

## Lesson 2

### ***From North to South: A Literature-based Discussion About The Immigrant Experience***

#### **GRADES K – 2 MODULE OVERVIEW**

Lesson 1: Establishing Community (90 minutes)	Lesson 2: The Immigrant Experience: A Literature-based Discussion <i>From North to South</i> (120 –180 minutes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Activity 1: Showing Feelings with Color</li><li>▪ Activity 2: The “Me” You Cannot See</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Discussion 1: Fear of Loss</li><li>▪ Discussion 2: Crossing Borders</li><li>▪ Discussion 3: Solving Problems</li><li>▪ Discussion 4: Staying Connected</li></ul>

#### **Preface**

The use of literature to discuss and understand the human experience is a demonstrable vehicle to share opinions, feelings and emotions through the characters’ experiences and story events. As students study a particular text to arrive at the understanding of the author’s message and make connections between the characters and their own lives, not only can a safe place to share thoughts and feelings be created but students can arrive at a better understanding of themselves and others. This story was selected because of its strong connection to the realities that some of our students might be experiencing or the stress and fear they might be suffering as a result of worrying about their family or friends migratory status. With this in mind, the lesson can last for several days to provide students with the time and space to explore and share their feelings and emotions about immigration and help support the social and emotional educational needs of this student population.

#### **Story Summary**

This bilingual story is about a family that is suddenly separated when the mother is sent back to Mexico as a result of her undocumented status. Hoping to be reunited with her husband and small son once her papers are in order, the mom stays at a shelter in Tijuana. After several weeks, the little boy and his dad are finally able to cross the border to visit her.

## **I. Objective**

1. Learn that there are people who help immigrants to be able to stay or return to the U.S. and places where immigrants can be safe while they wait to return home.
2. Use the story as a springboard for students to share their fears and thoughts about deportation and separation.
3. Understand the concept of borders, how they separate countries, and the human hardships they produce.

## **II. Standards**

ELA Reading Standards: Strands 1, 2, 3 6 and 7

ELA Speaking and Listening: Strands 1 and 2

ELD Standards: I.A.1, I.B.5 & 6, I.C.11

HSS Standards: K.1, 1.5, 2.2 & 2.5

## **III. Materials**

1. Literature Book – *From North to South* by René Colato Laínez, Children's Book Press, New York, 2010.
2. Literature Logs
3. World map or map of North America
4. Handout (optional) – Family History Interview
5. Teacher Resource – Sample Flow Map with Text and Drawings

## **IV. Vocabulary**

Immigration (*inmigración*)  
ciudadano (*citizen*)

border  
submit

lawyer

## **V. Introduction**

1. Ask students if they have a friend or family member who has moved away, e.g. new job, near family. Discuss how they felt when that happened.
2. Tell students that saying goodbye to friends and family who we may not see for a while and missing people we care about can be hard. What might you do when you are missing someone and feeling sad? Share a personal story if students are reluctant to share.
3. Ask students if they stay in touch or how they could stay in touch.

NOTE: If K-2 students have not experienced this type of situation, ask them if they have ever gotten lost and how they felt. The idea is for students to recognize that when we are separated from people we care about there is a fear that we will never see them again.

## **VI. Input**

1. Read the title and show the picture. Ask students to describe what they see and how they think the characters are feeling. Ask what they see in the illustration that helps them.

2. Ask students to predict what they think the story might be about. Chart their ideas.
3. Tell students that the story takes place in two settings. Show Tijuana and San Diego on a map and explain that one is in the U.S. and the other is a city in Mexico by the border with the U.S. If students have background knowledge allow them to explain what they know.
4. Explain that Tijuana and Mexico are South of San Diego and the U.S.

## VII. Reflective Discussion

< Section 1 (pp. 4-7) – Read Aloud. Show and discuss the illustrations.>

1. Page 4 - Ask students why the boy is so happy and to predict where his mom could be.
2. Ask students to identify who is telling the story (point of view)
3. Page 7 – Ask students to discuss what happened to the little boy’s mom and if their predictions were correct. Guide students to explain the reason the mom is not with them and how she might have felt. Reread the third paragraph if needed to support students’ understanding.
4. Re read the second paragraph –  
*“Two weeks ago, Mamá didn’t come home from work. That night, when she called us, we all cried together.”*
  - a. Ask, Before Mamá called Papá and José to tell them what happened, how do you think they felt when she didn’t come home? Why?
  - b. Why did they all cry together? (Refer to the *Color My Feelings* Table as a vocabulary resource for students)
  - c. Do you know anyone or have you heard about someone who experienced the same thing as Jose’s mom? Are you worried/afraid that this could happen to someone in your family? Why or why not?
5. With students, start a flow map that indicates the sequence of events so students understand that on this page, Jose is recalling these events.  
K: Add or draw simple sketches to illustrate the events in each box so that students might copy.  
Grs 1-2: Ask students to copy in their Literature Logs.

Setting: Jose lives in San Diego with his family.  
One night, Jose’s mom didn’t come home from work. She was sent back to Mexico by the authorities because she didn’t have permission (legal papers) to be here.



Two weeks later, Jose and his dad are planning to visit her in Tijuana, Mexico.

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Section 2  
(pp. 8-  
12) – Read Aloud. Show and

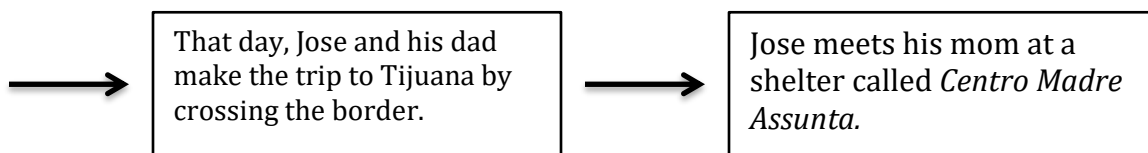
discuss the illustrations. >

1. Page 8 - Ask, *In what direction do José and his dad travel to visit Mamá?*
2. Point to the Mexico sign on the illustration and ask students what it means. Ask them if they have ever been to Tijuana or crossed the border.

Discuss the idea of borders. Explain the significance of the booths. Ask students why they think the dad is not afraid of going to Mexico through the border crossing. Explain the difference between an immigrant and a citizen.

3. Ask students if they know other ways people cross the border and how do they think Jose's mom came to the U.S. Encourage students to share personal experiences and/or oral family histories.
4. <Numbered Heads Together>
  - In small groups, assign a number 1-4.
  - Have students discuss reasons why people immigrate to the United States and chart their ideas.
  - Call on a given number and have students with that number stand up and share their group's ideas.

K - 1 students: Brainstorm as a whole class and chart their ideas.
5. Page 10 – How do Jose and his mom feel? Where is she? Do you think she is safe? How do you know?
6. Continue the Flow map.



7. Page 12 - What does José see at El Centro Madre Assunta? Who does he meet? Why do you think they are there?
8. Re-read paragraph 2 – *“These are my friends Dona Maria and Josefa, Mama said. “They have been here almost a month. They make and sell beautiful crafts. Soon, they will have enough money to continue their trip north.”*
9. What does Mama mean when she says, *“Soon, they will have enough money to continue their trip north.”* ?

K students: Explain that Mama's friends have come to Tijuana trying to get to the U.S. but they don't have enough money to do it. The Center gives them shelter and food so they will be safe until they can cross the border.

< Section 3 (pp. 14-18) – Read Aloud. Show and discuss the illustrations. >

1. Page 14 – Why is Mama's closet empty? Why do you think they brought her pictures and Jose's drawings? How do you think Mama is feeling?
  - b. Do you think she is going to stay at El Centro Madre Assunta for a long time? Why or why not?
2. Page 16 - What does Mama need to be able to go back to the U.S.? Who is trying to help her go home to Jose?

2<sup>nd</sup> grade students: If students bring up the subject of a “Green Card,” explain the concept of permanent residency making the analogy to a driver's license. Guide students to understand that the border separation can result in hardship for many families living in those countries.

**TEACHER’S BACKGROUND NOTE:** A permanent resident is a person who has been granted permission to live and work in the United States. Proof of this status is a Permanent Resident or “Green” Card. A permanent resident is allowed to travel and re-enter the U.S.

3. Page 18 – Why do you think the Centro has a garden? Why do you think Mama wanted to help the children take care of it?
  - b. What does Teresa mean when she tells José, “*All of us want to be with our parents, but they are so far away.*” Where do you think their parents are? Why are they separated from their parents? How do you think they feel?
  - c. Do Mama and the others seem happy at El Centro Madre Assunta? How is El Centro Madre Assunta a place of refuge and safety for the women and children?

< Section 4 (pp. 20 – 31) – Read Aloud as you show the illustrations. >

1. Page 20 – Have the students play the seed game. Why did Jose want to play the game?
2. Page 22 – Why would José ask Mamá, “When these seeds grow, will you come home?” How long does it take for a seed to grow into a plant? What does Mamá mean when she says “*no matter where they are, our loved ones are always with us because they are in our hearts*”?
3. Pages 24-27 – What do Jose and his mom promise each other? What does Jose hope for?
4. Pages 28-31 – What do they plan to do until Mamá can come home? How does José’s dream show that he is hopeful for Mamá to be able to return to the U.S.?
5. Complete the flow chart.



That night, Jose and his dad cross the border and return to San Diego but plan to visit Mamá in Mexico until she is able to return to the U.S.

## VIII. Closure

1. Saying goodbye to friends and family who we may not see for a while and missing people we care about can be hard. Jose takes care of his mom’s garden to help him feel close to her. What might you do to cope with, or manage, your feelings when you are missing someone and feeling sad? What might you say to someone who has a friend or family member far away?
2. Jose had his dad, where or with whom could he have stayed if both his parents had been taken to Mexico? What other family member might Jose have that loves him and could have taken care of him?

3. Jose's family is trying to solve the problem. What are they doing? Who is helping them?
4. Tell students that the shelter in the story is a real place. Show pictures and describe its purpose. Help students arrive at the understanding that there are places and people who can help our family and friends if they are deported so they can return and be reunited with their families.

NOTE: El Centro Madre Assunta was established in 1994 by the Missionaries of St. Charles in Tijuana, Mexico. The Centro welcomes women and children who have been recently deported from the United States or who are trying to enter the United States. The refuge provides shelter, food, and medical and immigration assistance.

<http://assunta-tj.wix.com/assunta#!>

### **IX. Follow up/Extension Activities**

The following activities may be carried out after reading the story or at the end of the section indicated below.

#### Section 3:

1. Grades 1-2: Have students research their family history. Where were you born? Where were your parents and grandparents born? Who were your first relatives to come to the United States? What country were they from? What year did they arrive?  
K: Invite a family member of a student in the class to visit the classroom and tell about their family history. Use the questions above as guide.
2. Grades K-2: Ask students to bring in one to three items (clothing, recipe, photo, postcard, etc.) that symbolize the countries from which their families came.

#### Section 4:

1. Just like José and the other children do in the story, have students decorate small pots or cans as plant holders to give to their parents or guardians. Provide students with paints, stickers, and other materials to design their planters and seeds to grow a plant in their pots. Have them keep track of how many days it takes for the plant to grow.  
Grades 1-2: Students can also take measurements at various intervals.
2. Grades 1-2: Write a letter to the Center or arrange for pen pals.  
K: Shared Writing - compose a letter to the Center and have students draw pictures. Create a class book to send to the Center.
3. Ask students to use the flow map to help them retell the story.
4. Use the *Color My Feelings* Table or the Feeling Word Cards from Lesson 1, Activity 1 to identify Jose's feelings throughout the story or students' feelings as they learn about Jose's story.

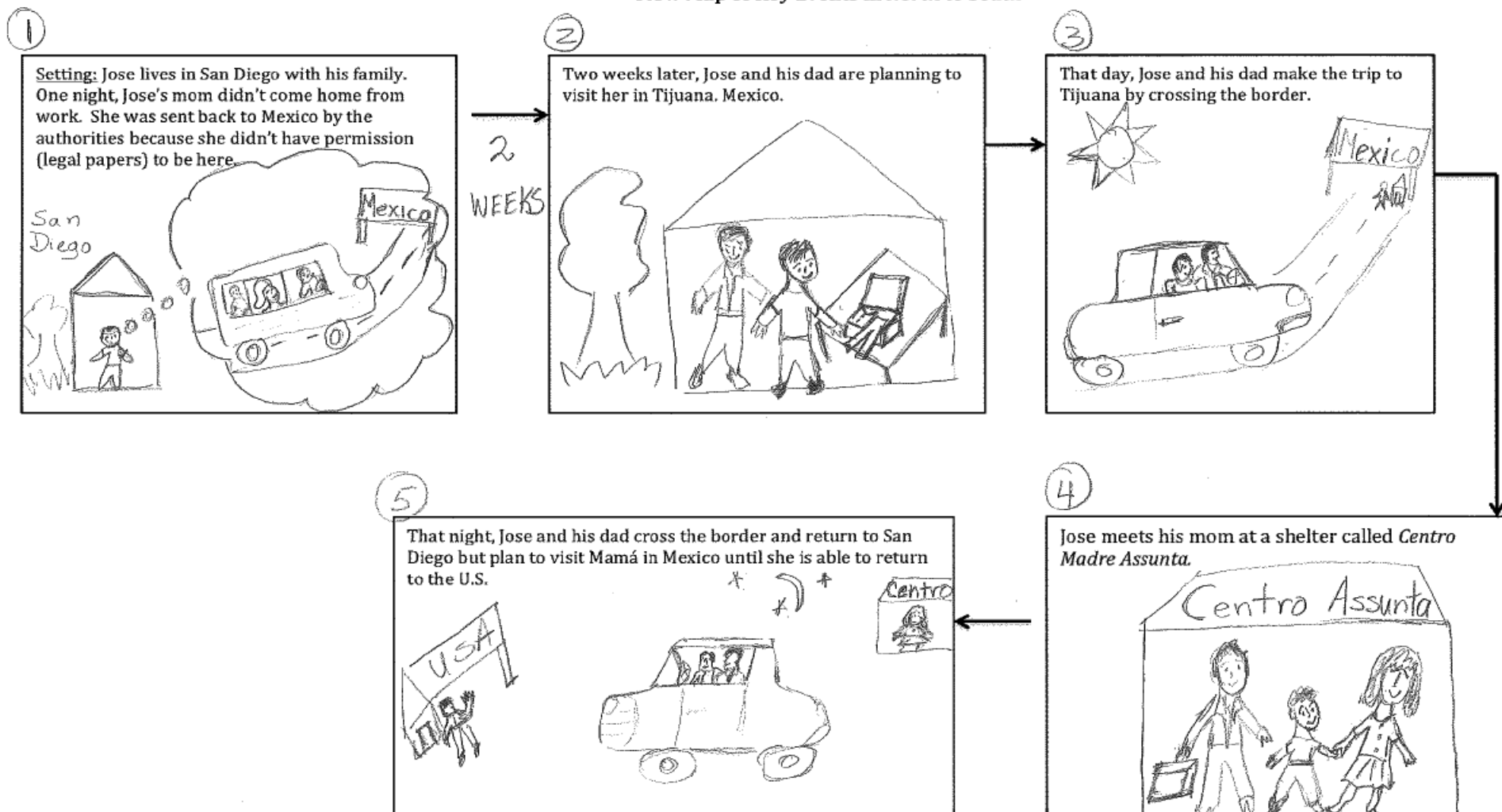
5. Create a storyboard of the things Jose did during his visit to the Center. Write the sequence.
6. Additional Read Alouds
  - *Undocumented Immigrants* by Sarah Howell, PowerKids Press, New York, 2015.

This informational text uses brief and easy to understand explanations suitable for elementary grade students about reasons for undocumented immigration, rights, deportation, sanctuary city, etc. K teachers will find it easy to read or paraphrase and to pick and choose sections as the text is organized by topics. Their website related to the subject is regularly updated – [www.powerkidslinks.com/mosa/undoc](http://www.powerkidslinks.com/mosa/undoc)
  - *The Journey* by Francesca Sanna, Flying Eye Books, London-New York, 2016.

This is the story of a mother and her two children who escape their war torn country in search for a new life. Without documents, they pay their way crossing many borders. The book is an allegory for the difficult personal journeys of immigrants and refugees and the different paths they take towards a better future.
  - *Mama's Nightingale* by Edwidge Danticat, Dial Books, New York, 2015.

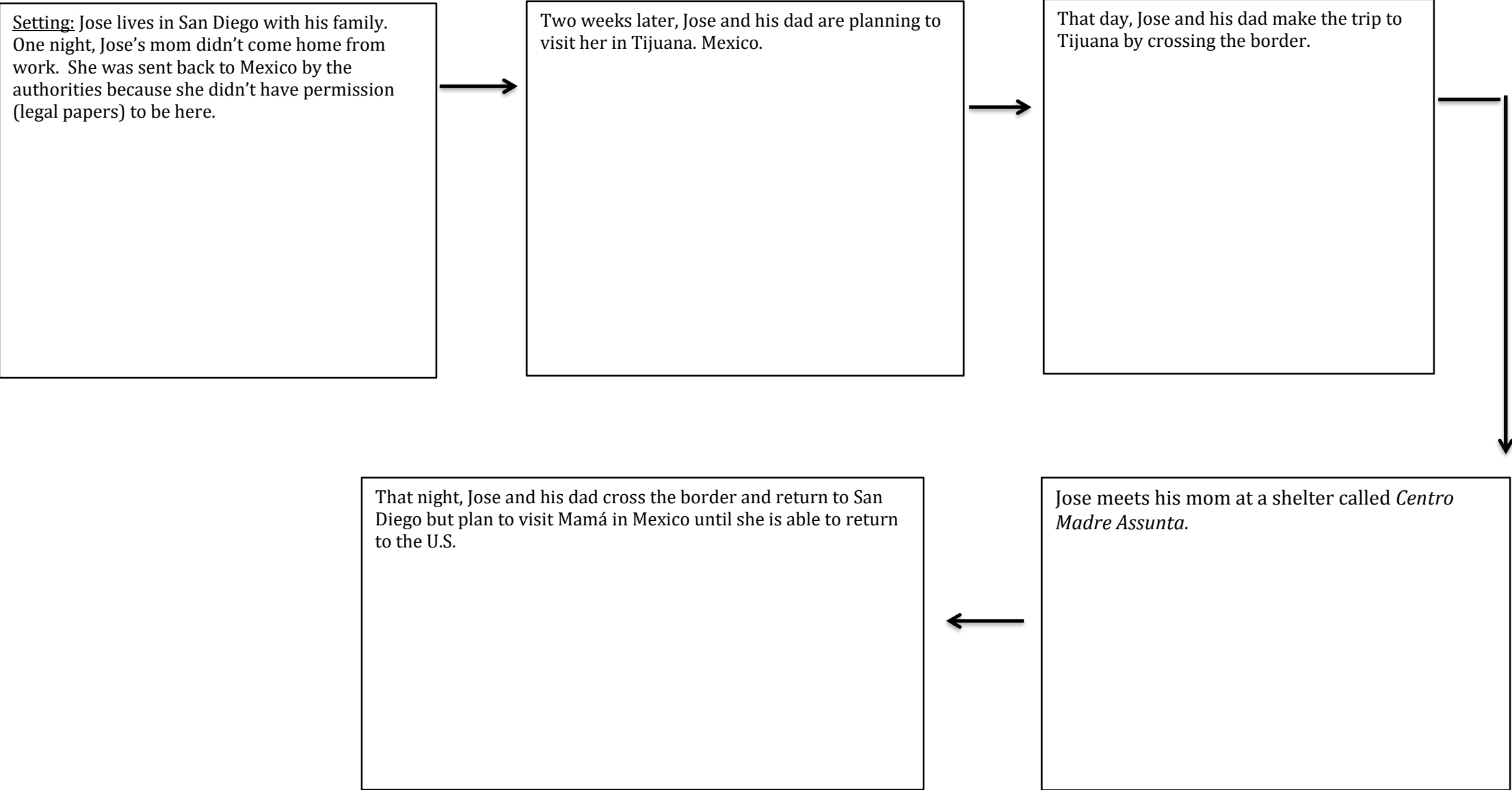
A Haitian mother is separated from her family when she is sent to an immigration detention center due to her undocumented status. After many unsuccessful appeals for help by the father, her young daughter writes a letter to the newspaper that causes a public outpouring of support. The mother is granted a hearing at court and is able to return home to her family. The story shows the potential for even the youngest of us to make a difference.

**Flow Map of Key Events in North to South**





**Grades 1-2- Sample Flow Map of Key Events in *North to South***



## Family History Interview

Interview an adult member of your family to learn about your family history. Write down the answer to each question in this form. Circle the interviewee.

Mother   Father   Uncle   Aunt   Cousin   Grandfather   Grandmother

**Entrevista a un adulto en tu familia para aprender sobre tus antecedentes. Escribe las respuestas en el cuestionario. Circula tu entrevistado.**

**Madre/Padre   Hermano/a   Tio/a   Primo/a   Abuelo/a**

1. Where were you born? **¿Dónde naciste?**

2. Where were your parents born? **¿Dónde nacieron tus padres?**

3. Where were your grandparents born? **¿Dónde nacieron tus abuelos?**

4. Do we still have family there? Where do they live?  
**¿Todavía tenemos familia allí? Dónde viven?**

5. Who were the first members of our family to come to the United States?  
**¿ Quien fue el primero en la familia en venir a los Estados Unidos?**

6. What year did they arrive or how long ago did they arrive?  
**¿ En qué año llegaron o cuántos años tienen de estar aquí?**

7. Why did they come? **¿Por qué vinieron?**