizing entertainment
D. studying languages

13. Which pair below contains Spanish-English cognates from the text?

A. reform / *escuela*
B. activism / *activismo*
C. parent / *maestro*
D. school / *política*

14. Readers can infer that Flecha-Figueroa became more politically active because:

A. she disliked schools
B. barriers encouraged her to push for change
C. she wanted to leave Chicago
D. community groups opposed education

15. The tone of the chapter is mostly:

A. humorous and playful
B. mysterious and suspenseful
C. serious and respectful
D. angry and sarcastic

16. Why is Flecha-Figueroa described as a “bridge” between schools and the Latino community?

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Worksheet; Chapter 6
Answer Key

Part I: Multiple Choice

1. **B** — improving unfair systems
 2. **B** — Activism and education can create change.
 3. **C** — white-male-dominated
 4. **B** — activism
-

Part II: Matching

5. **Foreshadowing** — **B**. Early leadership work hinting she would later become a principal
 6. **Opinion** — **A**. Community members calling Flecha-Figueroa an important leader
 7. **Irony** — **C**. A Latina woman succeeding in spaces where she was not expected to belong
-

Part III: True or False

8. **False**
 9. **True**
-

Part IV: Short Response

10. **Explain one challenge Flecha-Figueroa likely faced while working in education and leadership.**

Use evidence from the chapter.

Sample Answer:

She faced sexism, racism, language barriers, and resistance to Latino leadership while working in education and public service. Despite these obstacles, she continued to advocate for bilingual education and community involvement.

11. **How does the chapter connect schools with community activism?**

Sample Answer:

The chapter shows that schools worked with parents, community organizations, and activists to improve educational opportunities and strengthen Latino communities.

Part V: Vocabulary and Context

12. **B** — speaking or working for a cause
 13. **B** — activism / *activismo*
 14. **B** — barriers encouraged her to push for change
 15. **C** — serious and respectful
-

16. **Why is Flecha-Figueroa described as a "bridge" between schools and the Latino community?**

Sample Answer:

She brought together schools, parents, and community organizations, helping Latino families become more involved in education while improving communication and support between schools and the community.

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Quiz; Chapter 6

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class/Hour _____

Part I: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer.

1. What does the word “reform” most nearly mean in the chapter?
 - A. avoiding responsibility
 - B. changing systems to improve them
 - C. reducing school programs
 - D. replacing community groups

2. Which statement best reflects a central idea of the chapter?
 - A. Political leaders should control schools.
 - B. Community activism and education can create change.
 - C. Schools should stay separate from neighborhoods.
 - D. Leadership depends mainly on wealth.

3. Readers can infer that Flecha-Figueroa faced challenges because she worked in a:
 - A. student-run organization
 - B. bilingual classroom
 - C. white-male-dominated system
 - D. suburban community

4. Which pair contains cognates connected to the chapter?
 - A. activism / activismo
 - B. school / escuela
 - C. family / comunidad
 - D. reform / maestro

Part II: Matching

Match the term with the best example.

_____ 5. Irony

_____ 6. Opinion

_____ 7. Foreshadowing

- A. Early leadership experiences hinting at future success
- B. Community members praising Flecha-Figueroa as a strong leader
- C. A Latina educator succeeding in places where few expected her to belong

Part III: True or False

_____ 8. The chapter presents Flecha-Figueroa as both an educator and a community advocate.

_____ 9. The text suggests that schools, parents, and activists rarely interacted with one another.

Part IV: Short Response

10. Explain how Flecha-Figueroa helped connect schools with Latino communities.

11. Describe one barrier Flecha-Figueroa likely faced while working in leadership positions.

Part V: Reading Skills

12. The word “advocacy” in the chapter refers to:

- A. organizing entertainment
- B. speaking and working for a cause
- C. avoiding political issues
- D. teaching foreign languages

13. Why are words such as “community” and “organization” helpful to bilingual readers?

- A. They are difficult to translate.
- B. They are examples of figurative language.
- C. They closely resemble Spanish cognates.
- D. They only appear in political writing.

14. Which detail best shows foreshadowing in the chapter?

- A. Figueroa’s radio appearances
- B. Her retirement from education
- C. Her early community leadership work
- D. Descriptions of Chicago schools

15. The overall tone of the chapter is mostly:

- A. sarcastic and humorous
- B. serious and respectful
- C. playful and informal
- D. suspenseful and mysterious

16. Why is Flecha-Figueroa described as a “bridge” between schools and the Latino community?

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT

Quiz; Chapter 6

Answer Key

Part I: Multiple Choice

- B — changing systems to improve them
 - B — Community activism and education can create change.
 - C — white-male-dominated system
 - A — activism / *activismo*
-

Part II: Matching

- Irony — C. A Latina educator succeeding in places where few expected her to belong
 - Opinion — B. Community members praising Flecha-Figueroa as a strong leader
 - Foreshadowing — A. Early leadership experiences hinting at future success
-

Part III: True or False

- True
 - False
-

Part IV: Short Response

10. Explain how Flecha-Figueroa helped connect schools with Latino communities.

Sample Answer:

She worked closely with parents, community organizations, and schools to improve educational opportunities, support bilingual education, and encourage Latino families to participate in school and civic life.

11. Describe one barrier Flecha-Figueroa likely faced while working in leadership positions.

Sample Answer:

She faced sexism, racism, resistance to Latino leadership, and barriers within educational and political institutions.

Part V: Reading Skills

- B — speaking and working for a cause
 - C — They closely resemble Spanish cognates.
 - C — Her early community leadership work
 - B — serious and respectful
-

16. Why is Flecha-Figueroa described as a "bridge" between schools and the Latino community?

Sample Answer:

She connected educators, parents, and community organizations, helping schools better serve Latino families while encouraging greater community involvement in education.

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Worksheet B; Chapter 6;

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class/hour: _____

Part I: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer.

1. Which detail best shows the chapter's central theme?
 - A. A description of Chicago neighborhoods
 - B. Flecha-Figueroa's work to improve education and strengthen her community
 - C. A list of schools in the city
 - D. A discussion of family recipes
 2. Readers can infer that Flecha-Figueroa became a respected leader because she:
 - A. avoided difficult situations
 - B. worked with schools, parents, and community organizations
 - C. preferred to work alone
 - D. refused to take leadership positions
 3. Which example best illustrates **foreshadowing**?
 - A. Early leadership experiences that hint at future leadership roles
 - B. A list of awards received after retirement
 - C. A description of Chicago neighborhoods
 - D. A newspaper article about education
 4. The chapter's point of view mainly emphasizes:
 - A. personal wealth
 - B. community service and educational leadership
 - C. athletic achievement
 - D. business success
-

Part II: Matching

Match each literary concept with the best example.

_____ 5. Context Clues

_____ 6. Inference

_____ 7. Complex Interaction

- A. Readers conclude she faced discrimination from details rather than direct statements.
 - B. Working with educators, parents, activists, and political leaders to improve schools.
 - C. Surrounding details help readers determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word.
-

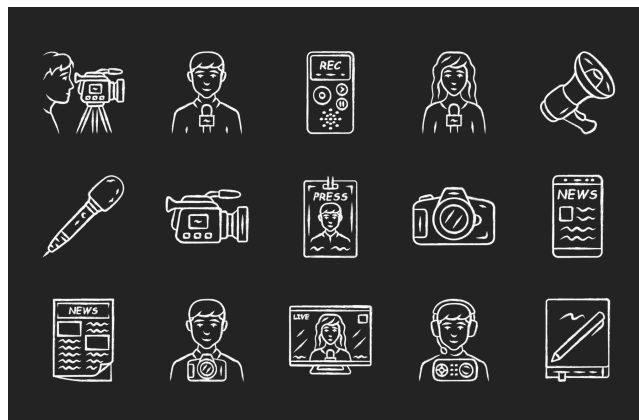
Part III: True or False

8. _____ The chapter presents education and community activism as closely connected.
9. _____ The chapter suggests Flecha-Figueroa worked without support from community members.

Part IV: Short Answer

10. Give one example of a context clue from the chapter. Explain how it helps define an unfamiliar word.

11. What do you think is Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa's most important contribution to her community?
Support your answer with one detail from the chapter.



Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Worksheet B; Chapter 6
Answer Key

Part I: Multiple Choice

1. B
 2. B
 3. A
 4. B
-

Part II: Matching

5. C
 6. A
 7. B
-

Part III: True or False

8. True
 9. False
-

Part IV: Short Answer

10. Sample Answer:

Students should identify an unfamiliar word from the chapter and explain how surrounding details reveal its meaning. Answers will vary.

11. Sample Answer:

Answers will vary.

Accept responses supported by evidence, such as her leadership in bilingual education, work as a principal, community organizing, or connecting schools with Latino families.

Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Quiz B; Chapter 6

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class/Hour: _____

Directions: Answer the following questions using complete sentences when necessary.

Multiple Choice

1. What is one major theme of the chapter about Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa?
 - A. Scientific discovery
 - B. Educational and community activism
 - C. Sports competition
 - D. Military leadership

2. What can readers infer about the challenges Flecha-Figueroa faced?
 - A. She avoided leadership roles
 - B. She worked in an environment with barriers for Latina women
 - C. She only worked alone
 - D. She disliked politics

3. Which word from the chapter is connected to working for change in a community?
 - A. Isolation
 - B. Advocacy
 - C. Celebration
 - D. Vacation

4. What role did culture play in shaping Figueroa's work?
 - A. It had no effect on her decisions
 - B. It encouraged her involvement in bilingual education and Latino communities
 - C. It kept her away from public service
 - D. It focused only on entertainment

5. Which statement best describes the tone of the chapter?
 - A. Humorous and fictional
 - B. Suspenseful and mysterious
 - C. Informative and respectful
 - D. Angry and sarcastic

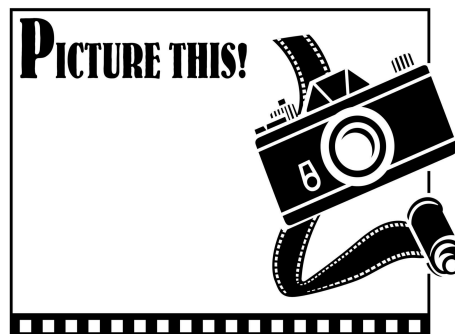
True or False

6. ____ The chapter focuses mainly on fictional events.
 7. ____ Flecha-Figueroa was involved in both education and community activism.
 8. ____ It is suggested that Latino communities were seeking greater representation & equality.
 9. ____ The chapter includes examples of leadership and political involvement.
 10. ____ The story takes place in a social setting with no political issues.
-

Short Answer:

11. How does Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa demonstrate perseverance throughout the chapter?

12. Which accomplishment best supports the author's view that Flecha-Figueroa was an effective leader?
Use one detail from the chapter to support your answer.



Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa, CLT
Quiz B; Chapter 6
Answer Key

Multiple Choice

1. **B** — Educational and community activism
 2. **B** — She worked in an environment with barriers for Latina women.
 3. **B** — Advocacy
 4. **B** — It encouraged her involvement in bilingual education and Latino communities.
 5. **C** — Informative and respectful
-

True or False

6. **False**
7. **True**
8. **True**
9. **True**
10. **False**

Short Answer

11. How does Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa demonstrate perseverance throughout the chapter?

Sample Answer:

She continues to pursue leadership despite facing sexism, racism, language barriers, and political resistance. She remains committed to improving education and serving her community.

12. Which accomplishment best supports the author's view that Flecha-Figueroa was an effective leader? Use one detail from the chapter to support your answer.

Sample Answer: Answers may vary.

Students should identify a major accomplishment—such as becoming one of the first Latina principals in Chicago Public Schools, leading bilingual education efforts, or working with community organizations—and support it with a specific detail from the chapter.

Questions:

1. An example of context clues appears when the text explains that Aracelis Flecha-Figueroa worked with “community organizations, parents, and school reform groups.” Those surrounding details help readers understand that “reform” means making changes to improve unfair or ineffective school systems.
L.9-10.4.a
2. There are not many openly funny moments because the chapter is mostly serious and historical, but there is some irony in how Flecha-Figueroa entered spaces where Latina women were rarely accepted and still became highly respected in education and politics. **RL.9-10.6, RI.9-10.4**
3. Readers can infer that Flecha-Figueroa faced discrimination and resistance even when the text does not directly describe every incident. Her rise to leadership positions in a “white-male-dominated” system suggests she had to overcome barriers. **RL.9-10.1**
4. A central idea in the text is that education and community activism can create social change. Throughout the chapter, Flecha-Figueroa works to improve schools, support Latino communities, and increase representation in leadership. **RL.9-10.2**
5. An example of word meaning in context is the use of the word “advocacy.” The text connects it to organizing communities, supporting parents, and improving schools, showing that advocacy means actively speaking or working for a cause. **L.9-10.4.d**
6. An example of foreshadowing appears when the chapter discusses Figueroa’s early involvement in community and educational work. These early leadership activities hint that she will later become a major public figure and school principal. **RL.9.6**
7. An example of opinion appears when people in the community describe Flecha-Figueroa as an important leader and advocate for Latino families. Those statements reflect personal judgments about her impact and character. **RL.9.3**
8. The chapter shows complex interactions among educators, political leaders, parents, and activists. Flecha-Figueroa had to balance the expectations of school systems, community organizations, and Latino residents who wanted educational reform. **RL.9-10.3**
9. The text includes nuance in how it describes leadership and activism. Flecha-Figueroa is presented not only as an educator but also as a bridge between schools and the Latino community. There are light moments of irony in how barriers intended to limit opportunities instead pushed her to become more active politically. **RL.9-10.3; L.9-10.5**
10. Words such as “activism,” “community,” and “organization” connect closely to Spanish cognates like “activismo,” “comunidad,” and “organización.” These similarities help bilingual readers recognize meaning across both languages. **RL.9-10.4; L.9-10.5**
11. One example of figurative language is the idea of Flecha-Figueroa “opening doors” for others. The phrase does not mean literal doors; it means she created opportunities for future Latino educators and leaders.
L.9-10.5a
12. Point of view and culture strongly shape the chapter because the story focuses on the experiences of a Puerto Rican woman working within Chicago’s Latino communities. Her cultural background influences her dedication to bilingual education, representation, and community involvement. **RL.9-10.6**
13. The story lends itself to discussion about educational inequality, Latino political activism, women in leadership, and the role of schools in community change. Students could also discuss how representation affects public institutions. **SL.9-10.1a-d**
14. Yes. The chapter references broader community networks and activists connected to Latino political and educational movements in Chicago, including people involved in Harold Washington’s administration and local community organizations. **RI.9-10.1**
15. The tone of the chapter is respectful, informative, and reflective. The style focuses on historical contributions and community leadership rather than dramatic storytelling. **RI.9-10.4, RI.9-10.6**

16. The main social and political backdrop is the struggle for Latino civil rights, educational equity, and political representation in Chicago during the late twentieth century. The chapter reflects efforts to increase opportunities for marginalized communities within schools and local government. **RL.9-10.6**
17. A cognate from the text is “principal” because it is similar to the Spanish word *principal*. Another example is “community” and *comunidad*.
18. Several elements of the story lend themselves to small group discussion, including discrimination against Puerto Rican educators, unequal school conditions, bilingual education, community activism, and the challenges Aracelis faced as one of the first Latina principals in Chicago. Students could also discuss how she balanced education, politics, and community service.
19. Yes, Aracelis seemed to have a personal philosophy centered on perseverance, education, and service to the community. She believed in helping Puerto Rican and Latino students succeed, standing up to unfair treatment, and continuing to work for change even when others opposed her.
20. Yes, her career generally followed a logical path. She began as a teacher in Puerto Rico, later worked in Chicago schools, became involved in bilingual and community education programs, moved into leadership positions as a principal, and eventually expanded her work into politics, media, and community organizations. Each stage built on her earlier experiences in education and activism.
21. How are the beginning and the end of the chapter related? Why

Ideas and sources for teachers:

Social Movements: Community, Labor, Civil Rights and Political activists; Education; AFL-CIO, LULAC;
Which organizations and/or people were most active during her time?

Some examples are:

- Héctor P. García: A physician and World War II veteran based in Corpus Christi, Texas. In 1948, he founded the American GI Forum, which became a prominent civil rights organization in the 1950s fighting against the segregation of Mexican American students and demanding equal healthcare and veterans' benefits.
- Cesar Chavez: Long before the United Farm Workers, Chavez worked in California as a lead organizer for the Community Service Organization in the 1950s. He focused on voter registration, fighting police brutality, and securing civil rights for Mexican Americans in Los Angeles.
- Bert Corona: A prominent labor and civil rights leader in Southern California who organized Mexican American workers and fought for fair labor practices alongside groups like the CSO throughout the 1950s.
- Ernesto Galarza: A labor activist, scholar, and writer who fought fiercely for the rights of agricultural workers and documented the abuses of the Bracero Program in the 1950s.
- Mendez Family (Gonzalo and Felicitas): While their landmark court case, *Mendez v. Westminster*, was decided in 1947, the Mendez family continued to be vocal advocates for school desegregation in California during the early 1950s, paving the way for the nationwide *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#), [\[4\]](#), [\[5\]](#)

- Carmen Rivera de Alvarado: A social worker and advocate who moved to New York City in the 1950s, working closely with the Puerto Rican migration division to address housing, labor exploitation, and cultural integration for newly arrived Puerto Ricans. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)]

Notes

1. In the Puerto Rican education system, teaching was considered a technical career and did not require a bachelor's degree. Those aspiring to be teachers would attend "La Normal," a technical school for teacher education.

2. Isidro Lucas, *Puerto Rican Dropouts in Chicago: Numbers and Motivation*, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, Bureau of Research, March 1971, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED053235.pdf>

3. Founded in 1968, ASPIRA of Illinois is an historically Puerto Rican not-for-profit organization committed to the self-determination of Latino and other underserved youth through education, leadership development, and cultural awareness.

4. Edward McClelland, "The Shadiest Ward in Chicago," NBC Chicago, February 27, 2012, www.nbcchicago.com/blogs/ward-room/The-Shadiest-Ward-In-Chicago-140586103.html

5. McClelland, "Shadiest Ward in Chicago."

6. Vrdolyak was the head of twenty-nine Chicago aldermen, an all-white majority on the city council, who consistently voted down any legislation or effort such as appointments Mayor Washington proposed, thus creating a stalemate.