

Guided Reading with

## A Birthday Meal for Dad

Guided Reading Level: J  
DRA Level: 18

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illustrated by Michael Ramirez

**Overview:** It's Dad's birthday. Read this story to learn how to prepare Dad's favorite meal.

### About the Book

Page number: 16, Word Cofunt: 283

**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Focus:**

**Concepts of Print and Reading Strategies:**

- blend letter sounds to read phonetically regular words, including content-specific vocabulary, relying on a wider variety of spelling patterns
- look at each part or syllable of a word to read it
- use context to confirm decoding of unknown words
- use known words as markers (high frequency or previously decoded)
- use background and vocabulary

knowledge to understand words read

- read varied sentences fluently, with expression and stamina
- attend to punctuation and formatting, including quotation marks, commas, and end punctuation
- use text to visualize events
- maintain comprehension over more detailed text episodes
- refer to text evidence when discussing the book

**Supportive Text Features:**

- some details supported by illustrations
- most vocabulary is familiar, with some content-specific language
- varied sentence lengths and formats

**Phonics:**

- review r-controlled vowels ar, ur, or, er, ir (e.g., starts, party, surprise, mortar, before, corn, tortilla, peppers, serving, birthday)
- suffix -tion to spell the sound "shun" as in traditional
- syllabication of multisyllable words with various syllable types, especially potentially unfamiliar vocabulary words

**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: **Una comida de cumpleaños para papá** See last page

### Getting Ready to Read

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

- Share how food is part of a celebration your family enjoys. Do you ever help make it? How might someone choose the food for a special celebration?
- Introduce the word "traditional." Ask, "What could it mean to make food in a traditional way?" Brainstorm examples together of traditional vs. not.
- Note: not all families celebrate birthdays. Ask students about special celebrations they have. If students



do celebrate birthdays, ask what types of food they enjoy.

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

- Hold the book. Call children's attention to the title. Read: "A Birthday Meal For Dad."
- Ask children to use the title and picture on the cover to predict what the book will be about.
- Show the back cover and read the copy. Have children predict how the characters will make Dad's favorite meal.
- 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 notice what each one shows. Introduce content-specific language as needed, or prompt students to be on the lookout for new vocabulary when they read. (E.g., "I wonder what that cooking tool will be called?")

### 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 from left to right, or syllable by syllable.
- If they stop to tackle a challenging word, remind them to re-read the sentence afterwards and think about the story.

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

- The book contains a wide variety of high frequency words. You might introduce or review several of the words using an orthographic mapping routine and/or review

a set of words with similar spellings or sounds.

- Content-specific and other useful vocabulary words and phrases include: preparing/prepares, enchiladas, traditional, grind, chili peppers, mortar, dough, tortillas, grindstone, rolling, pin, griddle, slightly, iron, burner, stovetop, sauce, serving
- The text follows a typical narrative structure with a goal/challenge, supporting events and resolution. A child describes the steps their mother takes to make enchiladas in a traditional way for Dad's birthday meal.

Guided Reading Note: Level J is the benchmark for the beginning 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. Students are also likely still refining their grasp of phonics patterns. Support their growing knowledge explicitly and discourage guessing at words.

## Reading the Book

1. Set a purpose by telling children to read the book to find out how to prepare Dad's favorite meal.



**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? Or do they sound out letter by letter for 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 think about chunking the word?” or “Did you try slowing down and sounding out letter by letter?”

**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.

- 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.

### After the First Reading

**1. Have children confirm their predictions and talk about how the characters prepared Dad's birthday meal.**

**2. Ask questions like:**

- Where and when does the story happen?
- Who are the characters in this story?
- What do the characters want to do?
- How does Mom get ready to make the enchiladas? How does she know what to do? Give evidence from the book.
- What part of the enchiladas does Mom make first? What does she do? What tools does she use? Give evidence from the book.
- What part of the enchiladas does Mom make next? What does she do? What tools does she use? Give evidence from the book.
- How does Mom get the enchiladas ready to bake?
- How does Dad react to his birthday meal? How do you think the Mom and the child feel? What makes you think that?
- What part(s) does the boy get to help in preparing the enchiladas?
- Why did Mom and the boy choose to make

enchiladas for the birthday dinner? Why not make something else?

- What would happen if mom didn't grind the peppers? How would it change the recipe and final results?
- What is the purpose of the griddle?
- If you have ever made enchiladas, is this how you make them? What other ways can we make enchiladas? What tips do you have for Mom and the boy?
- Do you think there are other ways to make enchiladas? Why do you think Mom chose to do it this way? If you were going to make enchiladas, what would you do?
- Why do you think the authors wanted to share this story with readers?
- Why is it important to make people feel special? How does making a dish someone loves make them feel special?
- What does this story teach about gift-giving?

### 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:** Have students summarize the story elements in the book, listing the characters, setting, problem/challenge, supporting events, and resolution.

Use evidence from the text to write a “How to Make Enchiladas” chart. Talk about adding features to help readers, such as labeled diagrams or helpful hints.

Read other books that feature characters who prepare special foods. Make connections between texts.

Make a list of cooking-related vocabulary, organized into different categories (e.g., cooking verbs, tools, ingredients, etc.) Set up a dramatic play kitchen area for kids to pretend to cook and use the vocabulary from your list.

Review the sounds of the r-controlled vowels ar, ur, or, er, ir by reading and sorting examples from the book (e.g., starts, party, surprise, mortar, before, corn, tortilla, peppers, serving, birthday). Practice reading or spelling and sorting other words with r-controlled vowels.

Talk about the suffix -tion, used to spell the sound “shun” like in traditional. Practice reading and spelling other words with -tion.

Work together to divide words from the book into syllables to read them. Talk about different syllable types.

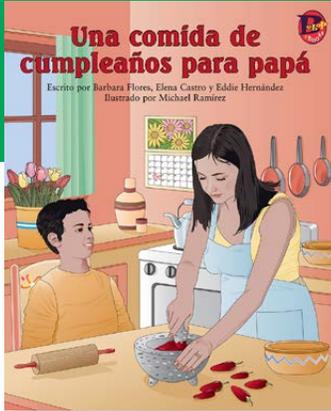
**Social Studies:** Look at photos or videos online that show someone making enchiladas and/or using the cooking tools described in the text.

Have students pick a different food from a culture that is of interest to them. Have them research the traditional way of preparing it and share their findings.

Note: not all students celebrate birthdays so consider who your families and students are. If possible, read additional books about how families celebrate birthdays, including: *Birthday in the Barrio* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/birthday-in-the-barrio-cumpleanos-en-el-barrio>), *The Birthday Swap* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-birthday-swap>), *Marisol McDonald and the Clash Bash* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/marisol-mcdonald-and-the-clash-bash-marisol-mcdonald-y-la-fiesta-sin-igual>), *The Hula-Hoopin’ Queen* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-hula-hoopin-queen>), *Seaside Dream* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/seaside-dream>), *Family Pictures* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/family-pictures-cuadros-de-familia>), *The Perfect Gift* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-perfect-gift>), and *My Magic Wand* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/my-magic-wand>).

**Art:** Have students create a collage that shows the ingredients needed for one of their favorite meals. Have them glue a photo (or drawing) of the meal in the center of a paper (or paper plate) and then add pictures of the important ingredients around it.

**Home connections:** Invite a caregiver to share enchiladas from home with the class and perhaps give a demo on parts of the preparation for enchiladas. Make sure students prepare questions to ask the guest volunteer beforehand and write a thank you note following the classroom visit.



## Guided Reading with **Una comida de cumpleaños para papa**

### Noun support

The following nouns are used when the family is preparing dad's birthday meal:

la comida, sorpresa, las enchiladas, la fiesta, papa, abuelita, mama, los chiles, el mole, el maíz, la masa de las tortillas, queso, la hora, las tortillas

The following cooking tools are used to prepare dad's birthday meal:

un molcajete, bolita de piedra, un metate plano, una piedra larga, una tabla de madera, un rodillo, un comal, una charola, el horno

*Guided Reading level: I*  
*DRA Level: 16*  
*Word count: 279*

Print each set of nouns on individual index cards 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 the noun on the photocopied illustrations

### Verb Support

The following verb/action words are used to describe the process of dad's birthday meal: preparando, asegura, empezar, hace, hacía, muele, viene, forma, estirar, extiende, cocina, mete, pone, dobla, hornear, calentaremos, servirlos, gritamos, dice

Encourage students to write or share a sentence with a partner that uses each of the words that describes how the birthday meal for dad was made.

For students engaging with both English and Spanish texts, have students note that there are exclamatory and question statements 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.

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.

**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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