





FLOR AGUILERA is a Mexican poet and storyteller. She has published books of poetry, short stories, and novels in Mexico and the United States. She studied Journalism and International Relations, but it was her children's and youth literature that caught her.

From a very young age she was interested in volunteer work, in the possibility that exists in all of us to do what is now considered social activism through storytelling in books, movies and music.

# CARO TAKES A LEAP

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CARO TAKES A LEAP

First edition in English, 2026

Original title in Spanish: CARO VA A SALTAR

Text: Flor Aguilera García

Illustrations: Estelí Meza Urbieta

Translator: Varinia del Ángel Muñoz

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Viaducto Tlalpan núm. 100, esquina Periférico Sur,  
col. Arenal Tepepan, 14610, Ciudad de México

ISBN complete electronic work in English: 978-607-8870-87-5

ISBN electronic volume in English: 978-607-2604-61-2

Free dissemination. No sale allowed.

# CARO TAKES A LEAP

Text by Flor Aguilera  
Illustrations by Estelí Meza



# PRESENTATION

*Caro Takes a Leap* is a title from the **Árbol** collection created by the Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE, National Electoral Institute) for children and adolescents to talk about the topics of citizenship and democratic values in a simple and enjoyable way.

This publication forms part of the Estrategia Nacional de Cultura Cívica 2017-2023 (National Civic Culture Strategy 2017-2023), whose central pillars aim to contribute to the improvement of our quality of life in society, as citizens with rights and duties. In this context, it seeks to encourage the active participation of young people in events of public interest, so that they can play important roles in the political life of Mexico.

In the following pages, readers will dive into the story of Caro, a teenager from an activist family who is committed to her society. She is restless and dissatisfied with some circumstances in her school community. Thanks to her friend Diego, she gets the chance to learn about the values of democracy, engaging in dialogue, participating, being tolerant, and listening to differences and accepting them. All of this helps her encourage her classmates to express their concerns to the school authorities and participate in actions to improve their conditions.

This short story is an opportunity to enjoy a literary work of great quality and to do so with family or among friends. Although the story holds appeal for people of all ages, it is particularly intended for middle school students. Through this work of fiction, they will be able to reflect on the importance of dialogue, demanding the fulfillment of our rights, and the importance of citizen participation in improving our communities.

The final pages include the “To Reflect and Discuss” section, which is intended for adolescents to reflect (on their own or with the support of adults close to them) on the importance of dropping a passive attitude towards the problems we face every day, contributing ideas, and highlighting the fact that we all have a commitment to participate solving them.

# Caro Takes a Leap

## Day 1

Today was the first day of school. I am now in my third year of middle school, and I can hardly believe it. I remember when Mariana and I started elementary school (Mariana has been my best friend since kindergarten) and we used to look up to the kids in middle school and think they were big and very sophisticated. Although I don't feel that way now, either big or sophisticated, I imagine some girls in the first year thinking I am, so I straighten up as I walk down the hallways.

The first class was Math, which usually gives me stomachache and headaches, nausea, dizziness, and makes me want to stick my head into my desk like an ostrich. However, I think it may become my favorite class this year. The reason for this strange turn of events is the teacher. His name is Sebastian and, besides being young, he is very nice. Mostly because he talks like a real person and says real things, things that apply to real life. Normally, adults at school think that we kids live in another world where trigonometry is used every day when you buy milk at the store and people talk at parties about the different types of rainforests and the fauna and flora of each one.

Today, the teacher surprised us when he found an incredible way to explain what statistics are and how probabilities are determined. He used me as an example:

It turns out that the odds of me being born the way I am are one in a million. There are so many variables! Countless coincidences must have happened for my parents (like all the parents in the world) to meet, fall in love, and decide to have me exactly at the moment they did, for this version of "me" to be possible. A small change in the timing or order in which things happened, or the slightest variation in events





happening at just the right time, would mean my story or what I call “me” not being as it is, as I am.

I have a brother called David, who’s three years younger than me, so he and my parents are my closest family. Although they tease me too much for my liking and I would love to be taken more seriously, they’re my family and that’s forever. The truth is that I like the family I’ve got, even if they bother me: it’s full of brave people. I want to be brave too.

One day, when we were coming back from the dentist, my mother started talking to me about courses. Not a racecourse like the one next to my elementary school or the summer course I’d taken in the park with my friends, but the courses I could study when I finish high school.

“You could be a presenter on the TV or on the radio. You always have a lot to say, interesting opinions about any subject that comes up, so you would do very well.”

That’s how my dear mother likes to tease me.

Following up on mom’s little joke, my brother yelled from the kitchen.

“You might as well be a writer... of great dramas.”

“Why do you both insist on saying that I make a big drama out of everything?” I grumbled. But being a writer... that idea sounded really good to me.

If I were a writer, I would talk about my grandmother Eva and my other grandmother, Elisa. Both of them are great women. If I were to write a book about that, I would talk about how being part of my family makes me the way I am. For example, I get very indignant about injustices, and I’m convinced that obstacles can always be broken down.

It all started with my mother's mother, Eva. She and her friends were part of an organization that fought for women's right to vote in Mexico, which they achieved in 1953. That's not so long ago if you think about it because time has been around for millions of years. She explained to me that men and women are different in many ways, but both deserve to be treated with dignity under the law, with the same rights, equal pay, and the same opportunities.

That's how my mom grew up, hearing and thinking about issues like these. She's a doctor who also teaches at the university. Although my dad teaches at the university too, he's an engineer like his mother, my grandmother Elisa. Except that there were only three women enrolled in the entire faculty when she studied engineering.



When my dad was young, he was the lead singer and guitarist in a rock band called *Déjà vu*. It means “already seen” in French, which is what you feel when your mind believes you’re experiencing something you’ve experienced before. At their concerts, they handed out flyers with the dates of their upcoming performances. According to my dad, he gave a flyer to my mom one day and “it was love at first sight,” although her version is that he seemed very nice and was a good musician. Dad says he is a humanist and that also makes him a feminist. Being a man who is a feminist is just a matter of common sense. I do believe my dad because he always treats my brother and I equally. He tells me that whatever I want to do I will achieve it and that women have every right to study and do whatever job makes us happy, just like men.

My mom is an only child, but my dad has a sister named Nelly. We rarely see my aunt because she’s an ecologist and marine biologist who works on a ship where she studies different species.





As my parents have been divorced for many years, I have two houses, two bedrooms, and two “sets of parents.” I live at my dad’s house on weekends and at my mom’s during the week. She really likes this arrangement because she’s a doctor. During the week, she sees patients all day and then goes to teach, but when I’m at my dad’s house on the weekend, she can have some time to herself and paint, something she has loved since she was very young. She always paints watercolors, and almost always paints flowers and animals. Sometimes, she paints us.

I remember when my parents were separating. All of us had a hard time, but especially them. Now they get along very well. We’ve all been much better since they came to an agreement. As Mom says, “Things work out and they work out very well once an agreement is reached that benefits both parties.” I would like to talk like her someday.

Today, I reached an agreement with myself: In order to stop talking so much about what’s going on with me and what I feel and think, and to stop bothering my family with my dramas, I’m going to keep a diary.

## Day 5

“You must flow like water, my love.”

It’s one of my mother’s favorite phrases, I’ve heard it since my brother and I were kids. I always thought it was an original phrase of hers, but it was actually said by Bruce Lee, the most famous karate fighter in history. We found out because a boy came to school wearing a T-shirt with Lee’s face on it and the phrase “Be water, my friend.”

Oh, my mom!

I'd really like to flow like water, but something happened at school today that really upset me. Vegetarian food will no longer be served in the cafeteria. I'm not a vegetarian because then I would have to stop eating hamburgers and I can't even imagine that, but my boyfriend Ricardo has been a vegetarian since he was a baby, and he was happy that there was always a rice and vegetable option for him to eat at school. The parents pay a special fee for us to eat at school because we have a very long school schedule: we leave at five. Mariana says it doesn't matter and that Richie should get used to it; but it's not that easy. I read that he could get sick if he suddenly starts eating meat because his body wouldn't know how to digest it.

In Civics and Ethics class, which I also love, we have to reflect on "problematic situations" and then imagine an ethical way to solve them. So, in today's class, I mentioned the problematic situation of them no longer serving vegetarian food in the cafeteria. The teacher told me that if someone sends a complaint to the principal's office, they have to attend to it. So, I wrote my complaint and left it in the suggestion box at the principal's office. Richie told me off in front of his friends, saying I shouldn't make a fuss. He said it as if to show off how cool he was. I thought it was very wrong of him to do so, as I was defending him, and I was thinking about how I could make him happier. Today I didn't like my boyfriend's behavior at all. How different he was during summer school when it was just me and him, when we started dating.

## Day 10

The principal called me into his office on Monday and told me they were going to take care of the vegetarian menus. He explained me that the problem was just that the cook and his assistant were new, but he would talk to them. Today, there was





an option of rice with vegetables and *enfrijoladas*,\* and Richie was able to eat again. Everything was resolved by putting a complaint in the suggestion box! The bad thing is that he didn't even thank me.

## Day 16

This year, I was put in some great classes. Rather, I would say that they are normal classes, but with very good teachers. In Art class, the teacher gave us a homework assignment for the whole month to make a replica of a famous painting in which we use only the things we find at home and then take a picture of it. I recreated a painting consisting of a landscape with a bridge. I used three bottles of mineral water for the bridge. To show the characters in the field under the bridge, I used some figures from my dad's scale models that my brother keeps. They're all mixed together with some Smurfs that he doesn't want to give away, even though he doesn't play with them anymore.

In other news, Mariana went to the park to learn how to ride a skateboard and tried to jump a ramp in her second class. The result was that she broke her leg. Luckily, it was a leg and not an arm, otherwise she wouldn't be able to play her musical instruments. The fracture was horrible, and she can't use crutches to walk around the school because it's so big, so she's using a wheelchair provided by the infirmary. Since we have the same classes, I push her chair and her mom picks us both up by way of thanks, so I get a ride home.

Since the school isn't built for people in wheelchairs, I went to the principal's office once again and put another complaint in the suggestion box.

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\*Translator's note: Mexican dish of fried tortilla dipped in a thick broth of ground beans, rolled or folded. Served with cheese, onion and cream.

The complaint said:

Dear Mr. Principal:  
Please put ramps in the school, even if they are temporary, so Mariana and I can move around, go to class and to the cafeteria. I looked in a book and it says it is by law that ramps exist in schools.

Thank you for reading my letter.

Carolina Sánchez Corral

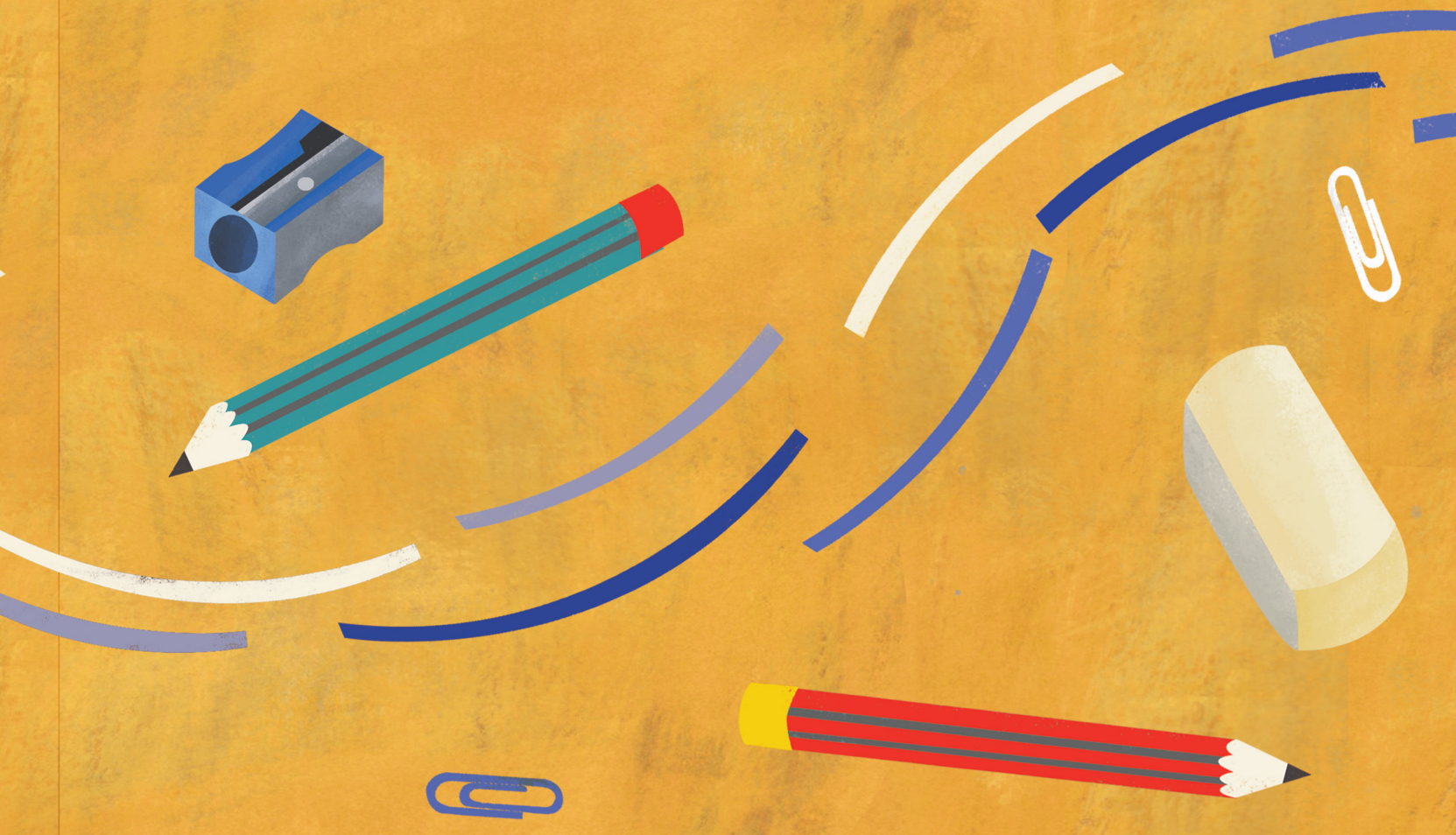


Today, I had to leave Mariana in a classroom, line up to get food for us, and then walk across the yard with the two trays so she could eat her sandwich and soup.

In the cafeteria, I chatted with some girls from the year below who I liked very much. Two of them are vegetarians and they thanked me for making my complaint. Their names are Eli, Matilde, and Sandra.

“Honestly, it wouldn’t have occurred to us.”

“We always believed that things are the way they are and there’s not much we can do to change them.”





# CAFETERÍA



“There are tons of things that should be changed,” said the guy in line behind me. The four of us turned to look at him and said as one, “Loads!”

“We could make a group.”

“That’s a great idea!” I said excitedly.

“You two invite people, we’ll do the same.”

We agreed to meet at the cafeteria after school on Friday to talk.

The girls are from the year below and the boy, whose name is Diego, is new and in the same grade as me; but we don’t have classes together. He asked me how old I am, and he’s a year younger, which means he’s a genius.

I usually only hang out with Mariana and Ricardo and his friends. If I weren’t going out with Richie, whom I met because the two of us were on the same summer course, for sure it would be just Mariana and me, as always. Two peas in a pod, as she always tells me, and then we high-five each other.

## Day 19

Two very sad things happened:

1. Richie told me that we should “take a break,” which means he’s met someone else whom he likes. I cried for a little while and then decided I wasn’t going to cry anymore. He’s going to miss someone really cool! That means me.
2. Mariana’s in a foul mood because she says I won’t want to do silly things with her anymore now that I have new friends. I just told her that peas will be peas forever (that means me) and that peas will be my favorite for the rest of my life because we’re family.
3. The third news is good, very good. My group has achieved a fabulous thing.

They all accompanied me to a meeting with the principal to discuss the ramps. He explained that he had already contemplated building them in line with the school's inclusion policies. In fact, they had already budgeted for the modifications. He recognized that the regulations included accessibility standards, and he was sorry not to have met them. His workload had been so big that he'd forgotten to organize the installations.

He told us that we could help him if he gave us a map of the school and we put an "X" in all the places where a ramp should go. I told the principal that I knew them by heart. We looked at the plans and I began to put crosses in several places with a pencil, but I got confused and we put "Entrance" on the place that I thought was the main bathroom. Actually, the plans are very complicated, so we asked the school principal to lend them to us so that we could go around the school tomorrow and



make marks there and then. Before we left, I told him that I would talk to my dad, who is an engineer, to ask him for the details of someone who could carry out the work, because he works on a lot of new constructions.

I called my dad at his office when I got home, and he said he would talk to the principal right away. In the evening he called to tell me that he had already given the principal the details of a person who could install the ramps. They are going to divide the stairs into two parts, and they will put a ramp in one half.

When we said goodbye after leaving the principal's office, we agreed that we would come up with a name for the group for the next meeting. There are seven of us and each member has one vote. As it's an odd number, the seventh vote breaks the tie when we have to make decisions.



## Day 24

At today's meeting, we made a list of things that need to change in the school.

I didn't speak much because I had to be the meeting secretary. As everyone spoke very fast, I had to be very attentive so as not to leave out any agreements. My notebook looks very funny because I wrote very fast, and the words are all over the place. I will write it out again neatly tonight.

Diego gave me a chocolate at the meeting. It was very casual, but I noticed that his eyes sparkled a little. I felt my heart skip a beat. With Richie, I never felt anything like that. Today we walked together to my house because he lives a few blocks ahead of mine, on the same street.

Diego is really very smart, I was delighted when he mentioned that he had just read about the values of democracy, and he explained them to me using the school as an example. When I got home, I wrote them all down: engaging in dialogue, participating, being tolerant, and listening to differences and accepting them... I don't think I've missed any of them out.

When we arrived in front of the building where I live, I told him that I was very happy to have met him and he replied that he felt the same way. If it weren't for the fact that he'd been listening with interest to our conversation in the line, he might never have dared to talk to me.

These words left me thinking. We are all very shy in school, or we get more and more shy. For the past two years, Mariana and I have thought it would be nice to have a Halloween party at school to make friends in a fun atmosphere. I think that if we were dressing up, we'd be less embarrassed about everything, even talking to



# HALLOWEEN



people from other classrooms who we see every day and never speak to. Although we think that maybe we are the only ones who like this plan of talking and dancing with people we see every day, and that we would have pretexts to get closer to them if we were already dressed up. I told my dad and he said that “my group” should propose a referendum, which means that the whole school should have a say in whether or not they would like a costume party for Halloween. I liked the word referendum; it sounds really cool.

## Day 28

Now we call ourselves “The Seven Musketeers.” Mati loves “classic books,” as she calls them, and she explained that the three musketeers were a band of three friends who were good at fencing and had a very clear idea of what was fair and what was not. They were dedicated to changing what wasn’t working and stopping those who wanted to harm the people. She also told us that there was an extra member, the one who broke tied votes, called D’Artagnan. She said the name of the fourth musketeer as if she were saying something mischievous. I like Mati very much.

I told them about the Halloween costume party idea. It would be a way for the school to come together and for people who don’t talk to each other to have a reason to do so.

We, the seven musketeers, have no enemies like the original musketeers. Not yet at least. But maybe that will change when we announce the referendum next week. People sometimes react strangely when a different idea is proposed to them. I don’t want to ever be like that; I will always keep my eyes and ears wide open.

## Day 30

We went to the principal's office and proposed a costume party for Halloween and to carry out a vote to see what the other students in the school thought. I added:

“We don't want to impose anything, but we want everyone to have a say in what we want and believe is best.”

I turned to see Diego and he gave me a big smile. The principal also smiled and said that he would share our ideas with the teachers in the afternoon meeting, as well as listen to their suggestions.

“I must warn you that we don't have the resources for these recreational events, so each student would have to pay an entrance fee.”



Diego immediately mentioned that his cousin Tito could bring the music equipment. Although he's in high school, he's starting his party business and would do it for free just to make himself known and gain potential customers. Mati proposed that we could decorate the school like a haunted house. Her aunt has a stationery store, and she always gets a lot of material to decorate on those dates.

The school administrator, who was sitting there very quietly, finally spoke:

“You could throw the party in the cafeteria with glasses and cardboard plates, if the students bring soda, fruit water and snacks.”

“So, it wouldn't cost anything,” Diego said.

“Ok,” replied the director.

Now all that remains is for the rest of the school to give their opinion.





## Day 40

Today, after the meeting, Diego held my hand as we headed home. I was happy, even though my hand was sweating profusely. His was sweating too, so I didn't feel so embarrassed. The fact that he is so smart makes him more than cute to me. Will it be normal for me to like someone younger than me? Actually, as I'm only eight months older than him, we'll be the same age for four of them.

The referendum was a success! My classmates got involved and voted, although I'm disappointed because they didn't choose what I wanted: three of the five third year groups voted not to have a Halloween party.

Since the director would like to hear the reasons for the refusal, there will be an assembly next week, when he will openly ask them why they don't want a party. But he warned us that it wouldn't be carried out if we couldn't agree. He said he couldn't see the sense in it with more than half a group missing.

We are nervous and disappointed. I never imagined that the school would reject the idea of celebrating, especially celebrating in costume.

The only thing that relieves me a little is that Diego and I are becoming closer every day and today I noticed that he was blushing when he told me something.

Mariana's acting so weird. I still push her wheelchair and she laughs when we go faster and I release her a little bit on the ramps that have already been installed, but I feel that's she's serious and distant with me when we go down the corridors and even when we get into her mom's car.

In Civics and Ethics class, I saw some girls whispering when I walked in, and they looked at me. I heard someone say, “American customs.” I didn’t understand why they would say something like that, but it made me uncomfortable. I asked Eli and she told me that the people in her classroom were very excited about the party. When they found out it wasn’t going to happen because of the kids in my year, they hated everyone in my grade.

Instead of uniting the school, this party is dividing us, which is the opposite of what Mariana and I wanted. Ahhh!

I told Mariana in the cafeteria, and she only replied:

“Oh look. Everything’s bad.”



## Day 48

At the assembly, many kids from my year gave the real reason for opposing the party. Marco, Richie's friend, explained that they were not against it, that it would be cool to have a costume party, but the party should be for Day of the Dead since we are in Mexico. They are right, but the word "Halloween" is more fun than the other option, which is longer and a bit scary, although it is a nice Mexican tradition and even cute like in the movie *Coco*. The second-year representatives were excited about the Day of the Dead party and proposed that the theme of the costumes be "Famous Mexican People." Wow! There will be lots of classmates dressed up as Frida Kahlo, many as Cantinflas, Pedro Infante, and Emiliano Zapata I'm sure.



The bravest of the first-year students proposed that the party should be early so they could go too. They are right; I remember keeping the same bedtime as I did in elementary school in my first year.

The teacher then asked us to vote.

“Those who agree with a Day of the Dead party, raise your hand.”

The entire assembly, except for three or four who stood with their arms folded, raised their hands and some first years raised both hands.

Sitting across from Mati, Eli, Sandy, Mariana, and me were Diego and his buddies.

Smiling a lot, he turned to me and said:

“Party time!”

## Day 50

The day and schedule for the Day of the Dead party were announced. The posters still need to be made and pasted in the hallways. Sabrina and Pepe from my class volunteered to help me. They're known as the artists, so I'm sure they will do very well.

At home, they told me I should wear the costume of “La Llorona,” because I love to make a drama out of everything. I don't do dramas anymore, so that joke doesn't work anymore. Actually, I would love to dress up as the singer of “La Llorona,” who's Natalia Lafourcade, my favorite singer. I'm going to look up pictures of her online.

Diego wants to be Benito Juarez. He's going to wear a suit with a presidential sash.  
He's going to look very handsome.





## Day 53

Mariana still doesn't talk to me. She no longer uses a wheelchair and walks normally. What am I saying? She walks like Speedy Gonzales, the cartoon mouse. But I think I know how to get her involved.

At today's meeting of the seven musketeers, I asked who would play the music.

"We hadn't thought of that," Eli said.

"Diego, does your cousin only provide the equipment or does he also play the music?"

"Equipment only."

Mariana plays guitar and harmonica and is learning to play the saxophone, and she wants to be a musician when she grows up. She has a great channel on Spotify where she uploads her music, as well as the songs she loves. She has a good ear.

I proposed that Mariana be the DJ. Diego's friends thought it was a good idea. I think Tomás likes my friend because he was very happy and mentioned that he could be her assistant.

Mati said having a DJ girl at the party was the coolest thing and her friends agreed. Sandra said she liked Mariana because she broke her leg on a skateboard. I didn't understand why she found that so cool, but he was saying something nice about my beloved friend, so I thought Sandy was right.

I walked alone today because Diego went to the movies with his friends.

On the way home, I called Mariana to tell her. I don't know if she heard the phone ring, but she didn't answer me. I recorded a WhatsApp message, but she wouldn't open it. She greets me at school, although she is still distant. We sit together at lunchtime, but she hardly talks, just tells me about the series she is watching and the book she took out of the library. I tell her about my series and the book I'm reading. It's not the same as before.

## Day 54

Finally Mariana heard my message and called me. She was so excited and had a thousand ideas about each of the sets. She told me that on the party poster she wants us to call her DJ Mar. The only thing that worries her is that her parents won't give her permission.

I kept thinking about that. I went to my mom and asked her about how to reach an agreement with Mariana's parents so that they'll give her a chance to go to the party.

Mom suggested coming up with a very well thought out plan. She asked me a series of questions:

“What do your parents dislike so much about Mariana going out at night?”

“That she's in a dangerous situation. Mariana's dad couldn't pick her up because he works at night and her mom is in bed with a bad flu.”

“Tell them that I'll take them and I'll come pick you up. It's early, right?”

“Yes, early.”

“What else are they worried about?”

“Boys.”

“But Mariana is really well behaved in that area. Let them worry if she becomes as smitten as you.”



“Mom!”

“I don’t worry about that. You’re a warrior and know very well how to deal with them, and I’m sure they see you as a karate fighter who will act like Bruce Lee’s daughter if they want to take advantage of you.”

“I haven’t even been kissed.”

“Let’s leave that way until college, eh?”

She said it and laughed out loud.

“Oh, Mom!” I grumbled and then laughed too.

I sent a WhatsApp to Mariana, and we thought of arguments to overcome any objections her parents could make.

When she talked to them, she gave them all the reasons we had considered and added one, the most important of all: because being a DJ at the party would make her very happy. She told me the party would be a great launchpad for her international DJ career.

Finally, the long-awaited day arrived.

The party went amazingly, everyone had a great time. Before it started, we walked the ramps, and we were very proud to have been part of that improvement. It’s already looking like the coolest of the cool years. So far.



TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS



# Dialogue and Consensus Building

Today, more than ever, our country needs citizens to be united to engage in dialogue about our desires and concerns, to seek answers, to respectfully express our differences when seeking agreements and a common good so that together we can change our present and build a better future.

Engaging in dialogue in order to reach an agreement is something we learn in our daily life, from the time we are children, in our family life, and in our close surroundings. Therefore, in this section we want to offer some elements of analysis that can motivate and facilitate reflection and dialogue on this important issue that affects our citizen life. We make a small-scale comparison of what this means by examining the story.

The Estrategia Nacional de Cultura Cívica 2017-2023 (National Civic Culture Strategy 2017-2023) from the Instituto Nacional Electoral (National Electoral Institute) suggests several lines of action that can be found in the story *Caro Takes a Leap* to guide civic education exercises that will help strengthen our democratic life.

Caro has the opportunity to learn about the values of democracy, engaging



in dialogue, participating, being tolerant, listening to differences and accepting them... which helps her to take actions to improve things in her school. One of her favorite classes is Civics and Ethics, in which students have to think of “problematic situations” and imagine what would be an ethical way to solve them. From this, she is encouraged to write a complaint to the School Principal for cancelling the vegetarian meal in the school cafeteria.

The political power of citizens should be understood as a collective practice involving a series of mechanisms that enable discussion, deliberation, and the exchange of opinions.

Political rights are not restricted to the exercise of suffrage, but also refer to those prerogatives that all individuals in our country possess to express themselves, to associate peacefully, and to petition the authorities.

Participation in community problems strengthens us as citizens. It is not just about complaining and filing claims, but collaborating on matters that concern us all.

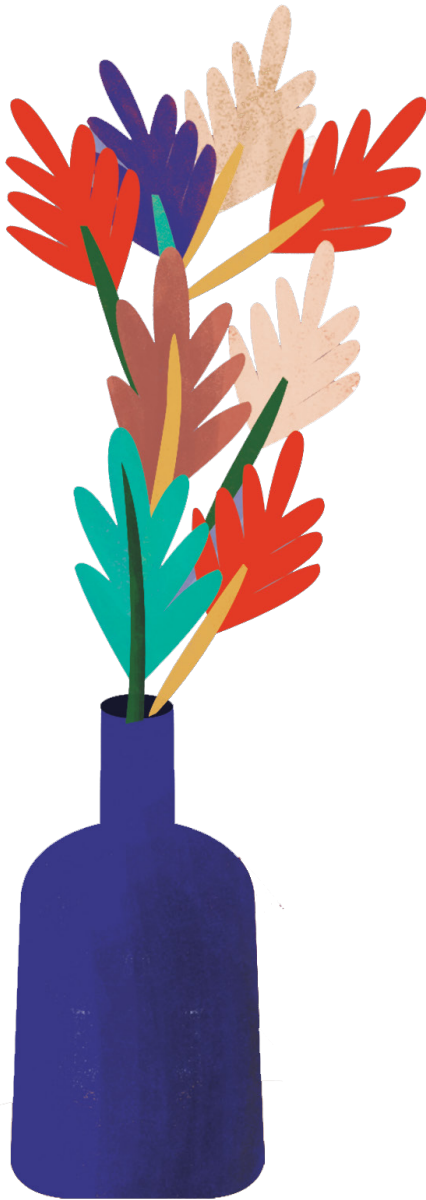
Caro involved her friends, school leaders, and parents in actions in which the whole school community would benefit in some way, such as food, mobility, or recreation.



Open and democratic dialogue makes it easier to build bridges of understanding between social and political actors based on the identification of common agendas, which means the things that unite us despite our differences.

This approach prevails throughout Caro's story and gives rise to the central moments of the narrative. For example, when the girl remembers the separation of her parents in which they all had a hard time, but they finally managed to come to an agreement. She recalls her mother's words: "things work out and they work out very well once an agreement is reached that benefits both parties." Other examples are when choosing the name of the group of classmates who wanted to improve things in the school, or the type of party that could be held in the school, or the participation of everyone in the celebration. All members of the educational community felt involved, informed themselves, started from their own possibilities of participation, expressed their





ideas and exercised their creativity, not only to solve a situation as important as the lack of ramps for people with special needs, but also to organize an event in which everyone felt included and happy.

In the search for solutions and building consensus, we learn tolerance, empathy, and respect.

“The Seven Musketeers” group went to the Principal’s Office and proposed holding a vote to find out what their classmates thought about having a costume party for Halloween. Caro said that they did not want to impose anything but wanted everyone to express their opinion.

In the end, this story had a happy ending and set the tone for future collective actions in search of the common good.

The referendum was successful, students were involved and voted, although they did not choose the option Caro wanted: three of the five third year classrooms opposed the Halloween party.

Have you thought about the main problems or situations that you would like to improve in your community? We invite you to talk with your friends, to express your ideas, listen to theirs, and think about how you can work together, create synergy, and achieve a beneficial change for all.



*CARO TAKES A LEAP*

The Bembo Std font family was used.



ESTELÍ MEZA was born in Mexico City, studied Design and Visual Communication with a specialty in Illustration at the Facultad de Artes y Diseño and a Master's Degree in Visual Arts at the Academia de San Carlos of the UNAM.

She has published books in Mexico, Spain, United Arab Emirates and the United States. She currently works for different publishers and magazines.



Caro belongs to an activist family committed to their society, she is restless and often disagrees with some situations that arise in her school community. With the support of her friends, she has the opportunity to learn about the values of democracy, dialogue, participate, agree, listen to differences and accept them... part of this learning is acquired by motivating other classmates to express their concerns to their school authorities about situations that must be improved and to collaborate in the actions to achieve it.

This book is part of the **Árbol** collection, whose objective is to contribute to the citizen culture of children and young people through stories that encourages reflection and active participation in society.