



Turning Pages: My Life Story

Written by Sonia Sotomayor

Illustrated by Lulu Delacre

Philomel Books, 2018, 40 pp

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A stairway to change, growth, and success is never an easy path. The cover of *Turning Pages* shows Sonia Sotomayor going up a set of stairs covered with words and resembling book pages. Through her book, she motivates readers to believe in the magic and power of books to improve themselves in life against all odds. This captivating picturebook autobiography by the first Latina Supreme Court Justice and illustrated by Latina artist Lulu Delacre is also available in Spanish as *Pasando páginas: La*

historia de mi vida. It tells Sotomayor’s story, starting with her childhood and youth in the Bronx, New York, with her immigrant parents. She shares memories of family gatherings and her grandmother reciting nostalgic poems about her home on a faraway island, which marks the beginning of her love for words. She also tells about how her father, like many immigrants, worked hard and was paid very little, with no insurance or health benefits, and how he passed away. The experiences Sotomayor shares of life moving between Puerto Rican and American cultures reveal how she overcame adversity, discrimination, and prejudice. Her life experiences motivated her to take the education pathway and help others who need justice. To treat people fairly under the law is very important to her as is representing people from minoritized communities.

As a child, she discovered that books were a way to escape from an unfair world and find solutions, so she could achieve her goals. Books became her constant friends, through hardships and life experiences, making a path of discovery of both real and fictional worlds. For her, “books were lenses, bringing into focus truths about the world around me”. Students of all cultures, genders, and races can relate to this story that reflects the reality of many immigrant children who dream of a better future. Sonia Sotomayor is a role model not just for immigrant children but for all children who believe in treating others fairly. Her legacy of becoming the first Latina Supreme Court Justice is not only an inspirational story but one that touches on important issues of government, justice, and finding oneself.

This book would pair well with *Sonia Sotomayor: A Judge Grows in the Bronx/La juez que creció en el Bronx* (Jonah Winter & Edel Rodriguez, 2009). *Just Ask! Be Different, Be Brave, Be You* by Sonia Sotomayor and Rafael López (2018) is another relevant text that extends readers’ understandings of diversity, tolerance, and justice.

Lulu Delacre is an award-winning Puerto Rican author and illustrator. Her passion is creating books that encourage Latinx children to empower themselves. In this book she uses a

combination of photographs from Sotomayor's life and colorful, active and imaginative watercolor illustrations to explain Sotomayor's point of view and how words and books shaped her into the person she is today. For more information, please visit her website.

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