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Corridos are songs that tell a story. These songs have been popular in New Mexico for 200 years. Some corridos are sung in Spanish. Others are a mixture of Spanish and English. A few are in English.

Corridos use plain words. The song is most often about a person. Some corridos are about an animal or a place. The story might be about the past. It might be about the present. Some corridos tell a story that is made up.

The verses tell the story. The chorus repeats after each verse. Each verse and the chorus are usually 4 or 6 lines long. Corridos that are sung in Spanish often have a rhyming pattern. Beginners should not attempt to rhyme their lines. The whole song is usually 36 lines long. Each line has 7 – 10 syllables. These rules are made to be broken.

Corridos might follow this form:

- The first verse describes the setting for the song. We hear about where, when and who the song is about.
- The story follows. The song might be about a chase, a challenge, a war, or something funny that happened. It might be about a miracle. The song might just describe a place and what makes it special.
- The corrido ends with a moral. It might give advice. Then the song is over with a goodbye.

Now listen to a corrido and read along with the lyrics. Afterwards, answer these questions.

Name of the Corrido?			* *******
Where is this setting for the song?			
What story is the song telling?			
What is the reflection or advice given?			
What are three details that made this	1.		
"sing" for you?	2.		
	3.		

Now listen to the first verse and the chorus of El Rio as you read along:

(Chorus)	(Verse one)
El Rio is like a grandparent	Desde este al oeste
A quien se debe de cuidar	From the north hasta el sur
Un regalo son sus aguas	Listen here to our corridor
Que fluyen hasta el mar	So that it may be understood
A scared gift are your waters	Why this Rio Grande
That flow hasta el mar.	Is a bringer of so much good.
Where is this setting for the song?	
What story is the song telling?	
What is the reflection or advice given?	

Now it is time to finish writing the corrido *El Rio*. Use details about your RIO Field Trip. Your song will be better if you do not try to rhyme the lines.

You can write about an animal or plant that lives in the bosque. Write in the voice of that animal or plant. Tell us how it needs the river and how we should conserve water.

You could describe things you saw on the RIO Field Trip at the river. Use *El Rancho de los Pinos* as a model. The song and words are on page 3 of this web site: http://poetry.arizona.edu/k12/corrido/teaching-resources

You might want to tell a made-up story about plants and animals in the bosque or the river. Here are some ideas.

- A coyote and a porcupine meet near the river.
- A beaver sings a love song to a cottonwood tree.
- A cicada discovers a new world when it digs up through the dirt. How did it feel to shed its skin? What was life like underground? What does it see in the light? How will it get away from the crows and other birds looking for a tasty cicada to eat? What song is the cicada singing?

Finish your story by telling the listener how the river brought all this good to us.				
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