

COUNT ON CULEBRA

by Ann Whitford Paul

Suggested Classroom Activities

Literature:

The animals in *Count on Culebra* talk and wear clothing. Do real animals do this? Read nonfiction books about these animals and compare their behavior with 'Culebra' and his friends. Introduce the concepts of Fiction and Nonfiction, and discuss how to tell the difference. What factual information about snakes, turtles, rabbits, and snakes did the author use in this story?

After 'Culebra' dragged all of the cooking utensils through the desert, his sore foot didn't hurt any more. Discuss why this happened. A similar book to enjoy is *Too Much Noise* by Ann McGovern (Houghton-Mifflin, 1967.)

Math and Art:

The endpapers (in the front and back of the book) show a chart of all of the items mentioned in the story. Students can make their own similar charts, showing any of the following: 1 – 10 animals; 1 – 10 toys; 1 – 10 fruits; 1 – 10 vegetables; 1 – 10 pieces of sports equipment; or ???

Following the same procedure, students can contribute to a classroom chart showing 1 – 10 things you would see in a market; 1 – 10 things you would see at the beach; 1 – 10 things you would see in the classroom; etc.

Students can make individual number cards using the categories mentioned above. On each card they can create a drawing, write the word in English and Spanish, and then show the numeral with the words in English and Spanish.

Students can use their number cards and combine them as they begin to learn to add. (i.e. 1 snake + 2 turtles = 3 animals, etc.)

Science:

The author presents a recipe for Iguana's Cactus Butter *Dulces* at the end of the story. Follow this recipe as a class project and make and enjoy the *dulces*.

Students can write and illustrate their own (perceived) recipes for favorite foods – sandwiches, cookies, soup, etc. These can be collected into a classroom book. (Note: these recipes will probably not be accurate, but they will be humorous!)

Learning Spanish:

Students can begin to learn other words in Spanish. A good English-Spanish dictionary is helpful here. They can begin by learning names of other animals in Spanish, and they can create a class list showing a picture and both words for each animal. They can use the Glossary at the back of the book as a sample.

Additional Resources for further exploration:

Dictionaries:

Passport Books, Let's Learn Spanish Picture Dictionary. McGraw-Hill, 1991.

Shapiro, Norma, Oxford Picture Dictionary: English-Spanish. Oxford University Press, 1998.

Additional Counting Books:

Boynton, Sandra, Doggies/Perritos: Un libro para contar y ladrar. Libros Para Niños, 2004.

Dillon, Leo, Mother Goose: Numbers on the Loose. Harcourt, 2007.

DK Publishing, My First Spanish Number Board Book/Mi Primer Libro de Numeros en español. DK Preschool, 2002.

Langham, Tony, Creepy Crawly Calypso. Barefoot Books, 2006.

Wildsmith, Brian, Cuántos Animales Hay? Star Bright Books, 1998.