



Title: Bless Me, Ultima
Author: Rudolfo Anaya
Imprint: Penguin Classics
Publisher: Penguin Publishing Group
On sale date: March 15, 2022
ISBN: 9780143137221
Format: Paperback

BOOK RESUME: BLESS ME, ULTIMA

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Although only six years old, Antonio Marez is perceptive beyond his years. He was brought into the world with the help of Ultima, a curandera, or folk healer, in touch with nature and the spirit world. Revered by some as a wisewoman but rebuked by others as a witch, Ultima has now come back to stay with Tony's family in New Mexico. As Tony seeks out his destiny—torn between his mother's farming forebears and his father's wandering vaquero roots, between Spanish Catholicism and the gods of his indigenous ancestors—Ultima's loving tutelage will help him navigate questions of life and death, good and evil, and reveal to him the vastness of the heritage that shapes him, in this pioneering work of literature.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"*Bless Me, Ultima* made me feel seen in the same way that Whitman's poetry does. . . . It's enchanting: a journey of the senses, and a classic for a reason. . . . Anaya was an author who appreciated different perspectives and cultures. . . . Without his work, books like mine could not exist." —Erika L. Sánchez, from the Foreword

"Half a century after its publication, *Bless Me, Ultima* is still reaching new heights. . . . The novel's impact is felt everywhere. . . . It's the quintessential coming-of-age story of a young person. . . . A universal tale of empowerment. . . . As Anaya wrote in the opening of the novel, 'Ultima came to stay with us. . . .' Fifty years later, she's still here and stronger than ever." —*Albuquerque Journal*

"One of the foundational texts of Chicano literature." —*Los Angeles Review of Books*

"Anaya's voice [is] rich as mahogany, terse as a stream." —*The New York Times*

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Excerpt](#)
- [Teacher's Guide](#)
- [Curriculum Guide](#)
- [Discussion Questions](#)

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

- [Kids' Right to Read Project Helps Lift Ban on *Bless Me, Ultima*](#) (2013)
- [Letter Opposing Removal of *Bless Me, Ultima* from Classrooms](#) (2008)
- [Free Speech Groups Oppose Censorship of *Bless Me, Ultima*](#) (2009)
- [Bless Me, Ultima Returns to Idaho High School Classrooms](#) (2013)
- [Legendary author Rudolfo Anaya on banning books](#) (2022)

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*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

- ['Librotraficantes' fire up to fight latest attacks on race, ethnicity, LGBTQ studies \(2022\)](#)

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