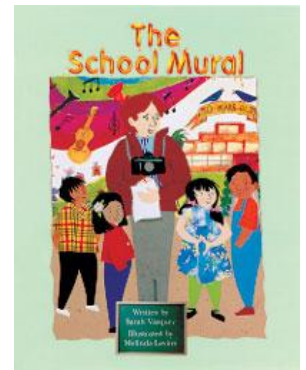


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This story was read together in class this week.

**THE SCHOOL MURAL**  
By Sarah Vázquez

**I**  
**THE NEWS**



One morning, Mrs. Sanchez greeted her class. "I have some news. Soon our school will be fifty years old. We're going to have an open house on May twenty-fifth to celebrate this big event."

Mrs. Sanchez said, "Each class will make a big project. It should be about our school and our community."

Paul asked, "What should we do?"

"I'm sure you'll think of some good ideas," said Mrs. Sanchez.

The class went outside for recess. Mei Lee (MAY-lee) and Paul raced for the swings. They liked to see who could swing the highest.

Mei Lee thought about the big project. She said, "I think we should write a song or put on a play for our class project. What do you think?"

Paul said, "We've done those things before. We need a really big project." While Mei Lee was swinging very high, she looked past the school. She saw the building across the street. It had a big mural painted on the front wall. This gave her a great idea.

**II**  
**A MURAL IDEA**

Later that day, Mrs. Sanchez asked the class for their ideas. Paul wanted to print a huge banner on the computer. Maria wanted to make bookmarks to give away. Edwina's idea was to make a huge card and have everyone sign it. Mei Lee said, "Let's make a mural."

"What's a mural?" asked Ted. "It's a big picture painted on the wall of a building," said Mei Lee. "Look at this one at the pt shop." She pointed out the window.

Mrs. Sanchez listed the children's ideas on the board. "These are all good ideas," said Mrs. Sanchez. "Let's pick one that everyone can have a part in. Look over the list again. Then we'll vote on our project."

Mrs. Sanchez pointed to each idea as they voted. At first, not many children voted. Then, she pointed to the mural idea. Sixteen children raised their hands!

"I think you picked a fine project that everyone can work on," said Mrs. Sanchez.



### III THE PLAN



Mrs. Sanchez said, "People from many different cultures have painted on the wall of their caves. Their paintings tell us how people lived then. Here is a picture of a cave painting. It is a kind of mural." She held up the picture.

"Murals are neat! We'll need to think of lots of things to show," said Maria.

Mrs. Sanchez said, "Murals tell about people and their community. Think of some things to tell about your school."

"Let's tell people about our school band," said Beto.

"We'll need a really big wall for our mural," said Maria.

"What about the outside wall we see when we swing on the playground?" said Paul. "All the classes see it every day!"

Mrs. Sanchez said, "I'll ask our principal, Mr. Ford, if it's OK. Mei Lee, since the mural was your idea, please go with me to see him."

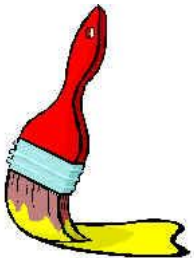
Later, Mrs. Sanchez said, "The principal likes the idea of painting a mural on the wall. He said he will ask if the local newspaper will take a picture of the mural. That would show how our community works together."

Beto asked, "Where will we get the paint? We'll need lots of brushes, too."

Paul said, "Let's ask the art teacher for help. Maybe we could ask our families to help us, too. My mom loves to paint."

"Good idea. Please tell your families about our project, and then I'll call them," said Mrs. Sanchez.

### IV PAINTING THE MURAL



For the next three weeks, the class worked on the mural. First, they planned the scenes to draw. Next, the art teacher helped the children draw sketches of the different scenes on the wall.

Then they started painting the mural. Twenty children couldn't all paint at once, so they took turns. First the band group painted. Then the next group painted. Some parents helped paint the high parts of the wall near the roof. It was hard work, but everyone had fun.

Some funny things happened. One day, Paul bumped the paint tray and got paint all over himself. Then he slipped and put his hand on the wall. He left his handprints on the mural! Everyone decided it looked good, so they added their handprints, too.

Another time, Anjelina was painting high up on a ladder. She dipped the brush into the bucket and splattered lots of paint onto the wall. But down below her was Beto, so she splattered him, too! He had green hair that day.



## V THE NEWSPAPER

When the mural was finished, Mr. Ford called the newspaper. A reporter came to write a story. He asked the class many questions about how they made the mural. He got everyone's name. He took photos of the mural with the painters in front of it. He told the children to watch for the article soon.



The children could hardly wait to see the article in the newspaper. After about a week, the article appeared with a big photo of the mural. The headline said, "Children Show School Pride."

## VI THE OPEN HOUSE

On the day of the open house, Mr. Ford spoke to all the children, parents, and visitors. He told everyone what project each class had done. Then he invited the visitors to walk around and see all the projects. The children were very proud and excited.

When Mr. Ford told about the mural, the crowd cheered. One neighbor stood up and thanked the student for making such a beautiful painting. He said people would enjoy it for many years.

The newspaper reporter came again, too. He took pictures of the mural and the children.

Some of the children decided they liked painting so much that it became their new hobby. Someday they might be famous painters. Or maybe they'll come back to the school sometime just to enjoy their mural. They might even tell students the story of how their mural came to be.