

Our Trip Out East

by Luz Nuncio Schick



Genre	Build Background	Access Content	Extend Language
Memoir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Travel • Regions of the U.S. • Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic Aids • Captions • Definitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compound Words • Words for Sounds

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Question of the Week

Why do we want to explore new places?

Key Comprehension Skill

Character, Setting, and Plot

Concept Words

skyline station wagon
lullaby chamomile

Learning Goals

- We see new and interesting things in new places.
- Life in a city is different from life in the country.
- Some people take trips with their families.

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Pela, Goly, and me

Leaving Chicago

This is a photo of me and my sisters Pela and Goly in 1959. I was four years old. We lived in Chicago.

That summer, my family and I took a car trip. We traveled from Chicago to the East Coast. It was a happy time for my family. I think of Mami and Papi when I look at this photo.

I think it was such a happy trip because Abuelita came with us. Abuelita was Mami's mother. She lived in Mexico.

My family had moved from Mexico to the United States in 1956, but Abuelita stayed in Mexico. Mami missed her very much. Mami sent postcards from Chicago, inviting Abuelita to visit us there. Finally, Abuelita came to visit. She joined us on our trip out East.





Pela, Goly, me, and Mami, who is holding Cristi

In this photo, you can see Mami, me, and my sisters. We are next to Lake Michigan in Chicago. We liked to go there and watch the sailboats. When the sun went down, we watched the buildings of the Chicago skyline light up. Mami sent photographs like this one to Abuelita in Mexico, so that she would know what we looked like.

skyline: outline of city buildings against the sky



Goly, Pela, Cristi, and Abuelita with our station wagon

We started our trip when Abuelita arrived in Chicago. My family left Chicago because Papi found a job in New Jersey. Papi was excited because he loved to see different places.

Our car was a sky-blue station wagon. The seats were very hard. It did not have air conditioning. Our car was not very comfortable compared to cars today.

station wagon: automobile with extra room behind the back seat

We thought our station wagon was wonderful. It was pale blue, like the summer sky. It had big round headlights that looked like eyes. We tied our suitcases to the roof, to make more room inside. That wonderful car took us from Chicago to Flemington, New Jersey and never broke down.



Here are Goly and Cristi on the hood of the station wagon. Abuelita is smiling as Goly teaches Cristi how to show that she is one year old.

My sister Goly and I rode in the back of the station wagon. There was a wide, flat space behind the back seat. Goly and I sat there and watched the road. When we got sleepy, we would lie down. We heard the sound of the tires on the road. The low, steady hum put us to sleep, like a **lullaby**.

lullaby: soft song that helps a baby sleep



In front of the farmhouse in Flemington



In this photo, Goly and I are watching Cristi walk.

Papi rented part of a farmhouse for us in Flemington. We lived in one part of the house. The owners of the house lived in the other part. The owners were nice, but spoke only English. My family spoke only Spanish. Somehow, we understood each other.

Extend Language Compound Words

Compound words are made up of two words. *Farmhouse* is made up of two smaller words, *farm* and *house*. Knowing the smaller words can help you understand a compound word.

What do these compound words mean?

sailboat skyline postcard suitcase

We loved to walk through the fields near our farmhouse. It was so different from Chicago. One day, we found a place where chamomile grew. We picked handfuls of the tiny flowers for Mami. She liked to use the flowers to make chamomile tea. When we opened our hands, they smelled sweet, like apples.

One time, we found a robin's egg. We were amazed that an egg could be so small and so blue.

chamomile: plant with flowers and leaves that can be used for tea



One day, Papi took us to see New York City. We walked around the city, looking up at the buildings. We saw that the buildings in New York City were taller and closer together than in Chicago. As I looked up at the towering skyscrapers, I felt dizzy.

We also walked through Central Park. It is a huge park in the middle of the city.

When Papi's job ended we moved back to Chicago. Abuelita stayed with us for a while. Then she went back to Mexico.

We all went with Abuelita to the train station. The train rumbled and hissed as Mami and Abuelita cried. Abuelita hugged each of us tightly, then got on the train.

We never saw Abuelita again. She died three years later.





Abuelita, Mami, Goly, and me in New York City

We took other trips as a family. Papi showed us other great American cities. We even lived in Puerto Rico for a while.

But our trip to the East was the happiest one we took. When I see photos from that trip, I feel Abuelita, Mami, and Papi near me. I can almost hear their soft, loving voices speaking Spanish to me.

Talk About It

1. When did the family come to the United States?
2. When did the family start its trip out east?

Write About It

3. Pick a place that is described in this story. On a separate sheet of paper, write about what the family did there.

Extend Language

Some words in English sound like the noise they make. The word *hissed* in the next sentence sounds like a noise the train makes: *The train rumbled and hissed as passengers got on.*

What is the word for the sound of the tires on the road that makes the girls sleepy?

Photographs

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