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 **Prestwick House**
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Bless Me, Ultima
BY RUDOLFO ANAYA



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ISBN 978-1-58049-201-8
Item No. 301929

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All references come from the Warner Books edition of *Bless Me, Ultima*, published 1994.

Note to Teacher: This book contains religious references and potentially controversial elements including violence, inappropriate language, sexual relationships, racial bias, and depictions of witchcraft.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Author Influences

Objective: Identifying elements of an author's life used as a basis for writing

Activity 1

Rudolfo Anaya is known for using his Hispanic heritage as a resource for his writing. During an interview with the National Education Association, he said the following when describing his goal for writing:

I hope my books present some of my New Mexican culture which includes Hispanic and Native American traditions and ceremonies....I hope my stories build self-esteem and self-interest; that is, an interest in our history. We need the stories of our community told so we can see ourselves as actors in the drama of life.

Research Anaya's life and complete the chart below with experiences from his life that you find in *Bless Me, Ultima*. Leave the second column blank, because you will review your list after you finish reading the book. The first column is done for you.

Anaya's Experiences	<i>Bless Me, Ultima</i>
Anaya spoke only Spanish until he went to school.	
His father, Martin Anaya, worked on ranches on the plains of New Mexico, and his mother, Rafaelita Mares Anaya, was from a farming family.	
Anaya spent his childhood fishing, hunting, and playing around the Pecos River.	
He was raised as a devout Roman Catholic.	
When he was 16, Anaya broke two vertebrae in his neck.	

Name: _____

Date: _____

As You Read...**Symbolism****Objective:** Identifying the purpose of a symbol**Activity**

When Ultima arrives at Antonio's house, an owl appears in the trees. Antonio often sees the owl nearby, particularly at times when he is afraid or in danger. As you read, keep a list of the times that Antonio sees the owl, and briefly describe the owl's actions. The first one is done for you.

Symbolism Chart

Page	Passage	Description
Pg. 13	"And with Ultima came the owl. I heard it that night for the first time in the juniper tree outside of Ultima's window. I knew it was her owl because the other owls of the llano did not come that near the house."	The owl acts different from other owls because it comes much closer to the house.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Siete-Doce**Family Traditions****Objective:** Understanding the significance of family history**Activity 1**

Antonio's father, Gabriel, is very proud that his family was from the llano. Use the chart below to list phrases that illustrate Gabriel's pride as a man of the llano.

Tradition Chart

Page	Phrase

Name: _____

Date: _____

Catorce**Perspective****Objective:** Understanding point of view**Activity**

The reader learns about the fight between Narciso and Tenorio from Antonio's point of view. As Antonio follows Narciso to Rosie's and then home, Antonio shares his feelings and fears with the reader. Although Antonio recounts what he hears Narciso say, the reader does not know what Narciso thinks.

Assume the role of Narciso and rewrite the section of this chapter in which Narciso heads to Antonio's home to warn the family about Tenorio's plans to kill Ultima. Be sure to write as if Narciso is the narrator, sharing his thoughts and feelings. Refer to pages 167–168 to re-read the section from Antonio's point of view.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Diecisiete–Dieciocho**Conflict****Objective:** Identifying conflict among different perspectives**Activity**

In these chapters, Antonio and Florence discuss the existence of God and God's role in their lives. Both of them base their beliefs on the events of their lives and their parents' influences on them. Review these chapters and use the chart below to list quotations from Antonio and Florence that explain their beliefs and some of the events that have influenced them. The first one is done for you.

Conflict Chart

Page	Quotation	Character	Influence
Pg. 191	“Man tries to know and his knowledge will kill us all. I want to know. I want to know the mysteries of God. I want to take God into my body and have Him answer my questions.”	Antonio	Antonio's mother is a devout Roman Catholic and has been instructing him in the Catholic catechism.