

Lilliputians Discover Wonderland

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“Tell me, O Muse, of that hero who traveled far and wide . . .”

-Homer, *The Odyssey*

INTRODUCTION

Literature and travel are two of my hobbies: therefore, they are two of my favorite subjects. Everything began with the Greek fables and the fairy tales of my youth, which composed the majority of my personal library. I went through the forest with Little Red Riding Hood and Snow White. Then, my father gave me an adaptation for children of the *Thousand and One Nights*. So I sailed the Arabian Sea with Sinbad the Sailor, and I rode a flying rug with Aladdin. Later on, I covered the Siberian plains, from Moscow through the Volga and the Yenisei to Irkutsk, capital city of East Siberia, with Miguel Strogoff. I acted as another Passepartout for Phileas Fogg in *Around the World in Eighty Days* and searched the island for a treasure with Jim Hawkins in Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island*. When I was ten years old, I started to study French at school and the comics of Astérix and Obélix and Tintin became two of my favorite readings to practice the language. The series of Astérix and Obélix tells the story of two individuals from a tribe in Galia who resist the Roman invasion. They live incredible adventures in the Ancient World always fighting against the Romans. Astérix and Obélix traveled to Britannia, Iberia, Corsica, Egypt, Greece – the Roman Empire, in short. Now in current times, the series of Tintin tells the adventures of Tintin, a young reporter, and his friends trying to rescue people or jewels, or discovering intrigues and robberies. Tintin travels all around the World (Andes, Himalayas, Sahara, North Sea, etc.) and even to the Moon. And that is how I started to travel: with my imagination and the help of good storytellers.

Even though I had visited many places in the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) with my parents, my travel life began at the age of sixteen, when I went to France, Belgium and Holland with my high school friends. Since then I have not stopped moving around: my “passport” includes various countries in the European Union, Canada and the United States of America, Mexico, Guatemala, Peru . . . and I am willing to fill it up with many other places.

This way, I have learned many things. I have seen wild orchids growing among the branches and have smelled the fresh aroma of tropical fruits taken directly from the tree. I have been lost in a sequoia forest and have seen women waiving their *huipiles* and adoring an idol in a catholic church. I have proved what I have read about the Eiffel Tower and the Grand Canyon.

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words and it is true. Many times you are told things, or you read them in a book or magazine but you will not grab them until you see them with your own eyes, especially if you experience them yourself. Let us explain it like this: one might have seen thousands of photographs of the pyramids in Egypt or the ruins of Machu Picchu in brochures and friends' albums, but the astonishment that one feels when in front of these wonders cannot be described. Besides, people remember things better when they touch them, smell them, look at them.

Personally, I can tell that traveling benefits people in many different ways since it allows you to discover different places and different people. It helps you to understand other cultures through food, scents, clothes, religions, philosophies, etc. However, traveling takes time, money and energy. These factors are not always available to us. This is when literature and imagination become important.

Now, I find myself in a room, surrounded by Spanish-bilingual kindergartners starting to discover the World, and I think that my experience could be a good help.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

The school in which I work is Virgil I. Grissom Elementary. It is in the south district of Houston Independent School District. Grissom Elementary provides educational services to 728 students from pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. It consists mostly of Hispanic and African American children: 36% of the students are African American, 63% are Hispanic, 1% is white, and less than 1% is Asian. I teach a kindergarten bilingual group of 23 students. The majority of children in my class are the second generation of immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras, although three of them were born in Mexico. They speak Spanish at home and their mothers cook typical food from Central America. They know the story of "la Llorona" and the landscapes that their ancestors admired have been described to them. They are economically disadvantaged; therefore, most of them have not traveled abroad. We have to add the factor of their short age; my students are just starting to discover the world around them.

UNIT BACKGROUND

During the first semester, we focus on preparing for the tests that the students have to pass in kindergarten (Stanford 10/Aprenda and TPRI/Tejas Lee). These tests measure the students' skills in mathematics and reading. So, until December we have little time left for subjects like Science and Social Studies. After the exams, the stress has passed and we can use our time in a different way because we do not need to follow the reading program as closely as before.

I want my students to realize how wonderful the world is outside the home, outside the school. I want them to see the marvelous things that you can achieve when you acquire the strength and when you realize that it is all right to accept help. They will learn about

adventures and maps, about the seas, the oceans and the continents. The books that I have chosen for developing this curriculum unit will help me, since they show different habitats (the South Pole, a tropical island, the Sahara Desert, the Red sea). We will also study transportation. Children will know which vehicle they would need to travel to different parts of the world. The stories' main characters undergo a major development as a consequence of the adventures that they live, and as a consequence of being in contact and interacting with other "people" (the characters are animals: a rhino, a polar bear, a shark, a pig, a chicken and a mouse).

The units will last four weeks. It is intended for use as part of the science and social studies curriculum, but since the selected titles are in English, I will use them during the E.S.L. daily lessons (30 to 45 minutes). On the other hand, and because I have some good materials in Spanish, the lessons will be completed in Spanish.

READINGS FOR THIS UNIT

For the curriculum unit that I am developing, I will use four titles: *Clark, the Toothless Shark*, *The Little Polar Bear*, *Friends Go Adventuring*, and *The Boxer and the Princess* as main titles. However, as I mentioned before, I will also utilize other books that will complete the units. These are mainly nonfiction books that explain facts about ecosystems, animals and means of transportation.

As I said above, I have chosen these four titles because they have something in common: the characters involved in the trips have fun and gain knowledge through the experiences they live being away from home. In *Clark, the Toothless Shark*, Clark becomes a real shark by getting a set of teeth. Lars discovers that there is something else, very different, beyond the North Pole in *The Little Polar Bear*. In *Friends Go Adventuring*, the main characters get the adventures they need by getting away from the routine of the farm. And, in *The Boxer and the Princess*, Max understands how important it is to have an open heart to really enjoy things in life.

Reading One: *Clark, the Toothless Shark*

This book tells the story of Clark, a shark that was supposed to grow up to be the most ferocious shark of the shiver, but has no teeth. He loses all the fights and cannot play with the other young sharks: this makes him very sad. So, he decides to swim away and get himself a set of teeth. At the beginning of his journey he finds Sid, a squid that needs help running away from a stingray. Knowing that the shark has no teeth, Sid hides in the mouth of Clark until the pursuer disappears. Then, the squid guides his new friend to the three mermaids. With their fishing lines, the mermaids pull out golden coins from a sunken treasure and make a set of false teeth for Clark. Finally, when Clark goes back home flashing his new teeth, he looks really ferocious and the other shark are frightened of him.

The Adventures of Clark and Sid were written by Corinne Mellor and illustrated by Jonathan Allen. In past years, children adored this book, not only for the story itself, but also because it is a pop-up, pull-tab book. Having movements and/or special features during the reading keeps students' attention easily. I am thinking, for instance, about other books that include lights and/or sounds like *The Very Lonely Firefly* or *The Very Quiet Cricket*, both written and illustrated by Eric Carle.

It is worth saying that the author has combined elements of other well-known stories and adapted them to a kindergarten level. Clark goes away from his family and friends to accomplish a mission—obtaining a set of teeth (precious golden teeth made out of a sunken treasure)—just like Jason and the Argonauts when they left Thessaly to get the Golden Fleece. Our main character helps the squid like Jason helped Phineus and meets the mermaids like the Argonauts met the Harpies, although in a different way: the three mermaids aid Clark while Jason and his fifty warriors have to fight against the Harpies to save Phineus.

The achievement of a task constitutes an important motif in literature. According to Burrows, Lapides and Shawcross, “*Arthur* pulls out a sword embedded in a stone to prove that he has the virtues necessary to be a ruler. Tasks, then, represent important tests to prove heroic potential. It may involve discovery of something treasured The tasks of *Hercules* and *Jason* are typical examples. Achievement of the task makes them worthy of the quest and the journey, or actually involves the quest or the journey” (130). One could deduce that Clark, the shark, is born to be the leader of the shiver. He needs to be the fiercest animal; he needs to get some teeth and not only does he get some teeth, but they are made of gold. Through this achievement, Clark shows to the sea creatures that he is capable of being a leader in the group or, at least, that he can be fearful. Now he has completed his mission and he can rejoin the other sharks looking as dangerous as he has to be.

Why did Clark swim away? What happened to him during his trip? What did he find? What can we learn from his experience? What do we know about sharks? We will find answers to these questions making a KWL chart.

With this book, we can work on making predictions. This would be mostly an oral exercise. Children will tell what they think is going to happen based on what they already know and the illustrations they see. The students need to be able to explain the feelings of the characters according to the expression of their face and the situation they are set in. We will study the difference between fantasy and reality: children will identify characters as real animals/persons (sharks, squid) and mythological creatures (mermaids). We will also study what the animals eat according to the shape of their teeth. I will explain how animals with pointed teeth eat meat because they have to tear the flesh of their prey, how animals with strong molars chew grass or how some animals have large incisors to cut their food. Finally, I have planned to study some more facts about sharks such as the kind of waters in which they live, what they eat, how they breathe, as well as types of sharks.

We will sing the bilingual song “In the Ocean Blue” (see Lesson Plan One) practicing and revising repetitions and patterns. Students can add to the song other sea animals that they might know. Once we finish, we will work on a bulletin board to include as many sea animals as we can (fish, crabs, sharks, seals, etc.) based on the ones that we mention in the song. The board will be called “The Deep Blue Ocean.” Children will draw the animals by connecting dots with numbers.

To reinforce what we have learned in English, I will present the Spanish book *Bajo las Olas (Under the Waves)*. This book offers images of animals that live in the ocean like the parrot fish, the tiger shark or the stingray. It also explains facts about these animals, which will support some of the information I had given to them before, e. g., the parrot fish uses its mouth, shaped like the beak of a parrot, to eat from a coral reef.

Reading Two: *The Little Polar Bear*

This book, written and illustrated by Hans de Beer, tells the story of Lars, a polar bear cub that gets lost when he goes hunting with his father and the piece of ice where he is sitting breaks. While Lars sails adrift, the piece of ice starts getting smaller and smaller until he reaches the shore of a tropical island. There he meets other animals that he had never seen before, like a hippopotamus and a chameleon. He touches the hot sand and he admires the beautiful colors of the new environment. Lars, the little polar bear, discovers with astonishment that not everything is white. Finally, with the help of his new friends, Henry the hippopotamus, Marcus the eagle and Samson the whale, Lars is able to go back to the North Pole and share with his incredulous father the wonderful things that he has discovered

In this case, the trip is produced accidentally. There is not a purpose for it because it is not intentional, but is useful for the main character because it opens his mind to new experiences.

The story of Lars begins “It was a big day for Lars. He was going with his father on his first hunting trip.” Going hunting for the first time probably means that Lars is getting ready for adulthood. He will not be a cub anymore in a short period of time, and he needs to know how to live by himself. The accidental trip would be another experience that counts in the steps towards “manhood.” Other stories include some kind of travel in which the main character grows up. He/she has to prove that he/she is ready to be an adult. This would be the case of David Copperfield, who struggles against adversity as he becomes a man. Of course, David Copperfield has to overcome social and economic problems that appear in his way, while Lars just has to go back home without his parents’ help.

Because it is a picture book, we will be able to discuss the importance of illustrations and how they contribute to the text. We will study the contrast between a tropical island and the North Pole – temperature, animals, plants, colors. We will write and illustrate a

two-column board that will compare the two ecosystems. Children will understand why some animals have vivid and different colors and why some animals can change the color of their appearance. The students will learn how animals that live in the snow have white fur so they can hide from their predators (white hare) or from their prey (white fox); the chameleon can change the color of his skin to protect himself from other animals as we have seen in the story *The Very Mixed Chameleon*, by Eric Carle. Other creatures have bright colors to warn that they are dangerous (coral snake, poison dart-frogs). We might also review the colors using tropical animals such as parrots, toucans, snakes.

We can work on activities of sorting animals according to their natural environment. Students can place pictures of animals in Venn diagrams to show which group they belong to and point at the ones that can live in both places, saying animals that migrate like whales or birds.

We will work on houses and clothing in these areas. Children will decide what kind of clothes we should wear if we travel to a cold place like the arctic and what we would wear if we traveled to the tropics. Also, children will learn about igloos and huts (the structures and the materials they are made of). They will understand how the environment determines how a population of an area lives. They will realize how living beings adapt to their environment.

Students will be able to point at a map/globe and show the regions of the Earth that we study. My intention is to introduce the kindergartners to the concepts of the poles, equator and tropics, so they can place the settings of the story in the map. Students will color the poles and the tropical regions with different colors. They will also be able to match animals with the places they live in. I will give two cards to each student with the words “Arctic Pole” and “tropics.” I will show the picture of an animal while I name it. Then, children will raise one card or the other according to the place the animal belongs. After this, we can build a graph that will indicate how many animals from the poles and how many animals from the tropics we have mentioned.

Also, children will have the opportunity of comparing the story of *The Little Polar Bear* with another story entitled *I Am a Little Polar Bear*, by François Crozat in which a polar bear cub describes his daily life in the Arctic region.

I will also utilize the book entitled *Más Allá del Patio (Beyond the Playground)*, written in Spanish. This publication explains facts about different ecosystems like the jungle, the savannah and the desert.

Reading Three: *Friends Go Adventuring*

This is the story of a mouse, a pig, and a rooster that are bored with the routine of the farm and “set out in search of adventure in the great, wide world.” They leave the farm and they have marvelous adventures. They rescue the goose princess; they save Milly the

cow's youngest son; in the snow, they find a map to treasure in the Red Sea, where they are eventually attacked by a gang of pirates. Finally, hungry and tired, they decide to go back to the farm and share their great adventures with all the other farm animals.

In this story, written and illustrated by Helme Heine, the animals start a trip for a reason: they are bored with their life on the farm. They search for new, exciting things and they do not go back home until they feel that they have had enough. In fact, the story starts "Today was like every other day on the farm." According to Paul Fussel "[travel] triggers the thrill of escape, from the constriction of the daily, the job, the boss, the parents" (13). It looks like this is exactly what Charlie Rooster, Johnny Mouse and Fat Percy are feeling. Charlie has to gather one thousand eggs daily and it is more than he can manage, he says. Fat Percy, the pig, has to eat all the time to be fat and he feels that it is too much. Johnny is bored because the cat, busy building mousetraps, never has time to chase him anymore. They need something new in their life, which is why they leave the farm for a while. Fussel adds, "The traveler's escape . . . has also been from the ugliness and racket of Western cities, and from factories, parking lots, boring turnpikes, and roadside squalor" (13). This sentence clearly explains the situation of the characters of this story. They run away from the boring routine of the farm, where they always perform the same tasks.

During their trip on a bike taken from the farm, they become heroes, rescuing the goose princess and her sisters, as well as Hugo, Milly the cow's youngest son. They also become truly adventurers searching for a treasure. Paul Fussel says that "There is thus about travel almost the *frisson* of the unlawful. The escape is also from the traveler's domestic identity, and among strangers a new sense of selfhood can be tried on, like a costume" (13). They turn into other "people" in other places because their new circumstances force them to react in different ways. Since the farm is a safe place, they would not have saved anyone's life being there.

This is an excellent story to review the animals that live on the farm with an activity that requires the children to write the name of the animal in the picture. I will use the adventures of Charlie the rooster, Percy the pig and Johnny the mouse to work the sequence of events. I will copy and color different illustrations from the book. In groups, children have to put the pictures in the right order and retell the story with their own words.

We will play the game "Find the treasure." I will hide a "treasure" (a box full of plastic coins) somewhere within the classroom. To find the treasure children have to follow oral instructions like "walk three steps to your right, four steps to the front, etc." Like that, students will review various objectives from the math and social studies curriculum.

We will use the world map to indicate the places where the characters of the story have been. Imagining that the farm is in the United States of America, we can draw a line

to the forests in Canada. From there, we will go to the north of Europe, Scandinavia, where the adventurers find the map of the treasure that leads them to the Red Sea. The line continues until the deserts of the Arabian Peninsula and then Southeast Asia, where Charlie and his friends decide to go back to the farm in an elephant. With this activity, the students will have the opportunity of learn about other environments like the forest, the desert. They will also be more aware of the shape of the planet and the differences between ecosystems. While the characters of the story, children will learn about the continents and recognize the ones that we have not visited yet: Antarctica, Australia and South America. We will color a World map using blue for bodies of water and other different colors of the continents. Children will label the continents and the oceans.

Aligned with *Friends Go Adventuring*, I will use ¡*Muévete!* (*Move!*). This book presents seven means of transportation: the boat, the bicycle, the car, the airplane, the balloon, the camel and our own feet. Charlie, Percy and Johnny leave the farm on a bicycle that they use until they go back to the farm. I will propose to my students other vehicles that our friends could have used to move around the world more efficiently and more quickly. Together we will add new means of transportation to the adventures of the characters. After working with labeled flashcards, my students will be able to read the words for the vehicles without looking at the picture and they will complete a worksheet that will consist of matching words and pictures.

The Boxer and the Princess

The Boxer and the Princess, also written and illustrated by Helme Heine, tells the story of Max, a young rhinoceros that must toughen up his skin because “life is hard” his father says. Max starts wearing armor and boxing gloves, so anything can hurt him. He becomes insensitive to everything and his parents decide to send him away to travel, to see the world. During his trip, Max becomes a knight able to defeat every single danger that he finds, until he meets the beautiful princess that refuses to marry a tough boxer. Then, Max tries to conquer her heart. He wants to pick some flowers for her so he has to take the boxing gloves off; he wants to swim in the river, so he has to take the armor off. Max starts to feel that love and care make him “stronger than ten suits of armor.”

In the chapter named “The Fall from Innocence to Experience,” Burrows, Lapidés and Shawcross express that “The fall motif generally focuses upon the change from a state of innocence to a state of sophistication (worldliness)” (110). They give the example of Robin in Hawthorne’s in “Kinsman, Major Molineaux,” who leaves his country home and learns of the complexity of life. In a similar way, we observe that the trip in which Max is set out serves the same purposes. On page 16 of the book, the narrator says “Even the doctor could not help, although he x-rayed Max from every single angle. Max and all his feelings were locked up tight, and there was no key to open him. His parents decided to let him travel wherever he wanted, to see the world.” The young rhinoceros has to gain experiences, has to learn aspects of life that, at that particular moment his parents cannot teach to him because he would not assimilate them.

When he leaves home, Max is locked to any sentiment, to any reason his family can give to him and his father decides that traveling is the best medicine for this illness. However, Max's armor becomes annoying soon, when he feels that he is ready to unlock his feeling to others. This happens when he meets the princess. Burrows, Lapidés and Shawcross say that "The fall, taken from Man's point of view, often occurs through a woman, who thus is seen as temptress" (110). In this case, the appearance of the princess has good consequences since, thanks to her, Max realizes that the armor is an obstacle to his enjoyment of good things in life. We could say that she acts as a temptress in a positive way. We can prove this from page 23 onwards: "So Max took off his boxing gloves and picked her some flowers. He wanted to walk the tightrope with the princess. So he got rid of his boots to get a better grip with his feet."

As I said some lines above, Max's father lets him go. Being away from home seems to be the only way for his son to realize the problem that he is actually "wearing." The awareness of travel increased during the eighteenth century. Travel was seen as a manner of education or, at least, as a supplement to education. Fussel illustrates this idea: "No one doubted Locke's argument that knowledge comes entirely through the external senses, and from the mind's later contemplation of materials laid up in the memory as a result of sense experience. . . . Travel, therefore, became something like an obligation for the person conscientious about developing the mind and accumulating knowledge" (129).

This book reveals the process of learning that takes place when somebody has to face life by him/herself. The story of Max will help us understand that we have to be open to the good things in life. Vulnerability makes us accessible both to bad and good experiences. This tale will help us understand human values and build character education for the children.

Independence does not equal self-sufficiency. Children will realize that there are some tasks that they can do by themselves, but that it is all right to ask for help when it is needed. I will illustrate the concept with daily situations in the classroom or at home. Sometimes, students say that they do not know how to do something just because they have not tried, and it does not occur to them that they can ask the teacher for help, their parents, or their friends. It looks like it is shameful to be helped. I would like to erase this mistake from their minds.

We can practice the sequence of the story with this book too. In this case, they will work in groups also. I will give to them six to seven sequences of the story. They have to color them, give them a number according to what happens first, second, third, etc., and paste them in a large piece of cardboard that will be prepared for it.

I will teach, as well, the concept of cause and consequence with the story of Max. Students will answer questions such as: "Why do mosquitoes bite Max?" ("Because he tastes so sweet"); and "What does Max do to fight the mosquitoes off?" ("He put a pair of boxing gloves on").

Children will also learn some facts about rhinoceroses from a videotape that I will play for them. After watching and listening to the video about the white rhinoceros, students will be able to answer such questions as “Where do they live?” and “What do they eat?”

We will write a two-column chart about things that children can do by themselves and things that they cannot do without adult’s help. I will provide some examples (get dressed, eat and drink, walk, ride a bicycle, to cross the street, brush their hair, etc.) for them to sort. Once they have classified the examples, students will add some more activities to both lists. After this group activity, children will illustrate and label two activities, one per column.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson Plan One: *Clark, the Toothless Shark*

Objectives

- Use prior knowledge to anticipate meaning and make sense of texts. Respond to the story through talk, art and writing in a way that reflects understanding and interpretation. Describe how illustrations contribute to the text.
- Distinguish fiction from non-fiction, including fact and fantasy.
- Record observations about parts of animals including wings, feet, head, tails. Identify basic needs of living things. Give examples of how living organisms depend on each other.

Procedure

Step One

I will show to the students the front cover of the book *Clark, the Toothless Shark* and I will read the title for them. Based on the illustration and the title, children will decide what the story talks about, what they know about sharks, and what they guess about Clark in particular. After this, students will express what they expect to know or what they want to know. While reading the story, I will let the children describe the illustrations and decide what is going to happen next according to what they see (setting, expression of the characters, previous pages). Finally, once I have read the book to them, they will tell me what they learned. I will write the answers in the board in a KWL chart.

Step Two

I will present the book *Bajo las Olas (Under the Waves)*. I will read the information about the tiger shark. We will compare this publication with the story of Clark. Children will learn which one of the books is a fiction book and which one is a non-fiction book.

Also, we will divide the characters of *Clark, the Toothless Shark* into two groups depending on if they can be real creatures or animals of fantasy. Students will add characters from other stories they know.

Step Three

After having read the facts about the tiger shark, children will be aware of the kind of teeth sharks have. We will comment about other animals with sharp and pointed teeth and conclude that they eat meat. We will compare these teeth with a mouse and a squirrel's teeth. These animals have long front teeth to gnaw their food. And finally, we will end with animals that have strong molars like a cow, because they need to chew grass. At the end of this activity, we will have learned about three groups of animals, divided according to what they eat, and how they eat it. This activity will be illustrated with photos and flashcards of the animals.

Step Four

I will read the entire book *Bajo las Olas*, to my students. They will learn facts about other sea animals and the ocean life. After this, I will give them individual sheets in which they have to connect dots with numbers to obtain the final picture (seal, shark, starfish, shells, whales). Children will color the pictures and cut them carefully. With these pictures, we will build a bulletin board in the room named "The Deep Blue Ocean".

Step Five

We will conclude the lesson by learning a song entitled "In the Ocean Blue." This song contains the names of most of the animals present in our bulletin board. The song goes on with repetitions and patterns the children need to follow.

In the ocean blue there are lots of fish swimming all around.
Fish, fish, *peces, peces*, fish, fish, *peces, peces*,
Fish, fish, *peces, peces*, swimming all around.

In the ocean blue there are great big whales splashing all around
Whales, whales, *ballenas, ballenas*, whales, whales, *ballenas, ballenas*
Whales, whales, *ballenas, ballenas*, splashing all around.

Children can add new animals with their action to the song and keep singing while they continue with the pattern and their movements (drama).

Lesson Plan Two: *The Little Polar Bear*

Objectives

- Use prior knowledge to anticipate meaning and make sense of texts. Respond to the story through talk, art and writing in a way that reflects understanding and interpretation. Describe how illustrations contribute to the text.

- Identify basic needs of living things. Give examples of how living organisms depend on each other.
- Compare two places based on their attributes.
- Sort animals according to the ecosystem they belong to and describe how the groups are formed.
- Understand the shape of the Earth and that the planet is divided in different regions. Be acquainted with the vocabulary: equator, tropics, poles, hemispheres.

Procedure

Step One

I will show to the students the front cover of the book *The Little Polar Bear* and I will read the title for them. Again based on the illustration and the title, children will decide what the story talks about. Then, I will continue showing the illustrations until Lars meets Marcus the eagle. While I turn the pages, children will “create” their own story according to what they see in the pictures. The students will propose their own endings too. They will guess what Marcus says to Lars. Lars goes back home with Samson the grey whale, but children can guess that he stays on the island, or the he is rescued by his father, etc.

Step Two

We will write a chart comparing both ecosystems: the Arctic Pole and a tropical environment. I will guide the answers with questions about the vegetation, the weather and temperature, the animals and the colors. Children will record what they learn with pictures. They will work in pairs so half of the class will draw the tropical island, and the other half will draw the Arctic Pole. I will add the pictures to the comparison chart.

Step Three

Students will draw a picture of a given animal. Each student should have a different animal. Using a Venn diagram, children will sort their pictures in groups according to where those animals live. They will be aware that some animals like whales can live in both places because they migrate. They will stand and paste their drawing to the Venn diagram that I will have drawn on the math bulletin board.

Step Four

We will study the type of houses where people in the tropics and the poles live and the kind of clothes we would need if we traveled there. Students will learn about huts and igloos. I have planned to construct igloos with plasticine in four groups.

Step Five

Children will be introduced to new vocabulary concerning geographical concepts. The students already know that the Earth is more or less a sphere. I will explain what the equator is and how it divides the planet in two halves called hemispheres. I will point at them in the map and in the globe. Children will have their own maps where they can color the poles, the tropics and the line of the equator.

Step Six

The students will increase their knowledge about the Arctic Pole by listening to the story entitled *I Am a Little Polar Bear*. Children will be able to realize that this book might not be a fiction story even though it has no photos but drawings, and that is the polar bear cub who explains about his life.

I also want to show the book *Más Allá del Patio (Beyond the Playground)*, with which children will enjoy learning about other environments besides the poles and the tropics, like the desert or the savannah.

Lesson Plan Three: *Friends Go Adventuring*.

Objectives

- Sequence events in chronological order and use vocabulary related to time and sequence.
- Sort animals according to the environment they belong to and describe how those groups are formed.
- Follow oral instructions understanding directions such as right, left, below, above, under, etc.
- Review of landforms and bodies of water (continents and oceans).
- Be acquainted with means of transportation and where/when to use each of them.

Step One

After listening to the story, I will divide the students into four or five groups. Each group will receive six illustrations from the book. The students will put these illustrations in the right order and be able to retell the story with their own words.

Step Two

Students will color a world map using blue for bodies of water and other colors for landforms such as continents and main islands. Depending on the level of development of the children, they will color the landforms with just one color, or they will use a different one for each continent. We will label continents and oceans together (guided activity). Once the world map ready, I will trace for them the route that the characters of *Friends Go Adventuring* might have followed, indicating the changes in the landscapes they see.

Step Three

The rooster, the mouse and the pig travel around the world on a bicycle. Children will name other means of transportation that they know and that the characters could have used. I will add other vehicles to their list and I will show them the book *¡Muevete!* about means of transportation. Children will complete a worksheet where they have to recognize and label in English basic vehicles like car, motorcycle, airplane, boat, bicycle and train. After this activity, students will decide which means of transportation would have been more appropriate to complete the trip that the characters of the story did.

Lesson Plan Four: *The Boxer and the Princess*

Objectives

- Sequence events in chronological order and use vocabulary related to time and sequence.
- Understand cause-and-consequence.
- Character education: students understand the value of giving and helping and being openhearted.

Step One

After listening to the story, I will divide the students into four or five groups. Each group will receive six to seven illustrations from the book. The students have to put these illustrations in the right order and paste them on a large piece of cardboard. Children need to be able to retell the story with their own words.

Step Two

Children will understand the concept of cause and consequence. We will start practicing with sentences like “It is raining; therefore I will take an umbrella.” Then, students will answer questions such as “Why do mosquitoes bite Max?” (“Because he tastes so sweet”); and “What does Max do to fight the mosquitoes off?” (“He puts a pair of boxing gloves on”).

Step Three

Children will share what they know about the rhinoceros (size, where they live, what they eat, etc) and I will share with them what I know about these animals. Children will draw a picture that includes all the information that they have about these mammals, and they will color their pictures.

Step Four

We will write a two-column chart indicating activities that children can do alone, and activities that require adult’s help. I will propose some activities that students need to sort and they will add some more. For example, they will decide to which column belongs “To get dressed” and “To cross the street.” Once we have the chart ready, children will chose one activity per column and they will draw a picture to illustrate that activity. After they draw, students need to write the activity that they have drawn.

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