

AN ACTIVITY KIT

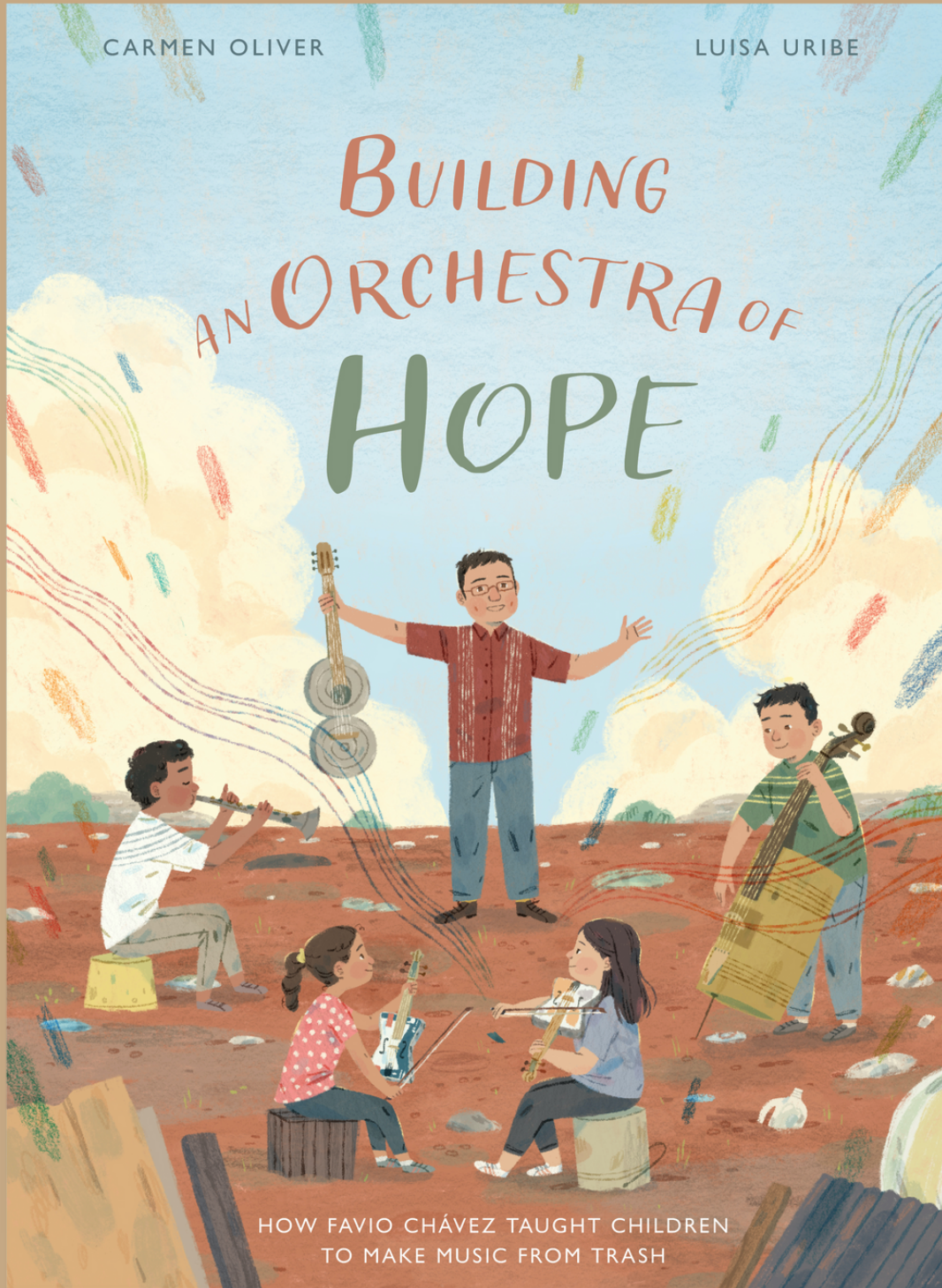


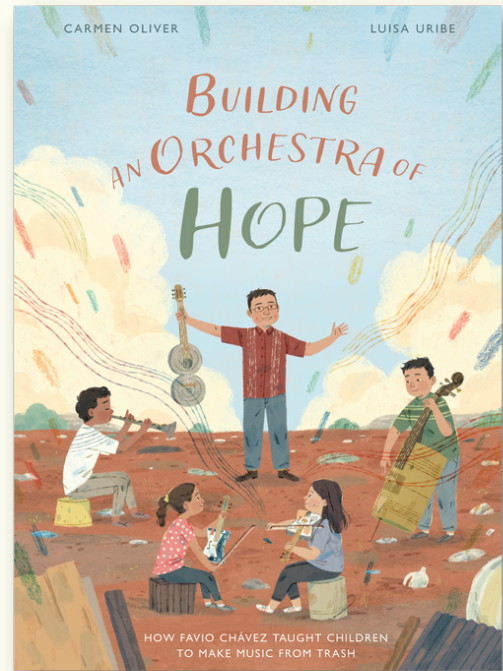
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ABOUT THE BOOK

In Cateura, Paraguay, a town built on a landfill, music teacher Favio Chávez longed to help the families living and working amid the hills of trash. How could he help them find hope for the future? Favio started giving music lessons to Cateura's children, but soon he encountered a serious problem. He had more students than instruments!

But Favio had a strange and wonderful idea: what if this recyclers' town had its own recycled orchestra? Favio and Colá, a brilliant local carpenter, began to experiment with transforming garbage into wonder. Old glue canisters became violins; paint cans became violas; drainpipes became flutes and saxophones. With repurposed instruments in their hands, the children of Cateura could fill their community—and the world—with the sounds of a better tomorrow.



Based on an incredible true story, *Building an Orchestra of Hope* offers an unforgettable picture of human dignity reclaimed from unexpected sources. Carmen Oliver's inviting words and Luisa Uribe's dynamic illustrations create a stirring tribute to creativity, resilience, and the transformative nature of hope.

Building an Orchestra of Hope / Hardcover / ISBN: 9780802854674 / \$18.99 / 44 pages / Ages 4–9

ABOUT THE CREATORS



CARMEN OLIVER is the author of the picture book biography *A Voice for the Spirit Bears* (Kids Can) and the Bears Make the Best Buddies series (Capstone). She is the founder of the Booking Biz, an agency that brings children's authors and illustrators to schools, libraries, and special events. Oliver lives in Round Rock, Texas, with her family. Visit her website at carmenoliver.com or follow her on Twitter @carmenoliver.

LUISA URIBE has illustrated many books for children, including *Areli Is a Dreamer* (Random House) and *Dear Earth...From Your Friends in Room 5* (HarperCollins). Luisa lives in Bogotá, Colombia; visit her website at luisauribe.com or follow her on Instagram at @lupencita.



MEET THE RECYCLED ORCHESTRA OF CATEURA



The Recycled Orchestra of Cateura, directed by Favio Chávez, is made up of young people with limited resources who live in the Bañado Sur community located around the Cateura landfill in Asunción, Paraguay. The distinctive feature of the group is the interpretation of musical works with recycled instruments made from garbage rescued from the landfill.

The orchestra's instruments imitate violins, violas, cellos, double basses, guitars, flutes, saxophones, trumpets, and percussion instruments. They perform classical music, folk music, Paraguayan music, Latin American music, music by

the Beatles, Frank Sinatra, movie music, and symphonic metal, among others. The orchestra aims to develop a training process aimed at young people who live in precarious conditions and in a state of vulnerability so that they live experiences that help them learn, stay in school, develop their creativity and access opportunities to improve their future.

Taken from <https://www.recycledorchestracateura.com/>.

WHO IS FAVIO CHÁVEZ?

Music educator and creator of the Recycled Orchestra of Cateura **Favio Chávez** was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and later moved to Carapeguá, Paraguay. Favio loved music and studied Engineering in Human Ecology. As a final thesis, he developed a work on household solid waste. Working in the Cateura de Asunción Landfill as a technician responsible for formal education, he began interacting with workers there and started teaching music to their children.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Before and after reading, discuss the title of the book. Why might the author (Carmen Oliver) have titled the book *Building an Orchestra of Hope*?
- What predictions can you make after hearing the title?
- Why did learning to play an instrument and music have such a big effect on this community?
- Have you ever played an instrument? How does it feel to make music?
- How has music impacted your life?
- How would you describe Favio Chávez? What kind of person do you think he is? What evidence can you use from the book to support your ideas?
- How do you think the children felt when they got their instruments?
- How do you think they felt when they played music? Why?
- What do you notice about the illustrations?
- How did the illustrator, Luisa Uribe, use pattern and texture in the pictures?
- What questions do you have about garbage and recycling?
- What could be done to help the community of Cateura?
- The back of the book jacket has a quote from Favio Chávez that states, “The world sends us garbage. We send back music.” Discuss this quote. What do you think it means? What do you wonder about after reading this quote? How does the quote make you feel? How do the book and this story explore this quotation? Where else does this quote appear in the book?
- Why might the author have chosen to include a direct quote from Favio, instead of rewriting the idea in her own words?

VOCABULARY INTRODUCED IN BUILDING AN ORCHESTRA OF HOPE

purpose

labor

captivated

contaminated

entice

innovative

heaps

vacated

deserted

informal

See printable for vocabulary activity. The vocabulary could be used for word study, etymology work, prefix/suffix exploration, or syllable work. Vocabulary could also be introduced before reading the text aloud to activate prior knowledge and scaffold the words.

EXAMINE THE CRAFT OF WRITING

Use the following mentor sentences to look at the craft of writing. Think about and discuss what the writer did in these sentences. What do you notice? What could you try out in your own writing?

“The trash weighed more than a herd of elephants. 1500 tons!”

“Glass clinked. Metal pinged. Plastic bags rustled.”

“They breathed a sea of stench. They waded through filth.”

“Colá collected oven trays, old drain pipes, door keys, metal forks and spoons, X-ray films, bottle caps, glue canisters, plastic buttons, paint cans, wooden crates, and oil barrels.”

“He taught them how to hold the bow at the right angle. He taught them how to hold the violin under their chin. He taught them how to read notes.”

WRITING PROMPTS

- Towards the end of the book, Favio says “You’re going to make mistakes. But don’t let that upset you.” Write about what mistakes you’ve made that have led to success. Or reflect in writing why mistakes are important. (See printable.)
- Using what you know from the book and the back matter, design and make a poster advertising a concert by the orchestra. (See printable.)

READING/ WRITING/ LISTENING AND SPEAKING COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.3 Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.8 Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.B Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.7 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

STEM ACTIVITIES

Gather, upcycle materials to design and make your own instrument!

Note: Some instruments are special to certain cultures and communities. Be sure to explore the history of an instrument and its cultural ties!

- **Shaker:** Fill a repurposed container with beads, pebbles, rice or rocks to make a shaker. Seal with glue or tape. Decorate the outside. Shake!
- **Drum:** Stretch a balloon over a can or container. Secure the balloon with an elastic. Decorate and bang away!
- **Straw Flute:** Cut straws to different lengths. Tape or secure the straws in size order at one end. Blow!
- **String Instrument:** Stretch rubber bands across something with a hole (a can or a cardboard box with a hole cut into it). Pluck away!

Optional Extensions

Collect a variety of materials to have children design and make their own instruments. What instruments do you already know about? What can you make? Experiment with what happens when you change something on your instrument. What happens if you make something longer, shorter, tighter, looser? How does it change the sound?

Write step-by-step directions so that someone else could remake your instrument.

Research and learn about the recycling process in your community. What ways are there to make it better?

Next Generation Science Standard (NGSS) Connections

K-ESS3-3 Earth and Human Activity

Communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment.

1-PS4-1 Waves and Their Applications in Technologies for Information Transfer

Plan and conduct investigations to provide evidence that vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate.

K-2-ETS1-1 Engineering Design

Ask questions, make observations, and gather information about a situation people want to change to define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool.

3-5-ETS1-1 Engineering Design

Define a simple design problem reflecting a need or a want that includes specified criteria for success and constraints on materials, time, or cost.

SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTIONS

- Find Paraguay on a map. Research and learn about Paraguay.

Extension: Find Cateura on a map. Research and learn about Cateura and the city of Asunción.

- The people of Cateura live on a landfill. What questions or thoughts arise from this fact?

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Listen/watch a video of the orchestra playing (see Further Reading and Study). Paint/draw/watercolor while listening to the music. Let the music inspire the art!

Optional extension: Write about what you were thinking about while listening. (See printable.)

Additional extension: Make recycled art while listening to the orchestra. Gather secondhand/recycled materials to make a sculpture, invention, or creation while being inspired by Favio Chávez and the orchestra.

- Use this website <https://www.recycledorchestracateura.com/> to look at photos of the instruments. Discuss, write, and draw about what you notice!
- Author Carmen Oliver used conversations with Favio Chávez to help her write the book. What questions do you think she asked to gather facts and information? Discuss what makes for a good interview question. Generate a list of possible interview questions (see printable). If you were to interview Favio, what questions would you ask?

Extension: Find places in the text that support your ideas for questions. Reverse engineer the text! (See printable.)

Additional extension: Think of someone who inspires you. Write a list of interview questions for that person.

- Music often involves beats and rhythm. Make a circle with a group of people. Have the first person start with a simple clapping pattern (e.g., clap, clap, stomp). Have each person add onto the pattern until you go around the circle.

PICTURE BOOK TEXT SET FOR BUILDING AN ORCHESTRA OF HOPE*

Because (Hyperion) — written by Mo Willems, illustrated by Amber Ren

Digging for Words: José Alberto Gutiérrez and the Library He Built (Schwartz & Wade) — written by Angela Burke Kunkel, illustrated by Paola Escobar

Drum Girl Dream: How One Girl's Courage Changed Lives (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) — written by Margarita Engle, illustrated by Rafael López

The Greatest Song of All: How Isaac Stern United the World to Save Carnegie Hall (Quill Tree Books) — written by Megan Hoyt, illustrated by Kate Hickey

I Can Help (Eerdmans) — written by Reem Faruqi, illustrated by Mikela Prevost

A Plan For the People: Nelson Mandela's Hope for His Nation (Eerdmans) — written by Lindsey McDivitt, illustrated by Charly Palmer

Playing at the Border: A Story of Yo-Yo Ma (HarperCollins) — written by Joanna Ho, illustrated by Teresa Martinez

**These texts could be used as companion books, comparison books, and/or books to make text connections with.*

LINKS FOR FURTHER READING AND STUDY

Greer, Carlos. "Favio Chávez Helps Children Make Music—Out of Trash." *People*, May 9, 2013.
<https://people.com/human-interest/musicians-brings-hope-to-kids-living-in-slums-in-paraguay/>

Landfill Harmonic. Meetai Films, et al., 2022.
<http://landfillharmonicmovie.com/>

Orquestade Reciclados de Cateura (Recycled Orchestra of Cateura). 2014.
www.recycledorchestracateura.com

Simon, Bob, correspondent, "The Recyclers: From Trash Comes Triumph." 60 Minutes, CBS. New York: CBS News, November 17, 2013, and May 11, 2014. Paramount Plus.
<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/recyclers-from-trash-comes-triumph-2/>

Tsioulcas, Anastasia. "The Landfill Harmonic: An Orchestra Built from Trash" NPR, December 19, 2012
t.ly/TiMk

A Q&A WITH CARMEN OLIVER

Q: What inspired you to write *Building an Orchestra of Hope*?

A: I have a passion for events and stories where ordinary people do extraordinary things to make the world a better place. So when a friend shared a video clip with me about the making of the documentary *Landfill Harmonic*, I knew I had to write Favio's story and bring it to children everywhere to inspire, enlighten, and empower.

Q: What about this particular topic attracted you?

A: I love that people's trash can be recycled, repurposed, and made into something useful. And what's more beautiful than crafting instruments to create beautiful music? Music to be enjoyed by everyone, music that can help and heal communities?

Q: What was it about Favio that made him the ideal focus of the book?

A: I love unsung heroes. The underdogs. The regular folk that sometimes slip under the radar but show up every day in their jobs, in their lives, and change the world for the better. And to me, Favio Chavez is that kind of hero. A hero for our planet. He's using his passions and talents and gifts to help families and to inspire others to pick up the torch and do better in their part of the world.

Q: What research did you do for this book?

A: I read every article I could get my hands on. I trolled the Internet for sources. I watched the *Landfill Harmonic* documentary many times. I interviewed and corresponded with Favio Chávez via email. I watched short documentaries and interviews, including the one on 60 Minutes.

Q: What do you hope young readers take away from your book and Favio's story?

A: Art in its many forms has the ability to connect and transform. It has the power to heal and uplift. It has the power to move us into action. Stories like *Building an Orchestra of Hope* remind us to do better. When we do nothing—nothing changes. But when we act, we have the power to make a difference in the world.



Building an Orchestra of Hope

Using the quote below, write about a time you made a mistake that turned into something positive.

"You're going to make mistakes but don't let that upset you." - Favio Chávez

Building an Orchestra of Hope

Listen to the orchestra play.
Write about what the music makes you
feel and think.

Building an Orchestra of Hope

Make a list of interview questions you think the author may have asked Favio Chávez. What question words could you use: who? what? where? why? how? which?

Building an Orchestra of Hope

Reverse-engineer the book! Write a possible interview question, then support your idea with a place in the text.

Question:

Spot in text:

Question:

Spot in text:

Building an Orchestra of Hope

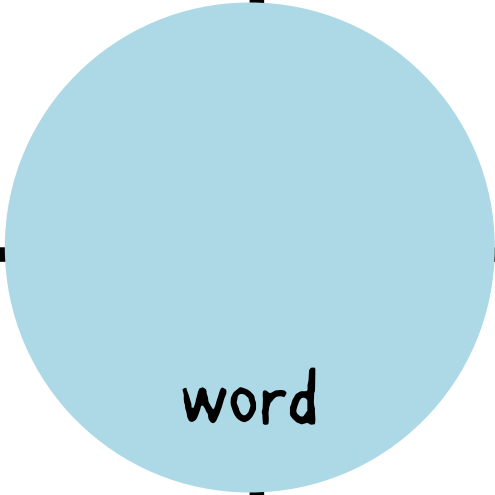
Think of someone who inspires you. Make a list of interview questions you could ask that person. What question words could you use: who? what? where? why? how? which?

Name _____

Date _____

Vocabulary from *Building an Orchestra of Hope*

Pick one vocabulary word from the list and then share your ideas with a partner or small group. Vocab: *purpose, labor, captivated, contaminated, innovative, heaps, vacated, deserted, informal*

Write the definition.	Use it in a sentence.
 word	
Write one thing you know about this word.	Draw a picture.

DEFINITIONS OF WORDS FROM BUILDING AN ORCHESTRA OF HOPE

purpose: the reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists.

labor: work, hard effort. Can be used as a noun or a verb.

captivated: to hold the interest of someone, often in a trance-like way.

contaminated: something is made dirty or poisonous or hazardous in some way.

innovative: creative, out-of-the-box.

heaps: piles. Can be a verb or a noun.

vacated: to leave a place that has been occupied.

deserted: empty, not occupied.

informal: not formal or official.

