

WHY DOES THE MOLE HATE DAYLIGHT?
Animal Folktales in a FLES Unit

Joan Blair

Why Does the Mole Hate Daylight? A FLES Unit Using Animal Folktales

By Joan Blair

OVERVIEW

Introduction

Children around the world love humorous stories that endow animals with human motives and emotions. Some of these stories belong to the genre of "why" stories. They tell a tale that offers a fanciful explanation of actual animal behavior or appearance. For example, in the well known Aesop fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare", we learn that the tortoise moves so slowly because it is a reliable and winning strategy. **Why Does the Mole Hate Daylight?** explores more unfamiliar Latin American and Mexican "why" folktales that feature animal protagonists. It is designed for students in a FLES program. The central story in the unit is "Un Lazo a la Luna" or "Moon Rope", an adaptation of a Peruvian legend written by Lois Ehlert. The author also created the original illustrations that accompany the story.

Targeted Standards

1.1 Interpersonal Communication

1.2 Interpretive Communication

Key targeted standards for students are Standards 1.1 and 1.2 within Goal One, Communicate in Spanish. Students will participate in a variety of pre-reading activities including games, oral practice of related vocabulary in relevant poems and songs and art activities in order to heighten their understanding of the story. During the teacher-led reading of "Un Lazo a la Luna", students will demonstrate their understanding of the story by participating in TPR actions and pantomime. The highly engaging nature of the animal characters of the tale will energize student retellings of the story after it has been read. Students will have opportunities to practice while using appropriate vocabulary to express feelings and emotions as they retell the story.

2.2 Products of Culture

Post reading and story extension activities are also linked to Standard 2.2 of Goal Two, Gain Knowledge and Understanding of the Cultures of the World. These activities will explore the cultural connections to ancient Peruvian textiles, jewelry, ceramics and other handicrafts as depicted in the vivid illustrations by Lois Ehlert and by other means including photos and realia. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of Peruvian culture by creating their own examples of highly stylized animal figurines using mixed media. In addition,

students will explore the connection between the natural world and man-made objects by creating their own tiny ropes made from braided grasses and other plant material.

4.1 Language Comparisons

Throughout this unit, students will have many opportunities to find similarities in Spanish and English words to help them understand both the instruction and the text. There are many cognates that the instructor will typically use in TPR exercises, including, for example, "repitan", "no", "diferente", and "igual". In this unit, students will also note the similarities between the Spanish words "animales importantes" that are used to describe the central animal characters of the story. Students will grasp the meaning of the instruction and storytelling based on many clues, among them the deliberately frequent use of cognates by the teacher. In so doing, they will have the chance to learn about the nature of language by comparing Spanish and English.

Previous Student Knowledge

This unit would be most appropriately offered to students who have had some exposure to the verbs tener, to have, and querer, to want, and some awareness of numbers from one to ten. For example, if students are familiar with the Mexican folktune "Caballito Blanco" they will have internalized the words "Tengo, tengo, tengo, tú no tienes nada." (I have, have, have, you don't have anything). This unit will build upon students' use of the verbs tener and querer by offering them many opportunities to practice the conjugation of these verbs in the first person singular and second person singular forms while retelling the story and playing games relating to the folktale. In addition, students will have opportunities to practice their mastery of numbers one through ten as they retell the story and participate in other activities connected with songs and poems that support and extend student understanding of folktales from Mexico and South America.

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PRE-READING LESSON PLAN

Materials: Un Lazo a la Luna, Lois Ehlert
Donde Viven los Monstruos, Maurice Sendak
Photos or drawings of key animals
Gummy worms and yellow paper plates for counting game
Glue for art activity

See appendix for examples of pantomime gestures to accompany target vocabulary.

Objective: *The learner will demonstrate active understanding of a related set of vocabulary words that are key to making sense of the folktale "Un Lazo a la Luna".*

Targeted vocabulary words:

<i>gusano</i>	worm
<i>zorro</i>	fox
<i>topo</i>	mole
<i>luna</i>	moon
<i>Tengo miedo.</i>	I'm afraid.
<i>uno a diez</i>	one through ten

Targeted Standards:

- 1.1 Interpersonal Communication
- 1.2 Interpretive Communication
- 4.1 Language Comparisons

Anticipatory Set: Follow the leader pantomime with gestures accompanied by single words to introduce or reinforce the meaning of the following vocabulary words: luna, dedos, uno a diez, más, patas, and garras. (moon, fingers, one through ten, paws and claws) [Choose simple gestures to accompany each of these words and appropriate numbers of fingers held high to accompany the numbers. Repeat these gestures each time the accompanying word is used during the direct instruction or guided practice and encourage students to use the gestures with the words.]

Statement of Objective: La semana pasada leímos este cuento, Donde Viven los Monstruos. [Show book and lead abbreviated picture walk through the story to remind students of the meaning of the following vocabulary words: luna, patas, garras.] (moon, paws, claws) Mañana vamos a leer un libro nuevo. Se llama Un lazo a la luna, por Lois Ehlert. También, hay animales en este cuento.

Direct Instruction:

En este libro hay dos animales muy importantes. Un animal se llama un zorro, y se ve así. El zorro no tiene miedo. Es muy fuerte. Siempre dice, "¡No tengo miedo!"

[Students repeat "¡No tengo miedo!" with accompanying gesture of strong arms on hips.] El zorro tiene patas. ¿Cuántas patas tiene el zorro? [Elicit student response.]

El otro animal se llama el topo. El topo es muy tímido. Tiene miedo. Siempre dice "¡Tengo miedo!" [Students repeat ¡Tengo miedo!" with accompanying gesture of hands to face in fear.]

Son muy diferentes, el zorro y el topo, ¿verdad? En este cuento, el zorro y el topo son amigos.

El topo tiene garras muy largas para escarbar los gusanos. ¿Qué son los gusanos? Mmmm.. ¡algo delicioso! Aquí son los gusanos. [Show gummy worms and place next to picture of mole so he seems to be eating them.]

[Display pictures of a fox and mole from text and photos as appropriate during the direct instruction and elicit student response regarding other details about the animals.]

Guided Practice:

Vamos a jugar un juego con los gusanos.

Hand out yellow paper plates, a dice and a bowl of gummy worms. Taking turns, students shake the dice and ask teacher to give them the number of gummy worms that corresponds to the number they have just rolled. Students place the worms on their plates. Teacher models targeted vocabulary of numbers one through ten, and the verbs querer and tener. During the activity, teacher guides student expression and encourages use of the target activity.

Example dialogue:

Teacher: Luis, ¿cuántos gusanos quieres?"

Luis: Quiero dos gusanos, por favor.

Teacher: Aquí son dos gusanos.

Luis: Gracias.

Teacher: ¡Fantástico! Estudiantes, ¿cuántos gusanos tiene Luis en su plato?

[students respond vocally, or with gestures]

Independent Practice: Students create a design with their gummy worms on their plates, and glue them into place. They are directed to imagine and make a simple design of curved or straight lines. During this art activity, students are encouraged to speak in Spanish with each other when requesting glue, assistance, etc.

Closure: Students clean up art supplies. If time permits, teacher leads students on a picture walk through the pages of Un Lazo a la Luna. Teacher directs student attention to the illustration in the story in which the moon appears to be covered with worms to stimulate curiosity and generate predictions about the narrative that will be shared in the next class meeting.

Assessment:

Students are assessed using the performance indicators and rubric that follows.

Participation in
TPR & Guided
Practice:

Active participation Some participation Passive participation

Engagement in
Independent
Practice Art
Activity:

Active engagement Some engagement Little engagement

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SHARED READING LESSON PLAN

Materials: Un Lazo a la Luna, Lois Ehlert
Arrorró, Mi Niño, Lulu Delacre
Photos or drawings of key animals
Completed paper plate art projects from previous class
Dark blue or black butcher paper
Yellow chalk

See appendix for examples of pantomime gestures to accompany target vocabulary.

Objective: *The learner will demonstrate active understanding of a related set of vocabulary words as they participate in a shared reading of the folktale "Un Lazo a la Luna" and will extend that understanding by learning the Latino lullaby "Luna, Lunera".*

Targeted vocabulary words:

<i>gusano</i>	worm
<i>zorro</i>	fox
<i>topo</i>	mole
<i>luna</i>	moon
<i>Tengo miedo.</i>	I'm afraid.
<i>uno a diez</i>	one through ten
<i>ojos</i>	eyes
<i>cara</i>	face
<i>pájaro</i>	bird

Targeted Standards:

- 1.1 Interpersonal Communication
- 1.2 Interpretive Communication
- 4.1 Language Comparisons

Anticipatory Set: Teacher led "Simon says" pantomime with gestures accompanied by single words to introduce or reinforce the meaning of the following vocabulary words: luna, dedos, uno a diez, más, patas, and garras, ojos, cara and ave. (moon, fingers, one through ten, paws, claws, eyes, face and bird.) [For the words "garras" and "patas" use the simple gestures from the previous class. For the word "ave" indicate flying arms. For the word "luna" ask students to point towards the paper plate moons they created in the previous class.]

Statement of Objective: Hoy vamos a leer el cuento "El Lazo a la Luna".

Direct Instruction: ¿Quién puede decirnos un animal importante en este libro? [elicit responses] Muy bien, el zorro es uno de los animales importantes en este cuento. Aquí está una foto del zorro. ¿Quién puede decirnos el otro animal importante en este libro?

[elicit responses] ¡Fantástico! El otro animal importante se llama el topo, y se ve así.
[Display large drawing of mole from previous lesson.]

En el libro el zorro y el topo son amigos. A ver si podemos encontrar nuestros dos amigos, el zorro y el topo, en este libro. [Begin picture walk through book by asking students to focus on specific illustrations and identifying the animals shown in them.]

Aquí está una cosa muy brillante, alta en el cielo. ¿Qué es esta cosa? [Ask students to identify the moon as shown in the pages of the book.]

Y aquí son los muchos animales que también son los amigos del zorro y el topo. Tienen alas. [Make movement for wings.] Estos animales son los pájaros. En el cuento, los pájaros ayudan al zorro y al topo. Ellos siempre dicen "Podemos ayudarles." [Make movement of offering help by cupping hands and gesturing forward.]

Y ¿qué dice el zorro? [Elicit student response.] ¿Qué dice el topo? [Elicit student response.] Creo que podemos comenzar el cuento.

Guided Practice: Read the story of "Un Lazo a la Luna", asking for student participation during each instance of the appearance of el zorro, el topo, or los pájaros with the appropriate gesture and dialogue.

El zorro dice: ¡No tengo miedo!

El topo dice: ¡Tengo miedo!

Los pájaros dicen: Vamos a ayudarles.

Depending on the ability of the class, the story may be read as written, or a simplified version may be used (see appendix).

Independent Practice: Ayer hicimos las lunas con los gusanos. Hay vamos a poner las lunas en el cielo azul.

Show students how they can create a blue sky with stars drawn in yellow chalk. Demonstrate how they can attach their moon plates created in the previous class to the dark sky. Divide class into small groups and have each group create a star and moon sky.

Closure: Teach students the following Latino lullaby:

Luna, lunera,
Cascabelera,
Ojos azules,
Cara morena.

Moon, gentle moon,
Jingle-bell moon,
Sky-lit blue eyes,
Amber-faced moon.

Assessment:

Students are assessed using the performance indicators and rubric that follows.

Participation in
TPR & Guided
Reading:

Active participation Some participation Passive participation

Engagement in
Independent
Practice Art
Activity:

Active engagement Some engagement Little engagement

APPENDIX:

Books and Websites:

Delacre, Lulu, Arrorró, Mi Niño Lee & Low Books, New York, New York, 2004.

Ehlert, Lois, Moon Rope, Un Lazo a la Luna Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, New York, New York, 1992.

Sendak, Maurice, Donde Viven los Monstruos, Harper Collins Publishers, New York, New York, 1963.

Themes and Lesson Plans for FLES teachers. University of Wisconsin Spanish Links.
My.exepc.com/~ehannan/links.html

FLES assessment and teacher reflection.
Ivc.uidaho.edu/fles/syllabus.html

FLES pedagogy and scope and sequence K - 5 in the Montgomery County Public School System, Bethesda, MD. Fles.org/regularprogram.html

SIMPLIFIED VERSION OF "UN LAZO A LA LUNA"

Aquí está el topo. Siempre tiene miedo. Dice, "¡Tengo miedo!"

Aquí está el zorro. El zorro siempre dice, "¡No tengo miedo!" Le dice al topo, "¿Qué quieres?" El topo dice "¡Gusanos!"

El zorro dice, "¡Yo no! Yo quiero ir a la luna!" "¿Como?" dice el topo.

El zorro tiene una buena idea. ¿Por que no hacer un lazo para subir a la luna?

Le dice al topo, "¡Tengo una buena idea! Vamos a hacer un lazo para subir a la luna." El topo tiene miedo. Pero el zorro le dice, "Hay gusanos en la luna."

El topo y el zorro hacen un lazo de hierba. El zorro da vueltas al lazo, pero caye y golpea al zorro en la nariz. El zorro está enojado.

El topo tiene una buena idea. "Los pájaros pueden ayudarnos."

Los pájaros toman el lazo en sus picos y vuelan hacia arriba. Luego el zorro sube, pata por pata. El topo sube, garra por garra.

El zorro no tiene miedo. Mira a la luna. Pero el topo tiene miedo. Mira a la tierra. De pronto se sueltan las garras y se cae hacia abajo.

¡PLUM! El topo cae encima de un pájaro. El pájaro le ayuda volver a la tierra. Pero los otros animales se burlan del topo. Ellos dicen, "¡Topo tiene miedo, topo tiene miedo!"

Por eso, el pobre topo escarba un túnel muy profundo. Decide no quedar amigos con el zorro. Y prefiere no salir durante el día. ¡Pobre topo!

¿Y el zorro? Los pájaros dicen, "Sí, está en la luna." El topo dice, "No, no está en la luna." Y ¿qué piensas tú?