

# Latina Lista

Book Reviews

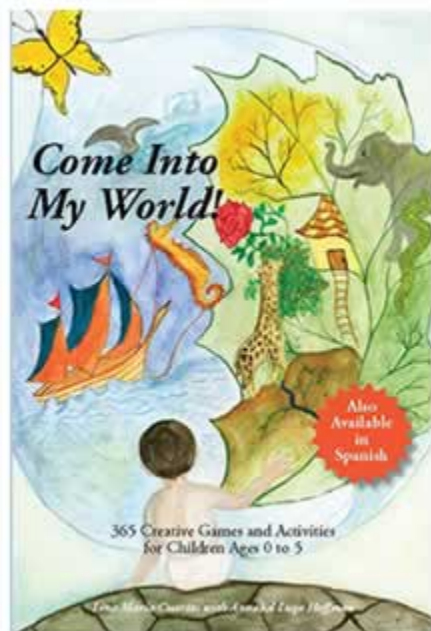
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## CHILDREN DISCOVER THERE'S SOMETHING FUN TO LEARN 365 DAYS A YEAR

—By Marisa Treviño

Now more than ever, the issue of school readiness for young children is on the minds of not just parents but politicians and policy makers as the country finds itself lacking the necessary high-skilled labor force it needs to compete in a global environment.

Yet contrary to popular perception, equipping pre-schoolers with their own computers and software programs isn't necessarily the key to school success. Basic lessons still need to be taught and learned and the tools for these activities are found outside the computer in simple activities that have been shoved aside for the sake of technology.



Thankfully the new children's book *Come Into My World: 365 Creative Games and Activities for Children Ages 0 to 5* (2008 Lunita Company, LLC), by Lina Cuartas and Annabel Lugo Hoffman, resurrects such old-fashioned ideas as actually taking a child by the hand and exploring the world together.

Author Lina Cuartas draws much of her inspiration for the book from her time spent teaching the Huitotos and Boras children of the Amazon rainforest. It was an experience that changed her perspective on how to look at life — and how life's lessons should be learned.

The book, available in both English and Spanish, is broken down by month and lists a different activity for each day using materials readily found around the house. From creative tasks like making a collage, creating colored ice cubes or illustrating a book about themselves to exploratory activities like going on a treasure hunt around the house or going for a walk outside to appreciate nature to even turning mundane chores into learning experiences like picking up toys or emptying trash cans, *Come Into My World* strives to introduce basic concepts that are essential for reading, math, science and social skills.

The best thing about the activities is that the children don't even realize they're learning and parents get to rediscover the wonder of the world hand-in-hand with their child.