

Written by Barbara Flores, Elena Castro, and Eddie Hernandez
Illustrated by Mary Ramirez-Greene

16 pages, 206 words

Genre: Realistic 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 wide variety of spelling patterns
- use a wide variety of high frequency words to support fluent reading
- recognize previously solved words when encountered again later in the text
- read varied sentences fluently, with expression and stamina
- use context and illustrations to understand unfamiliar vocabulary

Supportive Text Features:

- some details supported by illustrations
- some repetitive text and a repetitive text structure
- most vocabulary is familiar, with some content-specific vocabulary
- varied sentence lengths and formats

High-frequency words:

- *are, we, there, and, I, to, my, see, the, from, we, have, go*

Phonics:

- vowel digraph oo (as in "soon")

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

¿Ya mero llegamos, mami? [See back page](#)

Guided Reading with

Are We There Yet, Mom?

Guided Reading Level: I

DRA Level: 16

by Barbara Flores, Elena Castro, and Eddie Hernandez, illustrated by Mary Ramirez-Greene

Overview: Zoey and her mom are going on a long trip. Follow along as they travel from state to state.

Getting Ready to Read

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

- Have you ever taken a long car trip (or train or bus trip)? Where did you go? What was the ride like?
- What questions do you think a kid would ask an adult on a long car trip?

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

- Hold the book. Call children's attention to the title. Read: "*Are We There Yet, Mom?*"
- Ask children to use the title and picture on the cover to predict what will happen in the book.
- Show the back cover and read the copy. Ask children to predict where Zoey and her mom will travel.
- Have children suggest some words they might read in the book.
- Give children the book and have them look at the pictures.
- Ask them to tell what they notice about the pictures as they turn each page. Briefly discuss what each map 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 for chunks of words they know and to blend the sounds quickly.
- Suggest that children read on past an unfamiliar word in order to use the context of the story and sentence to



unlock the meaning of the word.

- 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: are, we, there, and, I, to, my, see, the, from, we, have, go.
- Content-specific vocabulary words include: Texas, California, El Paso, Las Cruces, New Mexico, Tucson, Arizona, Los Angeles, Bakersfield, Fresno.
- Each page spread shows Zoey and her mother passing a different city sign, and shows a map of their route. On each page Zoey asks, "Mom, are we there yet?"
- The amount of text on each page varies.
- The illustrations support and extend the text, but most of the meaning is contained in the text.
- The map is not drawn to scale. There is a map on the left side of each spread to show the progress of the journey and story.

Guided Reading Note: Level I is the benchmark for the end of first grade. Children reading at level I are in an early fluent stage, and the focus emphasizes comprehension and independent reading. Most of the reading should be done silently. Children read the book with a specific purpose, to understand the story. They 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 Zoey and her mom's long trip.

2. Have children read the story 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 story about?" or "Tell me how the story 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 showing signs of understanding the story?
- Are they monitoring meaning and rereading when they lose meaning?
- Do they easily move from page to page?
- Are they using punctuation to gain meaning?
- How are they dealing with conversations in the text?
- 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?
- 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 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 or sound chunk 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.
- Explore the story grammar—characters, setting, problem, solution, and so on.
- 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, exclamation points, and commas as clues to reading with a particular kind of expression or inflection. Talk about the use of quotation marks to indicate dialogue.
- Call attention to the sequence of events in the story.
- Model how to revisit the text to find specific examples or ideas in the story.
- Model how to use the repeating patterns in the text to solve words and read fluently.

After the First Reading

1. Have children confirm their predictions and talk about Zoey and her mom’s trip.

2. Ask questions like:

- Where do Zoey and her mom live? How do you know?
- Where are they going on their trip?
- Through what cities do Zoey and her mom drive?
- What can you learn from the maps in the book?
- How does Zoey feel about going on a trip? Do her feelings change during the journey?
- How does she feel when they arrive? How do you know?
- How do you think Zoey’s mom felt during the trip? What makes you think that?
- Do you think there are any parts of the journey the book didn’t describe? Which ones? Why do you think that?
- What do you think makes a long car trip more enjoyable?
- What advice do you have for Zoey to help pass the time on the trip and make the trip more interesting?
- Have you ever gone on a long roadtrip (in train, car, bus)? What was it like? Where did you go? Who did you go with?
- Have you ever visited any of the cities or states mentioned in the story? What were they like?

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: Set up a pretend car with chairs or other furniture. Have students turn the book into a short performance by reading parts of a narrator, Zoey, and her mom. Additional performers could hold up signs for different cities.

Compare the lengths of a shorter sentence and a longer sentence from the book. Practice reading each sentence fluently. Note the increased stamina required for the longer one. Point out how commas are a good place to take a breath.

Brainstorm or share a list of words with the vowel digraph "oo," starting with "soon" from the book. Have students practice reading and writing the words.

Talk about reading with expression and how tone of voice can convey characters' emotions. Practice re-reading sections with different emotions in mind for both Zoey and her mom. For example, how would they sound if they were happy, excited, frustrated, tired, etc.?

Mathematics: Use a mapping app with students to calculate approximate driving times between each city in the book. Have students add these times together to estimate how many hours Zoey and her mom drove.

Compare Zoey's family's approximate driving time to students' own days. If students' started driving when school started, when would they arrive at Zoey's grandparents' house?

Use the same mapping app entries to determine mileage between each city. Have students practice reading each numerical amount. With students, calculate the total mileage between El Paso, TX and Fresno, CA. (Round off each amount to the nearest fifty or hundred, if that's more appropriate for your students.)

Social Studies: Have students read or read aloud other books that describe a travel route, such as *When This World Was New* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/when-this-world-was-new>). Sketch maps of the characters'

routes as a way to help summarize the story content. Make connections between texts.

Share other books that include maps, such as *Follow That Map!* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/follow-that-map>). Compare how maps are used and the information they convey across texts.

Establish key questions or categories about each city, and help students learn more about the US cities included in the book.

Have students work on Google Maps to mark each city and state Zoey and her mom travel to. Encourage students to include their own city and state (and the capital of their state).

Art: Invite students to draw maps of fantasy travel routes. Ask them to add labels or illustrations for a starting place and destination and key points along the way.

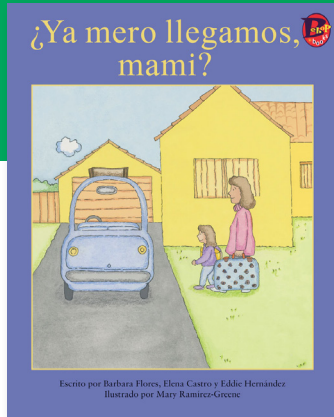
Provide old maps for students to cut up and create collage art. Invite them to notice different features on the maps.

Music: Learn and share songs for group singing on long road trips or your next fieldtrip, including "Down by the Bay," "Wheels on the Bus," "Baby Beluga," "Ants Go Marching," "The More We Get Together," and so on.

Collect songs students like to listen to for long roadtrips and make a playlist to share with the class or use for the next fieldtrip. Make sure each song is age appropriate before including it, even if it is a popular radio song.

Physical Education: Create signs on traffic cones to mark different spots on Zoey and her mom's route. Spread them across a large area. Call out different ways to move between cities (e.g., zoom on the freeway, stuck in a traffic jam.)

English Language Learners: Show a real map of the Southwest featuring the states in the book. Mark each state and city that is referenced in the story. Highlight the city and state students live in. Point out the elements of the map, including the compass rose.



Guided Reading Level: H
DRA Level: 14

Guided Reading with **¿Ya mero llegamos, Mami?**

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 following places that the mother and daughter drive through are listed in the story: El Paso, Texas; Las Cruces, Nuevo México; Tucson, Arizona; Los Ángeles, California

Print each city and state on separate, individual index cards that are small enough to be labels, similar to what's presented in the story. Photocopy the illustration with all four states: Texas, Nuevo México, Arizona and California. Cover the text so that students cannot see the names of the places. With the word cards, have students place the appropriate word card for each city and state from the story on the map.

Verb Support

The following verb/action words describe how the mother and daughter travel throughout the story: salimos, llegamos, pasamos

Encourage students to write or share a sentence with a partner a sentence that uses each of the words that describes how they travel or a place where they have traveled.

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.

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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