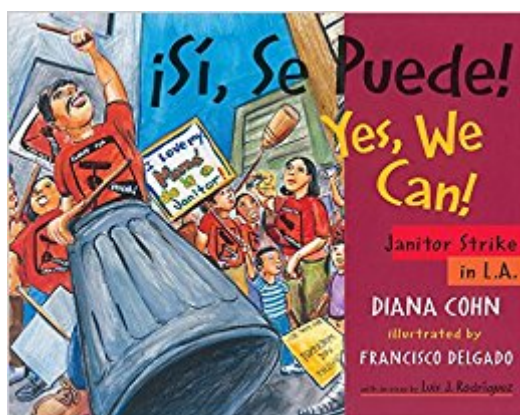


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# Ã,ÂiSi, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike In L.A. (English And Spanish Edition)



## Synopsis

¡Sí Se Puede! / Yes, We Can! is a bilingual fictional story set against the backdrop of the successful janitors' strike in Los Angeles in 2000. It tells about Carlitos, whose mother is a janitor. Every night, he sleeps while his mother cleans in one of the skyscrapers in downtown L.A. When she comes home, she waves Carlitos off to school before she goes to sleep. One night, his mamá explains that she cannot make enough money to support him and his abuelita the way they need unless she makes more money as a janitor. She and the other janitors have decided to go on strike. How will Carlitos support his mother? Carlitos wants to help but he cannot think of a way until his teacher, Miss Lopez, explains in class how her own grandfather had fought for better wages for farmworkers when he first came to the United States. He and the other children in his class join the marchers with a very special sign for his mom! ¡Sí Se Puede! is a Jane Addams Peace Award Honor Book, a Skipping Stones Honor Book, as well as a selection for The Best of Beyond Difference, a recommended list of the top 10 diversity books published in 2002. Diana Cohn, the author, is a social activist. As an elementary teacher, she discovered there were few books for children that discussed social issues, so she began to write as an avocation. She now works as Program Director for the Solidago Foundation, a foundation that supports communities working for economic and environmental justice. She lives on a houseboat in Sausalito, California. Francisco Delgado, the illustrator, grew up in Juárez, Chihuahua, but completed high school in El Paso, Texas. He will receive his MFA at Yale in Painting, Drawing, and Printmaking in May 2002. Francisco is becoming known nationally for his political paintings that satirize U.S. icons blind to the mestizo and immigrant communities of Mexico. He lives in New Haven, Connecticut. Luis J. Rodriguez (Always Running) adds the afterword and a poem.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 5 - 7 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 2

## Customer Reviews

Focusing on the event in April 2000 that united 8,000 workers in the Justice for Janitors Campaign, *Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.* by Diana Cohn, illus. by Francisco Delgado, trans. by Sharon Franco, chronicles the proceedings through the eyes of one female worker's son. An opening color-pencil sketch in fiesta-bright colors shows Mamá tucking in Carlitos for bed before she leaves for work. She explains to her son the need for a strike, and a series of spreads chart the strikers' progress. A final spread profiles union organizer Dolores Sánchez; the dust jacket doubles as a poster that explains labor unions and strikes, along with a poem by Luis J. Rodríguez. Ages 7-12. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

PreS-Gr. 3. Political and passionate, this bilingual picture book about the L.A. janitors' strike in 2000 gives a voice to contemporary urban Latino working-class families. With the English text at the top of each page and the Spanish translation below, the story is told in the first person by Carlitos, a Mexican immigrant child, whose widowed mother cleans offices nights and weekends but still can't manage to support her family. After Mama tells Carlitos that she is helping to organize a janitors' strike for a union, Carlitos gets support at school from his teacher and classmates, and he joins the march with a sign that reads: "I love my Mama. She is a janitor!" Delgado's bright, active pastel pictures, much like poster art, are reminiscent of the work of Mexican artist Orozco, with pulsing scenes of marching crowds in the streets as well as warm close-ups of people at work and home. Carlitos' story is framed by lots of politics for group discussion, and the inside of the dust jacket is a poster with art and text about labor history. Hazel Rochman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

I teach children who are 1st grade English Language learners. In class, we have been doing a social studies/literacy unit on César Chávez - focusing mostly on issues of "fairness" and working conditions. When I introduced the book *Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!* to my class, they

absolutely loved it. I read the story to them in English, and the language may have been a bit complex for some of my less English proficient students. However, we had built the necessary background, and they greatly enjoyed this book. They made endless connections both to César Chavez, and to their own lives and their own families' experiences. The students loved the colorful and descriptive illustrations. They loved that the main character's classroom had a poster of César Chavez in it. From a teaching perspective, this is a great book to make the story of César Chavez and his fight for fair working conditions more accessible and relevant to urban/inner-city children. The children understood the main premise of César Chavez, but I believe that reading this book helped them to relate to it in more profound ways. My students and I loved this book. I would recommend it to any teacher. (However, teachers of younger students or students who are just learning English will need to build the relevant background and vocabulary in order for the students to really take advantage of the messages in the story.)

a good book to start a discussion with my grandchildren

I love the story and the illustrations. What I like most about is that it is a true story told in a special way for children. I plan to read this book to my nephews when they come to visit next week.

This was the children's book that made me cry. The little boy wanted to help his Mother. It's the sweetest thing that talks about workers rights. Standing up for something, supporting family and solidarity. A must own for all children IMHO

Amazing book that inspires children to stand up for what they believe in.

What a great educational fun children's book. Dare to struggle, dare to win.

Good story for beginning Spanish students.

Kids love it.

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