Deborah Guarino’s best-selling children’s classic, “Is Your Mama a Llama?” is now celebrating almost 25 years in print! With more than a million copies sold, this playful book's popularity now spans two generations. It's available in five different editions, including Spanish, Arabic, and E-book versions, and has even been animated by Weston Woods on DVD.

Please join us...
In celebrating literacy by participating in a simultaneous reading activity on Wednesday, January 15, at 9 a.m. (EST).

You can support this effort to promote literacy in your homes, centers and schools by reading “Is Your Mama a Llama?” by Deborah Guarino at the same time as thousands of others across Florida.

The foundation for reading is built from infancy. A child’s early experiences with books and language lay the foundation for success in learning to read. When you read, talk or play with children, their brains are stimulated and build the connections that become the building blocks for reading. Brain development research shows that the development of language and literacy skills begins at birth and reading aloud to children every day increases their brains’ capacity for language and literacy skills.

Reading a book to young children is not only one of the best activities to stimulate language and cognitive skills, but it also builds motivation for reading along with curiosity and memory. The more words parents use when speaking to an infant, the greater the size of the child’s vocabulary.

ABOuT THE BOOK
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Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! 2014 is taking place the week of January 13-17, 2014. Join the Just Read, Florida! Office, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), Florida’s Office of Early Learning, school districts and Early Learning Coalitions in promoting the enjoyment of reading for children and adults.

For more information, visit http://www.justreadflorida.com/literacyweek.asp.
Llama Snacks

Llama is hungry after looking for his mama all day long. Make him a treat! Llamas like to eat apples, carrots, broccoli and orange peels. Provide washed and cut-up apples, carrots, broccoli and oranges (with peels, optional) for snack. Or let the children cut their own carrots, broccoli and oranges and graph who likes which food. Be sure to follow safe and sanitary food handling practices. Older children may be able to help wash and prepare food for snack.

Providing early literacy experiences

- Hold young children on your lap or close to you. Read an age-appropriate book to engage in some back-and-forth dialogue around the words and pictures.
- Engage in repeated sequences of interactions between you and the children. Point out something on the page and ask the child questions like “What’s that?” “What’s the llama doing?”
- Allow the child to respond and then provide feedback.
- Use open-ended questions instead of yes or no questions so children have a chance to express themselves.
- Ask questions that relate to the sequence of the story. Such as “Who did the llama visit first?”

Things You Can Do to Raise a Reader

1. Model good reading habits by reading to or alongside your child.
2. Encourage your child to read new and challenging books, articles and magazines.
3. The love of reading begins at home. Create a “home library” for your family to access.
4. Limit TV viewing by controlling the amount of time spent watching television.
5. Play word games with your child.
6. Visit your local public library and help your child get a library card of their very own.
7. Take books in the car to read, rather than watching a DVD.
8. Encourage your child to write a book about his or her day.
9. Help your child read the labels while at the grocery store.
Activities for “Is Your Mama a Llama?”

Moms and Babies
“Is Your Mama a Llama?” features animal moms and their babies. In the animal world babies look a lot like their moms. Have each child discuss how they look like their moms.

Animals, Not Animals
“Is Your Mama a Llama?” is jammed packed with animals. Cut pictures out of magazines or catalogues and have the children sort them into two categories: animals and not animals.

Animal Parade
Have the children pick their favorite animal and learn the noise the animal makes or the way it moves. Have them make masks to dress up like the animal. Then you can have a parade around your class of all the different animals there are.

Matching Game
Print two copies of the animal sheet on the next page. Have the children play a memory game and match the animals. You can also hide the cards in your classroom and give the children instructions on how to find them.

Discovering Animals
Animals can be grouped according to their traits. Make different categories: small or large, smooth or hairy, slow or fast, etc. See how you can categorize the animals in the book. You can make charts or graphs of your results.

You can also explore what they all have in common. This would be great way to introduce inclusion. One thing to remember is that they may be very different but they are all animals.

For more animal information visit the National Geographic website at http://tinyurl.com/2f8f76j.
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How can you make this llama fluffy?