

WRITTEN BY JAIRO BUITRAGO AND ILLUSTRATED BY RAFAEL YOCKTENG

A COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS ALIGNED EDUCATOR'S GUIDE FOR GRADES 2 AND 3

Note: The activities in this guide align with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for Grades 2 and 3 but standards for other grades may also apply.

ABOUT THE BOOK

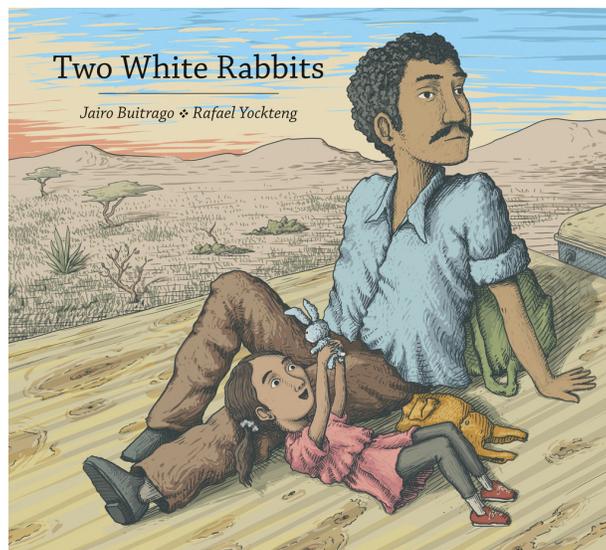
In this moving and timely story, a young child describes what it is like to be a migrant as she and her father travel north toward the US border.

They travel mostly on the roof of a train known as The Beast, but the little girl doesn't know where they are going. She counts the animals by the road, the clouds in the sky, the stars. Sometimes she sees soldiers. She sleeps, dreaming that she is always on the move, although sometimes they are forced to stop and her father has to earn more money before they can continue their journey.

As many thousands of people, especially children, in Mexico and Central America continue to make the arduous journey to the US border in search of a better life, this is an important book that shows a young migrant's perspective.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jairo Buitrago is a children's book author who has collaborated with Rafael Yockteng on several award-winning picture books, including *Jimmy the Greatest!* (which received six starred reviews) and *Camino a casa*. He lives in Mexico.



TWO WHITE RABBITS
Written by Jairo Buitrago

JUVENILE FICTION
Grades 2 and 3

978-1-55498-741-2 | 8.27 x 8.86 | 32 pages
Hardcover with jacket | Full-color illustrations
\$18.95

BISAC: JUV013010

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Rafael Yockteng has illustrated many highly acclaimed children's books, including *Sopa de frijoles / Bean Soup* by Jorge Argueta (USBBY Outstanding International Books Honor List) and *Jimmy the Greatest!* by Jairo Buitrago, which received six starred reviews.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

Ask students: When you are traveling from one place to another, do you play any games to pass the time?

Look at a map of Central America, Mexico and the United States with students to show them where *Two White Rabbits* takes place.

Vocabulary

Many Spanish words appear in this book, some in the text and some in the illustrations. Before reading the book, familiarize students with the following words. Have students be on the lookout for these words as you read the story.

- chucho
- frontera
- plaza comercial
- coyote del sur
- frutas
- vegetales
- chuleta
- leche

L 2.4, 2.6, 3.4, 3.6

POST-READING QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

The story begins with the little girl saying, “When I travel, I count what I see.” Ask students if they count things when going on a trip. As a class, study the first illustration. Could this be a picture of a student in the class traveling with her father? When did students first realize where this story is set and what it is about?

RL 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7
SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

From the beginning of the book the little girl tells us she likes to count. Have students study the words and pictures in the book to identify the different things she counts. Is there anything she doesn't count? Why do students think the girl loves counting so much?

RL 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7
SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

The chucho that the girl meets at the beginning of the book ends up traveling with her and her father. Look through the illustrations as a class. Where is the dog in each scene? What is he doing? What do students think happens to him at the end of the story?

RL 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.5, 3.7
SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

The text in *Two White Rabbits* is very simple and the story is told from the point of view of an innocent young girl travelling with her father. The illustrations, however, tell a more complex story, showing actions and emotions she might not notice or understand. As a class, go through the book and identify instances where the illustrations tell the reader a part of the story that the text does not. What parts of the story were told by the illustrations that were not communicated by the text?

RL 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.5, 3.7
SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

While her father is working to earn money, the girl plays with a little boy. Have students write a story that tells this episode from his point of view. What is his life

like? What does he think of the girl and her father? How does he feel when they leave?

RL 2.6, 3.6

W 2.3, 3.3

This story is told in the first-person, narrated by the little girl. Discuss with students how the father's point of view might be different. Assign each student an illustration. Have them rewrite this part of the story from the father's point of view. Come together as a class and have students arrange the rewritten scenes in the proper order from the book. What comes first? What happens next? How does the story end? Now reread the story as it might have been told by the father. How is the new story different from the original?

RL 2.1, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7

W 2.3, 2.7, 3.3, 3.10

SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Have students close their eyes and listen to the story as it is read to them. Then break students into pairs and have them retell the story to each other without reading the words, just looking at the illustrations. Once they are done, have each pair work together to write a plot summary of the story. Come together as a class to discuss. Compare the length of their summaries to the amount of text in the original book. How did the book tell such a complex story with so few words?

RL 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 3.7

W 2.3, 3.3, 3.10

SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

There are several parts of this book where the text is open to interpretation. Working as a class, discuss the possible meanings of the following passages.

“But we do stop. Because the people who are taking us don’t always take us where we are going.”

“The truck that is going to take us arrives. The boy and his grandmother look at us the way that people that meet us on the road look at us.”

“Sometimes, when I’m not sleeping, I count the stars. There are thousands, like people. And I count the moon. It is alone. Sometimes I see soldiers, but I don’t count them anymore. There are about a hundred.”

RL 2.1, 2.7, 3.1, 3.7

SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Two White Rabbits tells the story of a father and daughter who are traveling, but the little girl does not know where they are going. In fact, this story is about migrants headed north, through Mexico to the USA in the hopes of finding a better life. The story remains a personal one, telling about the emotions and adventures of this girl and her father. Background information about the life of migrants of all ages will help students make connections with the events in the book and understand what is happening. The book includes a publisher’s note that is a good starting point. Team with a social studies teacher, or other resource in your community, to create a lesson to acquaint students with the real-life issues addressed in this story. If you like, read the book first and discuss what students think it is about. Then read it again when students have completed the background lesson. How did their perspectives change?

SL 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

After students have read and discussed the book, ask them to reexamine the title. What do students think it means? How does it relate to the story as a whole? Have students cite specific evidence from the book (pictures and text) that shows how the little girl feels about rabbits. What do students think her father feels about the two white rabbits? Have students explain what they think happens at the end of the story and why.

RL 2.1, 2.2, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.7

SL 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Visit the *Common Core State Standards* website to read about the individual standards listed in this guide: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>

INTERNET RESOURCES

AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO TWO WHITE RABBITS

Note: The following links are intended to provide background for educators, who can then refine the information and decide what and how to share with students.

Migration Policy Institute

Central American Migrants and “La Bestia”: The Route, Dangers, and Government Responses

<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-migrants-and-la-bestia-route-dangers-and-government-responses>

Geography AS Notes

Mexico to USA Migration

<https://geographyas.info/population/mexico-to-usa-migration/>

The New York Times

Mexico Makes Route Tougher for Migrants

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/22/world/americas/mexico-makes-route-tougher-for-migrants.html?_r=0#

The Guardian

La Bestia: The Hit Song the US Border Agency Made to Scare Off Immigrants

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2014/jul/16/la-bestia-song-commissioned-us-border-control-stop-immigration>

Washington Office on Latin America

Central American Children Fleeing Violence: Links to Service Providers

<http://www.wola.org/commentary/central-american-children-fleeing-violence-heres-what-you-can-do-to-help>

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS USED

Reading Standards for Literature Grade 2 (RL)

Key Ideas and Details

2.1. Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

2.2. Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson or moral.

2.3. Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

Craft and Structure

2.5. Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

2.6. Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

2.7. Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting or plot.

Writing Standards Grade 2 (W)

Text Types and Purposes

2.3. Write narratives in which they recount a well elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order and provide a sense of closure.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

2.7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

Speaking and Listening Standards Grade 2 (SL)

Comprehension and Collaboration

2.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

b. Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.

c. Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.

2.2. Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

2.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

Language Standards Grade 2 (L)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

2.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., happy/unhappy, tell/retell).

c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional).

d. Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).

e. Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases.

2.6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., When other kids are happy that makes me happy).

Reading Standards for Literature GRADE 3 (RL)

Key Ideas and Details

3.1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

3.2. Recount stories, including fables, folktales and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

3.3. Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Craft and Structure

3.5. Refer to parts of stories, dramas and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

3.6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

3.7. Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

Writing Standards GRADE 3 (W)

3.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details and clear event sequences.

a. Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.

c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.

d. Provide a sense of closure.

Range of Writing

3.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.

Speaking and Listening Standards GRADE 3 (SL)

Comprehension and Collaboration

3.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- c. Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic and link their comments to the remarks of others.
- d. Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

3.2. Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.

3.3. Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

Language Standards GRADE 3 (L)

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

3.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat).
- c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion).

d. Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

3.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., “After dinner that night we went looking for them.”).