



The Village School's Children's Book of the Month



'Borreguita and the Coyote'

(By Verna Aardema; illustrated by Petra Mathers)

Young children love repetition. That's why in our preschool classroom we choose one

story each week and we tell that story each day in a different way. On Monday the children sit on the rug and listen to the story being told to them by a teacher. On Tuesday the children assemble to hear the story again but this time with felt pieces on a flannel board to accompany the storytelling. On Wednesday the children are treated to a very simple puppet show put on by their teachers. On Thursday the children gather to have the same story read to them from an illustrated book and by Friday the children know the story so well that they act it out!

One of our weekly stories is Borreguita and the Coyote by Verna Aardema. In this tale from Mexico, Borreguita (Boh-rray-GEE-tah), which is Spanish for "little lamb," is eating clover in a field. Along comes a coyote who wants to eat the little lamb. But Borreguita is clever and says "Baa-a-a, baa-a-a-a! Oh, Senor Coyote, I would not fill you up. I am as thin as a bean pod. When I have eaten all this clover, I shall be fat. You may eat me then." Coyote notices that the lamb is thin and agrees to come back when she is fat. When Coyote returns after many days he says "Grr! Borreguita, you are as plump as a tumbleweed. I'm going to eat you now!" Once again Borreguita diverts Coyote's attention and tricks him out of his next meal. Young children love to see how Borreguita continues to trick Coyote throughout the book. There is something very satisfying when the smaller, weaker animal triumphs over the stronger animal, not by brute force but by quick thinking.

The illustrations by Petra Mathers are simple, bright and bold. The beautiful Mexican landscape of mountains and sandstone cliffs under the beating sun adds drama to the story.

Preschool children listen to this story breathlessly, barely moving. Children love to hear this story told and read aloud over and over again. And they love to act it out, taking turns being coyotes and being lambs.

The Village School Preschool is a child-centered classroom, with two teachers and a limit of 12 children. The curriculum aims for balanced development, with work on fine motor skills, large motor skills, art, music and lots of play to enhance social development and grow imagination. The preschool has openings for next September. Call the school at 978-249-3505 if you are interested for your child to possibly enroll next September, and the school will set up a visit for you and your child. Information can be found at www.villageschoolma.org.



Book reviewed by
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