

Historical  
Fiction

# Mabuhay

by Paul Mason • illustrated by Burgandy Beam



Mc  
Graw  
Hill

PAIRED  
READ

The Pensionados

## STRATEGIES & SKILLS

### Comprehension

**Strategy:** Reread

**Skill:** Theme

### Vocabulary Strategy

Homophones

### Vocabulary

depicts, detested, discarded,  
eldest, ignored, obedience,  
refuge, treacherous

### Content Standards

**Social Studies**

History

Word count: 1,832\*\*

\*\*The total word count is based on words in the running text and headings only. Numerals and words in captions, labels, diagrams, charts, and sidebars are not included.



## Essential Question

Why is it important to keep a record of the past?

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## Chapter 1

# Feeling Lost

Gloria stared out of the window as the taxi driver scratched his head, puzzled. “I’m sure Ellis Street is around here,” the driver said to her father. “Don’t worry, we’re not lost.”



But Gloria was worried. She felt lost enough coming to a new country. She gazed at the houses, each with its neatly trimmed front yard. This didn’t look like her old neighborhood at all, and she was already feeling homesick.

Everything here was so different from the Philippines. Even the trees were nothing like the ones back home.

“What do you think of America from what you’ve seen so far?” her mother asked, squeezing Gloria’s hand and smiling encouragingly.

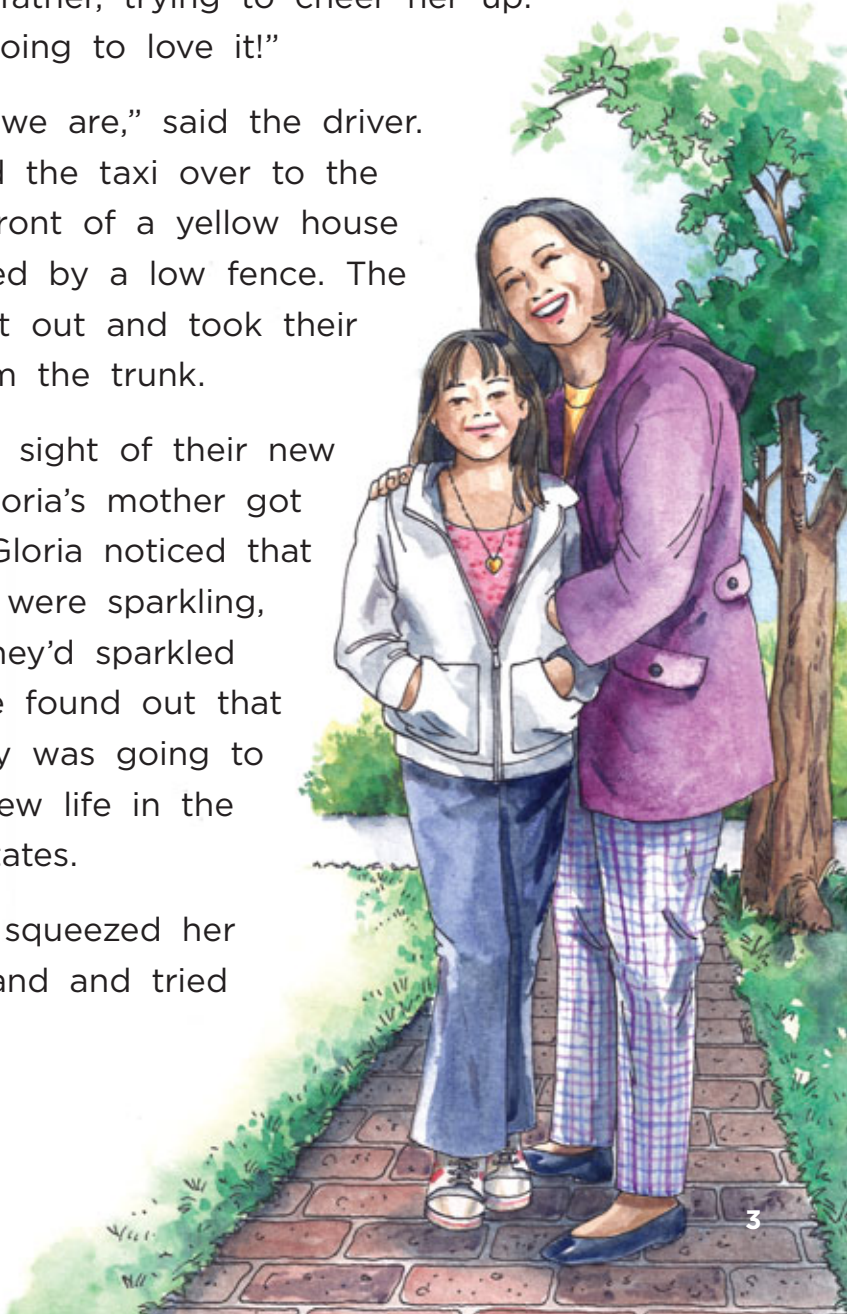
“It’s okay,” said Gloria. “I guess.”

“Wait until you see our new house,” said her father, trying to cheer her up. “You’re going to love it!”

“Here we are,” said the driver. He pulled the taxi over to the curb in front of a yellow house surrounded by a low fence. The driver got out and took their bags from the trunk.

At the sight of their new house, Gloria’s mother got excited. Gloria noticed that her eyes were sparkling, just as they’d sparkled when she found out that the family was going to start a new life in the United States.

Gloria squeezed her mom’s hand and tried to smile.





Just as they were about to open their front door, a man came out of a nearby house. He slammed his door shut and hurried down the steps toward the street.

“Hello!” Gloria’s dad called.

The man glanced over at Gloria’s family, but ignored them and got into his car. He revved the engine a few times. Gloria thought it sounded like a growling dog. Then the car sped off, roaring down the street.

The family looked at each other. Gloria had lost her smile and so had her mom. They felt crushed by the coldness of their neighbor. Some welcome that had been! Gloria hoped people would be friendlier at her new school.

**STOP AND CHECK**

How does Gloria feel about her new home?

## Chapter 2

# Flower, Flour

The next day was Gloria's first day at school. Her teacher, Mrs. Wallis, welcomed her to the class. She explained to the students that Gloria was from the Philippines.

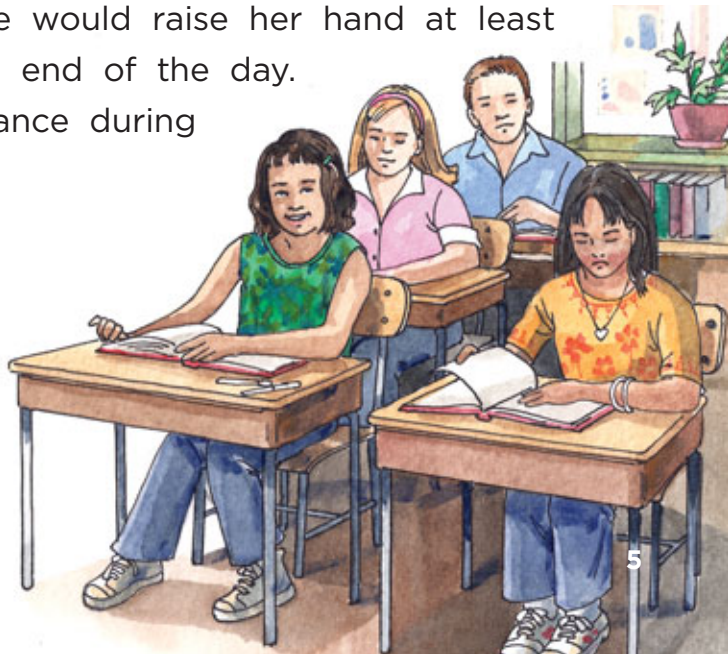
"Ramona, you're Gloria's buddy," she said.

Showing obedience to Mrs. Wallis, Ramona nodded. "Sure!" she said, smiling at Gloria.

"Thank you, Ramona," said Mrs. Wallis, and Gloria went to sit at the desk next to Ramona's.

Ramona said "hi." Gloria whispered "hi" back, but she kept her eyes down and only peeked at the rest of the class when they answered questions.

Slowly Gloria started to build up a little nerve. She decided she would raise her hand at least once before the end of the day. She got her chance during writing time.



Mrs. Wallis asked the class to write a poem about spring. “What are some words you could use to describe a flower?” she asked the class.

Gloria raised her hand. “White and powdery?” she asked. Everyone laughed. Gloria’s face went red, and she wondered what she’d said that was wrong.

Mrs Wallis smiled at her kindly. “Good try, Gloria, but I meant a flower in a garden, not the flour you use in baking.”

“Oh,” said Gloria, feeling silly.

“Those two words do sound exactly the same—like scents and cents, or deer and dear.” Mrs Wallis wrote the words on the board to show how each one is spelled. “It’s an easy mistake to make.”





Gloria lowered her eyes again. English was treacherous. Now she wouldn't say anything for the rest of the day. She'd have to endure this horrible school till the bell rang. Then she'd race to the bus. When she was home again, she could take refuge in her bedroom, where it was safe.

Ramona could see Gloria was embarrassed, and she smiled at her. "Don't worry," she whispered. Gloria nodded but said nothing.

At home, when her mother asked Gloria about her day, everything spilled out in a flood of words. Gloria told her mom that she'd made a mistake and the class had laughed. She detested school and the city. Why had they even come here?

Gloria's mother listened patiently. "So you didn't make a single friend?" she asked.

Gloria shrugged. "Well, I did meet one girl. Her name is Ramona and she is my buddy. But she had singing practice at lunchtime, and I was left on my own."

Her mom smiled. "Well, one new friend—that's a start, isn't it?" Gloria wasn't so sure.

**STOP AND CHECK**

Why didn't Gloria's first day at school go well?

## Chapter 3

# Uncle Jose

At bedtime when Gloria's father said good night to her, he had a book with him. It was the family photo album.

Her father sat on the edge of Gloria's bed. "I thought you could use something to cheer you up," he said, tapping the album. "Did I ever tell you about your great-uncle Jose? He was a *pensionado*."

Gloria shook her head. "What's a *pensionado*?"

Her dad thumbed through the album. "Well, a long time ago, the American government helped some of the best students from the Philippines come here to study. It was kind of like a scholarship. They called the students *pensionados*."

He found the page he was looking for. "Here he is. This photo depicts Jose and some of his friends on their graduation day. Jose is 23 years old in the photo."



Gloria looked at the old black-and-white photograph and at the man her dad was pointing to. Uncle Jose looked really nice in his suit and graduation cap and gown. He was smiling brightly at the camera. Gloria thought he looked younger than her dad was now.

“Did he come over with his parents?” asked Gloria.

Her dad shook his head. “No. Jose was the eldest in his family, and he came here on his own. He didn’t know anyone. I remember when he told me how hard it was at first. He often felt really lonely. There weren’t many other people from the Philippines here to offer support and friendship. But things got better, and he became the first person in the family to earn a college degree. So it was worth it in the end.”

“Uncle Jose must have been brave,” Gloria said.

Her father nodded. “So if you feel a little down at school, think about your great-uncle Jose. Remember, some things take time.” Then her father carefully closed the photo album.

After her dad had turned out the light, Gloria thought about her great-uncle standing there proudly on the steps of the university. Her father was right. If pensionados could come to a foreign country all alone and do well, then so could she. After all, she wasn't alone. As she drifted off to sleep, Gloria felt more hopeful about the day ahead.

**STOP AND CHECK**

Why does her dad's story about Jose make Gloria feel better?



## Chapter 4

# Surprises

Gloria's good feeling about school was proved right as soon as she arrived the next morning. Ramona ran up to her with a big grin. Gloria could see she had something she was dying to share.

"Mahbooey," she said. Gloria didn't understand. Ramona tried again. "Mahaatay?"

Gloria still didn't understand, and Ramona looked disappointed. "Doesn't that mean 'welcome' or 'long life' where you come from?"

Now it was Gloria's turn to grin. "Oh, you mean *mabuhay!*"

"Yes, as I said." Ramona nodded. "Mabooay!"

"How do you know that word?" Gloria asked.

Ramona shrugged. "I thought about you after school yesterday. How it's tough moving to a new country. I figured you might like to hear your own language. My dad works with a man from the Philippines, and he found out for me. Only I guess I didn't get it quite right."

Gloria blushed. "That's okay," she said. "It was a really nice thought."

“I’ll practice it,” said Ramona. “Come on, let’s go and play before the bell rings.” The girls discarded their bags and ran onto the playground.

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That afternoon as the school bus stopped at the end of her street, Gloria saw her parents waiting for her on the sidewalk. She said good-bye to the girls from her class and skipped off the bus to give her parents a hug.

“Looks as if today went a little better,” said her mom.

Gloria nodded. “Yes, I made some new friends, and I learned a new song.”

Gloria’s dad grinned at her. “Sounds good! You can tell us all about it when we get home.”



As the family walked through their front gate, their neighbor pulled up in his car. When he got out, he called, "Hello!"

The neighbor came over, looking embarrassed. "I'd like to apologize for yesterday," he said. "I was having a bad day, and I was in a really big hurry. I didn't mean to be so rude. Can we start again? My name is Joe." He held out his hand.

Gloria's dad hesitated for a second, then he shook Joe's hand. "Apology accepted," he said with a smile, and he introduced the family.





The man beamed. “Nice to meet you all. Just wait there a second; I have something for you.” He took a basket tied with ribbons from the trunk of his car. The basket was full of fresh fruit. “This is just to say welcome to the neighborhood,” he said.

“Thank you,” said Gloria’s mom, “and *mabuhay*. That means ‘long life to you’ and also ‘welcome.’”

“*Mabuhay*, then,” said Joe with a grin.



At bedtime, Gloria’s dad came to her room to read with her. Gloria shook her head when she saw that he had a book. “May we look at the photo album again, please?” she asked. “I want to see the other photographs of Uncle Jose and hear more about the pensionados.”

“Okay,” said her dad. “I’ll get the album, and then I’ll tell you some of Uncle Jose’s stories.”

Gloria smiled to herself. “*Mabuhay*, Uncle Jose,” she whispered.

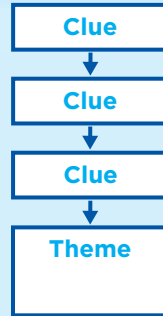
**STOP AND CHECK**

What changed for Gloria?

# Respond to Reading

## Summarize

Summarize the important details that show how the photo album helped Gloria in *Mabuhay*. Your graphic organizer may help you.



## Text Evidence

1. How can you tell that this story is historical fiction? **GENRE**
2. How did the stories of Uncle Jose help Gloria settle in at her new school? **THEME**
3. Gloria is confused when her teacher asks her to describe a *flower* on page 6. Why was Gloria confused? What other words do you know that sound the same but have different meanings or spelling? **HOMOPHONES**
4. Write about how Gloria felt before her dad showed her the photo album and how she felt after. Use details from the text in your answer.

**WRITE ABOUT READING**

## Compare Texts

Read about students from the Philippines who came to study in the United States in the early 1900s.

# The Pensionados

The United States is home to almost 2 million people from the Philippines. In 1903, the United States government started a program to bring Filipino students to the United States to further their education. The Philippines was governed by the United States at that time.

The students were called *pensionados*. They were given a free college education. In return, the students agreed to work for their government when they returned to the Philippines.



Many pensionados wrote letters so their families would know what life was like in the United States. Some of the families kept these letters, which have now become important family records.

The pensionado program lasted for almost ten years, and more than 200 Filipino students took part. Most went to universities and colleges in Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, Washington, D.C., and California.

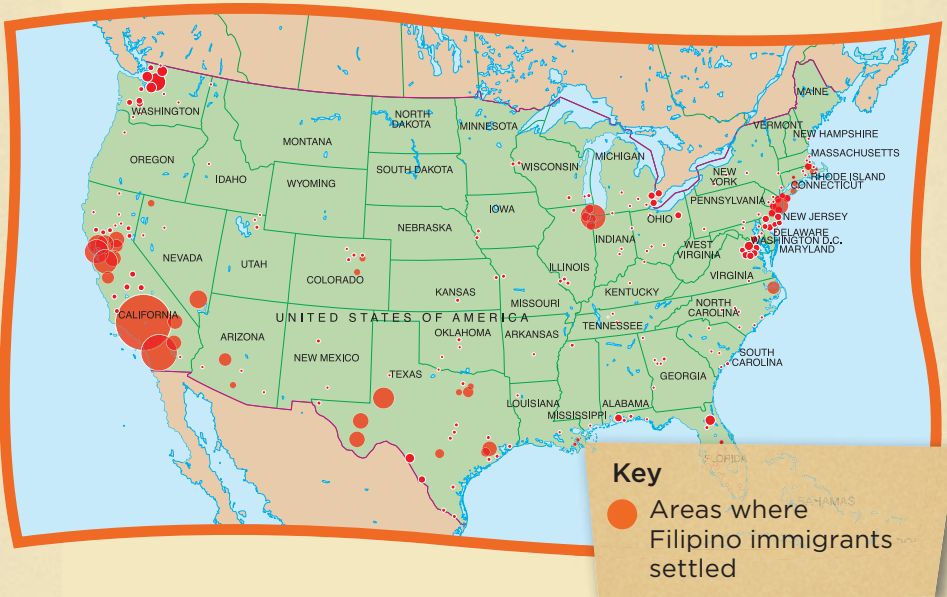


Thom Lang/Corbis

**Letters can help document family history and provide rich details about a person's experiences.**

The pensionados were not the only Filipino people to go to the United States. Because the United States controlled the Philippines, other Filipino people went to the United States at this time to work on farms and in the fishing industry. Many workers ended up making the United States their permanent home.

## Filipino Settlement in the United States as of 2000



### Make Connections

Why do you think the letters the pensionados sent home to their families in the Philippines were important? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

How would Gloria's experiences in *Mabuhay* compare with the experiences of the pensionados?

**TEXT TO TEXT**

# Focus on Literary Elements

**Mood** Writers use words to help create a mood, or feeling, in a story. This helps readers to visualize and understand the characters' actions and feelings. Writers can use words to make a mood that is cheerful, sad, anxious, scary, or even dreamy.

**Read and Find** Reread the description of the meeting with the neighbor on page 4. The neighbor is unfriendly, and the family feels very disappointed. The writer has used words such as “revved” and “roaring” to create an unpleasant mood.

## Your Turn

Think of two different moods a writer might want to use in a story. For each mood, make a word map. Write the name of a mood in the middle of a circle. Draw lines out from the circle and add words that you connect with that mood. For example, if the mood word is *happy*, you could add words such as *giggle*, *laugh*, *grin*, *tickle*, *glad*, or *sunshine*. Share your word maps and save them to help you create mood in your own writing.

## Literature Circles

### Fiction

# Thinkmark

## Characters

Who are the main characters in *Mabuhay*?

How would you describe Ramona?

How would you describe Gloria?

## Setting

Where did *Mabuhay* take place?

When did it take place?

## Sequence of Events

What happened first, then, next, and finally in *Mabuhay*?

## Plot

What was Gloria's problem in *Mabuhay*?

How did she solve it?

## Conclusions

What conclusions can you draw about the things that help make someone feel welcome in a new place?