

Historia de Carlito/Carlito's story.

Reviewed by Cristi Jenkins, Access & Programs, Fort Vancouver Regional Library, WA -- Críticas, 6/15/2008



Benavidez, Max and Del Monte, Katherine.
tr. by Olga Villalba. illus. by Noel III. U.S.: Lectura. 2008. 121p. ISBN
978-1-60448-004-7. pap. \$8.95.

YA-When 13 year-old Carlito suddenly lands in jail for tagging a wall, he finds himself deeply conflicted. He feels proud to please the older boys in his gang, yet troubled by his family's fearful reaction to his criminal activity. His life takes a turn when his father finds a gun in his backpack and sends him to his uncle's farm hoping that a new setting will help reform his values. While living in the country, Carlito finds a girlfriend and becomes involved in an art project. But upon returning to L.A. to attend the funeral of one of his gang buddies, he is pressured to retaliate against the killers. Carlito's father gives him an ultimatum, and his choice affects his life forever. Benavidez and Del Monte realistically treats a difficult topic, underscoring the fact that small choices can affect our lives in big ways. Combined with Noel III's black-and-white pencil-and-ink illustrations, the book creates a believable account of a young Hispanic at a pivotal time in his life. Half of the book is in Spanish; it needs to be flipped over for the English version. The Spanish translation is clear and easy to understand...The fast-paced, engaging story will surely grab reluctant readers. Recommended for bookstores, and school and public libraries.