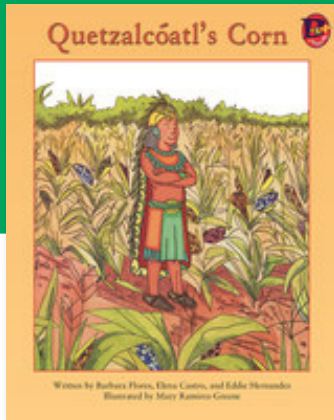




# BEBOP CLASSROOM CONNECTION



Guided Reading with

## Quetzalcóatl's Corn

Guided Reading Level: K

DRA Level: 20

by Barbara Flores, Elena Castro, and Eddie Hernandez, illustrated by Michael Ramirez

**Overview:** Read this story to discover the Mexican legend of how corn came to the Aztec people. Pronunciation of Quetzalcóatl is ket-sahl-KOH-ah-tel..

16 pages, 307 words

**Genre:** Fiction

### Focus: Concepts of Print and Reading Strategies

- use context to predict unknown words; confirm by attending to letter sounds
- blend word parts to read phonetically regular words, including content-specific vocabulary, relying on a wider variety of spelling patterns
- use a wide variety of high frequency words to support fluent reading
- read varied sentences fluently, with expression and stamina
- use text and illustrations to visualize story events
- use background and vocabulary knowledge to help read and comprehend unknown words
- read and comprehend dialogue in various formats
- maintain comprehension over more text episodes
- determine author's message using evidence from the text

### Supportive Text Features:

- some details supported by illustrations
- problem and solution narrative text structure
- most vocabulary is familiar, with some more varied word choices, literary and content-specific language
- varied sentence lengths and formats

### High-frequency words:

- *In, there, a, and, was, what, us, some, our, are, for, could, do, with, this, the, of, he, to, may, have, their, they, you, from, how, can, be*

### Phonics:

- R-controlled vowels (ar in harvest, army, marching, large, er in leader, kernels, wondered, were, never, or in corn, tortillas, ur in turned, returned)

### Common Core Standards:

- RF.2.3, RF.2.4
- RL.2.1, RL.2.2, RL.2.3, RL.2.5, RL.2.6, RL.2.9, RL.2.10

### ELL/ESL

*El maíz de Quetzalcóatl*

[See back page](#)

## Getting Ready to Read

### 1. Introduce the concept and vocabulary by asking open-ended questions:

- What do you think a "legend" is? Have you read or heard any legends? If children are unfamiliar with legends, end with clarification, such as, "A legend is a story that has been passed down through history by many people; it's often a story many believe to be true or partly true, even with no way to be sure. The book we'll read today is a legend."
- Have you heard of the Aztec people? What do you know about them? (If students do not, give a brief introduction, such as, "The Aztecs were native people who lived in what is now Mexico from the 1300s to the 1500s and their history culture and stories are still important today.")
- What's corn? Do you like to eat it? How do your family or other people you know use corn?

### 2. Connect children's past experiences with the story and vocabulary:

- Hold the book. Call children's attention to the title. Read: "*Quetzalcóatl's Corn*"
- Ask children to use the title and picture on the cover to predict what the book will be about of it.



- Show the back cover and read the copy. Ask children to predict what the legend will say about how corn came to the Aztec people.
- Show students the pronunciation guide for the name Quetzalcóatl. Practice saying it together syllable by syllable. Quetzalcóatl: ket-sahl-KOH-ah-tel
- Have children predict some words they might read in the story.
- Give children the book and have them look at the pictures. Ask them to describe what each page shows.

### 3. Remind children of the strategies they know and can use with unfamiliar words:

- Ask them, "What will you do if you come to a word you don't know?"
- Encourage children to sound out each letter if the word can be phonetically sounded out. Point out any consonant blends or digraphs, word families, or vowels sounds they may know.
- Suggest that children also remember what they know about the subject or topic of the book and choose a word that both makes sense in the sentence and fits with the letter sounds written.
- Tell children to think what they know about the subject or topic of this book. Then encourage them to choose a word that makes sense in the sentence.

### 4. Be aware of the following text features:

- The book contains familiar words, including a variety of high frequency words.
- Potentially unfamiliar vocabulary words include: ancient, Mexico, god, gentle, leader, Aztecs, fields, bare, begged, army, red ants,

"Mountain of Sustenance," kernels, stalks, harvest, grind, flour, tortillas, tamales.

- The story follows a typical narrative structure, including an introduction of characters/setting, problem, related events, and resolution.

### Guided Reading Note:

Level K is the benchmark for the middle of the second grade. Children reading at this level are moving into a fluent stage, and the focus emphasizes comprehension and independent reading. Most of the reading should be done silently. Children are also encouraged to: 1) independently apply their reading skills and strategies, 2) make connections between their own experiences and the story, and 3) "get" the author's message and be able to discuss it with other readers. Most importantly, children should feel confident and eager to read. This is a time to build fluency and independence as children read a variety of genres and develop a sense of reading for different purposes

## Reading the Book

**1. Set a purpose by telling children to read the book to find out about the legend of how Quetzalcóatl brought corn to the Aztec people long ago.**

**2. Have children read the book silently.** Each child should be reading at his or her own pace. Listen to children as they read by leaning close or bending down beside each child. After the group has read a few pages, check for understanding with simple questions, such as: "What is the book about?" or "Tell me how the book begins." Then direct children to continue reading. As they read, watch for indications of comprehension: changes in facial expression, giggles, audible comments, rereading, turning back a page. You may want to make notations about what you observe.



### 3. Look for these reading behaviors during the first reading:

- Do they rely on the print while reading?
- Do they have a strong sight vocabulary?
- Do they use known sound chunks to read unknown words?
- Are they monitoring meaning and rereading when they lose meaning?
- Do they easily move from page to page? Are they reading fluently?
- Are they using punctuation and any text features to gain meaning?
- Do they make accurate predictions?
- Are they connecting the text to their own experiences?
- Do they react to the text even though they are reading silently? Do they laugh? smile? frown?
- Are they drawing conclusions and making inferences?

### 4. As children read, note what they are doing.

Help them build independence by being available, but not intervening too quickly.

- Watch for changes in children's facial expressions and use these signals to ask questions, such as: "What made you smile?" or "Where do you need some help?"
- Encourage children's attempts by making comments, such as: "I like how you are using a different strategy when the first one you tried didn't work."
- If children are struggling with deciding which strategy to use, suggest a specific strategy that would help them get meaning in the most efficient way, such as, "Did you try to sound out the word?" "Did you think about chunking the word?"

### 5. Possible teaching points to address based on your observations:

- Call attention to all the high-frequency words children have learned and used.
- Review how to find a known part in an unknown word.
- Show children how to use analogies to move from the known to the unknown when encountering new words.
- Work with suffixes and prefixes.
- Review using grammar (syntax) to unlock words by considering the sentence structure or parts of speech in the sentence.
- Review how to determine what is important in a picture or sentence.
- Model asking questions or making "I wonder..." statements to extend comprehension.
- Review using punctuation marks to guide the meaning-making process. Discuss the use of question marks and exclamation points as keys to reading with a particular kind of expression or inflection.
- Call attention to the sequence of events in the story.
- Model how to revisit the text to find specific examples or ideas.

## After the First Reading

### 1. Have children confirm their predictions and talk about what happened in the legend.

### 2. Ask questions like:

- What does this legend explain?
- Who was Quetzalcóatl? What did people think



of him? How did the book describe him? What did you notice about him from the pictures?

- What problem did Quetzalcóatl's people have?
- How did Quetzalcóatl feel about his peoples' hunger? What did he do?
- What happened when Quetzalcóatl saw the ants?
- What do you think the "Mountain of Sustenance" means?
- What did the ants show him?
- How did the ants respond to Quetzalcóatl's asking for corn?
- How did the people react when Quetzalcóatl brought back the corn kernels? What does their reaction tell you about how they felt about Quetzalcóatl?
- What did the people do with the corn? What happened?
- Do you think this legend is true? Why or why not? Could parts of it be true?
- Why do you think this story has been passed down through history? Why is it important?
- What could people today learn from this very old story?

### Second Reading

**1. Have children reread the book silently or to a partner.**

**2. This is a time for assessment.** Keeping notes on children's progress during a guided reading session will be a helpful resource for giving children on-going feedback about themselves as readers as well as helping you record how they develop over time.

- While they are reading, watch what children do

and what they use from the teaching time.

- You might also take a running record on one child as an assessment of the child's reading behavior.
- You might also listen in on each individual reader, observing as children use appropriate or inappropriate strategies. This information will be valuable for any additional strategy discussions after the second reading.

### Cross-Curricular Activities

**Language:** Share an example word from the book of a word for each r-controlled vowel pattern, (e.g., ar: harvest, er: kernels, ir: none in text, but you could use "skirt" from the pictures, or: corn, ur: turned). Talk about the sounds each of these spelling patterns typically represent. Practice sorting other words into these categories based on their r-controlled vowels, starting with others from the book (army, marching, large, leader, wondered, were, never, tortillas, returned). Have students practice reading and writing some of them in context.

Have students use sticky notes to add speech bubbles to the illustrations. Ask them to focus on including characters' words or thoughts not already written as dialogue in the text.

Have students practice summarizing the text orally or in writing, making sure to include information about the characters, setting, problem, and resolution.

Have students read, or read aloud, other legends, such as The Woman Who Outshone the Sun/ La mujer que brillaba aún más que el sol <https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-woman-who-outshone-the-sun-la-mujer-que-brillaba-aun-mas-que-el-sol>



<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-woman-who-outshone-the-sun-la-mujer-que-brillaba-aun-mas-que-el-sol>. Notice patterns in the story structure and content.

**Science:** Learn about plant parts and how a corn plant can grow from a single corn kernel. Look at a photo of a mature corn plant and work together to label the plant parts and explain the role of each one. Start with reading the book *Maize: Plant of the Americas* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/maize-plant-of-the-americas>).

**Cooking:** If your school has a microwave, consider making and sharing popcorn.

While not all families will regularly use corn, encourage students to share any family recipes featuring corn if corn is something they cook with at home.

**Social Studies:** Learn more about the Aztec people with students. Create a chart listing Who, What, Where, etc.

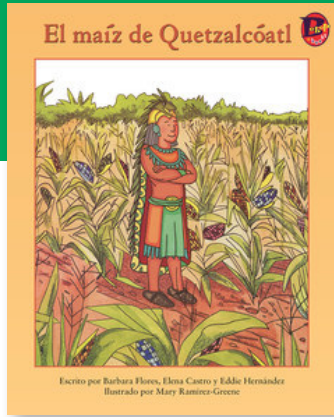
Have students read another Aztec legend, *The Two Volcanoes* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-two-volcanoes>). Compare and contrast the legends and the main characters.

Learn more about the importance of corn in Mexican culture (e.g., beginning with the references to tortillas and tamales in the book), and other cultures. Compare stories and traditions related to corn

Learn about additional plants and foods unique to the Americas with *Yum! ¡Mmmm! ¡Qué Rico! Americas' Sproutings* by Pat Mora (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/yum-mmmm-que-rico-americas-sproutings>).

**Art:** If available, obtain corn kernels of different

colors, or search online for simple directions to dye popcorn kernels the colors mentioned in the book. Invite students to create mosaic artwork by gluing corn kernels to pieces of cardboard.



## Guided Reading with **El maíz de Quetzalcóatl**

The directions given for the introduction, first reading, and second reading of the English edition can be used with the Spanish edition of the book. To read the book successfully, children need the same kinds of support as their English-speaking classmates. Second language learners often benefit from acting out new words, seeing pictures, and talking about them using concrete examples.

Guided Reading Level: L  
DRA Level: 24

### Noun & Verb Support

The following nouns are used in the story of Quetzalcóatl: México, lider, aztecas, gente, comida, campos, canastas, niños, montaña, tierras, ejército de hormigas, Montaña del Alimento, hormiga, cuarto, maíz, granos, sol, plantas, harina, tortillas, tamales, pueblo

Print each noun on separate, individual index cards or sticky notes that are small enough to be labels. Photocopy the illustrations and cover the text so that students cannot see the nouns. With the word cards, have students place the appropriate word card for each noun.

The following verb words are used to describe how Quetzalcóatl and his people use the corn gathered to feed the village: Vivía, trataba, cuidar, llamado, tenia, vacíos, sabia, hacer, ayudanos, buscar, suplicó, tienen, puso, quería, subió, pensar, miro, podía, conseguir, vio, siguió, dan, regresó, enseñó, traigo, sembró, brilló, crecieron, formaron, apendió, moler, convirtieron

Encourage students to write or share a sentence with a partner a sentence that uses each of the words that describes how the people of Quetzalcóatl's village gathered corn.

### Continued on next page...

**Guided Reading** Guided reading levels were assigned by literacy experts and certified Reading Recovery® teachers using the guidelines identified in Guided Reading and Matching Books to Readers by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell.

**INT. (Intervention)** Intervention levels were assigned by literacy experts and certified Reading Recovery® teachers and are intended for use in early intervention and one-on-one tutorial programs, including Reading Recovery®. These levels are not officially authorized by Reading Recovery®. Reading Recovery® is a registered servicemark of The Ohio State University.

**DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)** and **EDL (Evaluación del desarrollo de la lectura)** DRA and EDL levels were determined using information in the Developmental Reading Assessment Resource Guide and EDL Resource Guide by Joetta Beaver.

All level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

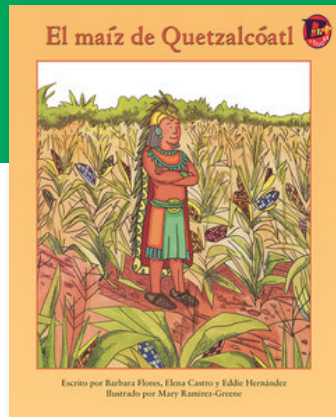
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### Guided Reading with **El maíz de Quetzalcóatl**

For students engaging with both English and Spanish texts, have students note that there are exclamatory statements and questions used throughout the story.

In Spanish, the question marks and exclamation points come before the sentence in an upside-down orientation and after the sentence in the opposite orientation.

*Guided Reading Level: L*  
*DRA Level: 24*

The book language used may differ from children's oral language. Comparing any differences will help children read and understand the story. Also help children understand that we often speak differently than we write, and that both ways of using language are important.

Encourage students to create an illustration of their favorite spread from the story and to write a sentence using the nouns and verbs they learned in the story.

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