

2019

**Southeast Wisconsin Festival of Books
Unfairness, Inequality, and the Struggle
Between**

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When people tell their stories they inspire others to change their lives for the better. By doing that they open up new doors for opportunities in other people's lives. In the book, *Sylvia and Aki* by Winifred Conkling talk about two different kids during World War 2 with the same struggle and how they help each other fix their problems. Sylvia Mendez is a girl with Mexican roots and her parents are immigrants from Mexico. She was born in the United States but she is discriminated and segregated for her skin color and because of her family being Mexican immigrants.

Sylvia has moved homes and is going to a new school. She wants to go to Westminster school because it's a better school with better classes. They don't let her in the school because it is a "white" school and because she has dark skin. Sylvia was very disappointed in herself of her having dark skin and not being able to do anything about it. She was confused about why she couldn't go to Westminster school and wanted to know why. She was forced to go to the "Mexican" school since she had brown skin. The school had old equipment and was very dirty. After that, Sylvia and her family fought for change of the unfair segregation laws in California. They fought by hiring a lawyer, talking to a judge, and speaking to the California school board. It took several days and they eventually won their case. They changed segregation laws for the better.

Sylvia's way to fix and solve problems helped her get what she wanted and what was right for the unfair laws of California. I can relate to Sylvia's problem and how it was being solved. Next school year, in September of 2019, I'm going to have biology, it's a high school class. Before, students from the dual language program could not go to the biology class. I was not expected to be able to go to the biology class since I was in the dual language program. It was my classmate and I trying to get into the class, we had the requirements to be in the class, but we were in dual language. We talked to the counselors about the class and convinced them to let us in.

Eventually, she agreed with us and saw our side. I thought it was unfair that we had the same requirements but didn't accept us in the class. It's an advanced class which means I get a high school credit when I pass the class. I'm going into eighth-grade taking high school classes next year. Being in better classes gives me new opportunities for the future and will get me a step higher than anyone else. After that, anyone from the dual language program with the requirements could be in that class. My friend and I changed the rules for the better just like Sylvia Mendez, and because of that, we opened doors for others.