***The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora***

By Pablo Cartaya

### **Annotation:**

Arturo lives in Miami playing basketball and working a few shifts at his Abuela’s restaurant. When he meets Carmen, a young girl who moves into Arturo’s apartment complex, his stomach is in knots. On top of the problems with his new crush, his town is being threatened by a land developer. With the help of Carmen and the book of poetry of Jose Marti left by his grandfather, Arturo discovers family bonds and community are stronger than ever.

**Book Talk:**

Have you ever epically failed? If so, you are not alone. Arturo is a thirteen year old boy who tries to do the right thing and save his abuelo’s restaurant; however he makes a few mistakes along the way. As you read “The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora” you’ll laugh at his mishaps and see just how powerful family truly is.

### **Author on the**:

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### Items to use in a library d**isplay:**

* A book of poetry
* minature houses/buildings
* recipe cards, cooking utencils
* a chefs hat
* a model/toy bulldozer

**Book Club Discussion Questions/Topics**

* In the first few pages, Arturo compares his adventure to David and Goliath. After reading the novel, what are some of similarties and differences to this reference?
* Arturo has a wonderful connection to his Abuela and develops a new understanding of his Abeulo through the book of poetry of Jose Marti. Explain the importance of generational connections in the novel and relate it to your own life.
* Discuss whether or not Arturo “epically failed” as the title implies.
* The author Pablo Cartaya uses the poems of Jose Marti to add depth to the book. Jose Marti was a revoluntionary in Cuba who fought for independence. Consider why the Cartaya chose this poet to use in his book.

**First Line of the Book:**

* “I’m officially resigning from love.”

**Non-Fiction Companion Title(s)**

# Books about Cuba

* Cookbooks with Spanish Recipes

**What to Read Next**

* *Lucky Broken Girl* by Ruth Behar
* *Clayton Byrd Goes Underground* by Rita Williams Garcia
* *Amina’s Voice* by Hene Khan

Other Books by this Author:

* *Marcus Vega Doesn’t Speak Spanish*
* *Tina Cocolina: Queen of the Cupcakes*

**Additional Resources**:

* Poetry: Jose Marti
* Art/craft activity: Have students design a menu for La Cocina de la Isla
* Reader’s Theater script: None as of March 2018
* Interview with the author: http://wlrn.org/post/miamis-newest-young-literary-hero-takes-development
* Book Study: None as of March 2018
* Lesson ideas: None as of March 2018

**Name that Book:**

* “It was the Sunday before the official start of summer, and summer meant hanging out, swinging on banyan trees, looking for manatees in the canals throughout Canal Grove, eating churros (because let’s be real: those deep-fried sugary sticks are all kids of delcious, listening to music, and jumping around in Bren’s bounce house.” (page 4)HB
* “Love and faith are most important. What does that even mean?” (page 57)HB
* “It was an article from a local paper in northern Florida talking about a word I had never heard before: gentrification” (page 97)HB
* “That last line made me feel totally fired up. I folded the letter back into the box ready to test my courage in more than one way. It was like Abuelo was giving me his mojo through his words.” (page 131)HB
* “Every Saturday night, her apartment filled with heavenly smells of saffron, yerba buena, cilantro, and perejil. That was our traidition until she got sick and my mom took over dinner. She preferred to handle everything herself.” (page 193) HB