



Guided Reading with

## A Surprise for Mama

Guided Reading Level: G

DRA Level: 12

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

**Overview:** Beto wants to make a surprise gift for his mama. Read this book to find out what he makes.

16 pages, 213 words

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

### Focus: Concepts of Print and Reading Strategies

- use context to predict unknown words; confirm by attending to letter sounds
- blend letter sounds to read phonetically regular words, relying on a wider variety of spelling patterns
- use high frequency words as markers
- use context, background knowledge and vocabulary knowledge to read unknown words
- read varied sentences fluently, with expression and stamina
- read with expression to show characters' feelings
- maintain comprehension over more text episodes

### Supportive Text Features:

- illustrations support some text details
- text depicts a series of simple, related ideas
- text includes some repetitive language

### High-frequency words:

- *to, a, for, his, the, in, I, it, could, some, she, on, and, you*

### Phonics:

- r-controlled vowels "ur" and "er"

### Common Core Standards:

- RF.1.1, RF.1.2, RF.1.3, RF.1.4
- RL.1.1, RL.1.2, RL.1.3, RL.1.7

### ELL/ESL

*Una sorpresa para mamá* [See back page](#)

## Getting Ready to Read

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

- Has anyone ever given you a happy surprise? What was it? How did you feel? Have you ever surprised anyone?
- If a young person wanted to surprise a special grown-up, what might they do?
- Have you ever made something special for a family member? What did you make? Why? How did it make you feel to give it to them?

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

- Hold the book. Call children's attention to the title. Read: "A Surprise for Mama."
- Ask children to predict who might be in the book and what they might do.
- Show the back cover and read the copy. Have children predict what kind of gift Beto will give to surprise his Mama.
- 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 look at the pictures and the beginning sound of the word of the unknown word.



Have them read on and return to the word after completing the sentence.

- Suggest that children also remember what they know about the subject or topic of the book and choose a word that makes sense in the sentence.

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

- The book contains familiar words: to, a, for, his, the, in I, it, could, some, she, on, and, you
- The text describes how a boy adds different details to a paper heart gift to give to his mother.
- Content-specific vocabulary words and phrases include: border, trace.
- The illustrations support and enhance the story.

## Reading the Book

**1. Set a purpose by telling children to read the book to find out what gift Beto makes for his Mama and how he makes it.**

**2. Have children read quietly, but out loud.** Each child should be reading at his or her own pace. Children should not read in chorus. Listen to children as they read by leaning close or bending down beside each child.

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

- Have they begun to cross-check, using a variety of strategies, and to self correct?
- Do they rely less on the pictures and more on print when reading? Do they use multiple sources of information?
- Do they have a growing sight vocabulary?
- Do they use beginning, middle, and ending sounds to read unknown words?
- Are they monitoring meaning and rereading when they lose meaning?
- Do they easily move from one line of text to the next when making a return sweep?
- Do they use punctuation appropriately and to gain meaning?
- Do they make more accurate predictions and confirm or revise them while reading?

- Can they connect the text to past experiences?
- Have they begun to draw conclusions and make inferences?

**4. As children read, suggest a reading strategy if they are struggling: "Try rereading the sentence.** Try looking at the picture to make sense of the print." Encourage children to take a guess based on the subject of the book or to use the beginning sounds or known parts of the word. Encourage children to take a guess or read past the unknown word and return to it.

**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 the gift Beto made.**



## 2. Ask questions like:

- What did Beto want to make? Why?
- How did he start?
- Who did Beto show his gift to? What advice did they each give? How did Beto respond?
- How would you have responded to all the family members' suggestions?
- What did Beto add to his gift that was his own idea? How did he do it?
- What did Beto say to his Mama?
- How do you think Mama responded to her gift? Why do you think that?
- What can you tell about Beto as a character based on the information in the story?
- Why do you think Beto gave his mother this gift? What holiday(s) might he be celebrating his mother?
- How does this story show the family working together?
- What do you think will happen next in the story?
- If you don't have art supplies at home to make a surprise, what are other ways you could express how much you love someone special to you? (Example: a poem, a song, help them in a task, etc.)
- What do you think Beto's mother should do with this gift? Where could she hang it or keep it?

## Second Reading

1. Have children reread the book in a whisper voice or to a partner.

2. This is a time for assessment. While they are reading, watch what children do and what they use from the teaching time. Alternatively, you might take a running record on one student as an assessment of the student's reading behavior.

## Cross-Curricular Activities

**Language:** Have students work together to assign character roles and read the book aloud as a short performance.

Use the story events to write a "How to Make a Paper Heart Gift" procedural text. Talk about the similarities and differences between a story and an informational text on the same topic.

List and practice reading words that include the r-controlled vowels "ur" and "er," starting with examples from the book (surprise, paper, sister, border).

Read aloud other stories about gift giving, such as *The Perfect Gift* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-perfect-gift>) or *Raymond's Perfect Present* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/raymond-s-perfect-present>). Discuss connections and compare the characters' experiences across texts.

**Social Studies:** Compare and contrast the different emotions that can be associated with surprises. Create a Venn diagram comparing good and bad surprises, examples, and associated emotions.

Talk about ways to show care for another person, using Beto's surprise for his mother as a springboard. Plan an unexpected kind gesture to make as a group.

Talk about possible responses to others' feedback, using Beto as an example. Do an activity that involves asking for and incorporating others' feedback. Reflect on the experience and related emotions.

**Art:** Have students create their own paper heart gifts using details from the story, or their own ideas. Have them brainstorm people who might like a surprise gift, write messages on the back of the hearts, and share them with others.



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## Guided Reading with Una sorpresa para mamá

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.

### Noun Support

The boy in the story uses the following items to make his surprise for his mamá: papel rojo (x2), tijeras, un lápiz, pegamento, dos botones viejos, pedazo de estambre, una cinta de encaje, dos pedazos de cinta

The boy uses the items to create the following parts of the heart-shaped face:

Los ojos: dos botones, La sonrisa: pedazo de estambre, Los brazos: dos pedazos de cinta, Las manos: papel rojo

Print the items from the story and parts of the face on individual index cards. Covering the text from the story, have students match the different item with its corresponding picture. Afterwards, without support from the story, have students sort the different items underneath the correct part of the face, using the word cards for the face as headings for the sort.

### Verb Support

The following action words are used in the story to indicate how the boy creates the face-shaped heart as a surprise for his mamá: doblar, cortar, desdoblar, pegar (x4)

Print each of the action words on individual index cards. With the text covered from the story, have students place the index cards on its corresponding illustration that matches the action. Students can think of another sentence using the verb that demonstrates their understanding of the action.

For students engaging with both English and Spanish texts, have students note that there is an exclamatory statement on the last page. In Spanish, the exclamation points come before the sentence in an upside-down orientation and after the sentence in the opposite orientation.

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.

**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.

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**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.

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