



## Inquire to Learn!

There are many ways in which *Carlos and Diego/ Guinea Pigs Galore* can be used as a base for Inquiry Learning. This is just one suggestion.

## Session 1

Using the Big Book, share-read *Carlos and Diego*, stopping at natural points for discussion. Draw on the students' prior knowledge of guinea pigs, farmers, traps, foxes, and tricks and tricksters.

### Possible Starter Questions for Discussion

**Guinea Pigs:** *What do guinea pigs eat?* Discuss that guinea pigs eat grass and other plants.

**Farmers and Traps:** *How would a farmer feel about an animal eating his or her plants? What might the farmer do to stop the animal? (trap it)* Encourage the children to understand that some animals, such as rabbits and opossums, are pests to farmers in New Zealand and that guinea pigs, which live in the wild in Peru, are both pests and a source of meat to Peruvian farmers.

**Foxes:** *What do foxes eat?* Introduce the word *omnivore* and explain that omnivores eat both animals and plants. Foxes are omnivores. They eat small animals such as mice, rabbits, and guinea pigs and plants such as fruit and vegetables.

**Tricks/Tricksters:** *What makes a trick OK or not OK?* Talk about the difference between tricks that are fun and do no harm versus tricks that are dangerous, harmful, or hurtful to others. Discuss that folk tales often contain a trickster character, and *Carlos and Diego* is one of those folk tales.

### Text and Illustration Based Inquiry Questions

Cover: Look at the cover and read the title *Carlos and Diego*. Ask, *Who do you think is the trickster character in this story – the fox or the guinea pig? Why do you think that?*

Global: *Look at the artwork in Carlos and Diego. Do you know what style of art this is? (collage)* Discuss that collage artwork is made by sticking various different materials such as paper and fabric on to a background.

P. 2: Review the opening sentence “*In the mountains of Peru lived a guinea pig.*” Remind the students that guinea pigs are native to Peru and live in the wild.

PP. 2–3, 4–5: Ask, *Why did Carlos hide and wait until nighttime before eating the plants?* (Because he didn't want the farmer to see him.)

PP. 4–5: Revisit the text and note the verbs or “doing words”: *crept, ran, nibbled, munched, rolled, giggled, ate, sleep.*

P. 6: Note the illustration of the farmer and tell the children that the illustrator of *Carlos and Diego*, Natalia Vasquez, is from Peru and she chose to dress her farmer in the traditional style of a Peruvian farmer.

# Carlos and Diego/Guinea Pigs Galore

## Teacher's Notes continued

P. 7: Ask, *Where would the farmer have got the clay from to make the little man? Why did he use tree sap instead of glue to make the little man sticky?* Discuss that a farmer living in the mountains of Peru would not visit shops to buy clay or glue. Instead he would make use of the natural resources he had around him. *What other kind of "man" is sometimes put into a field to guard plants? (scarecrow) What is this kind of man guarding the plants from? (birds)*

P. 8: *In this story, Carlos, the guinea pig, talks. How do we know that Carlos is talking? (use of speech marks and signifier "said Carlos.")*

PP. 8–9: *At this point in the story, who has been tricked? (Carlos) Who has been the trickster? (the farmer)*

PP. 12–13: Revisit the text and illustrations. Ask, *Why is Diego, the fox, licking his lips?* Note that at this stage in the story, Carlos is sure to be eaten; either right now by the fox or tomorrow by the farmer.

PP. 14–15, 16: *How does Carlos fool Diego? (By making up a story, flattering Diego, and getting him to swap positions.) Who has been tricked now? (Diego and the farmer) Who has been the trickster? (Carlos)*

## Further Discussion and Inquiry Extension

Challenge the students to write their own story about a New Zealand trickster animal.

Have the children make their own little people from clay or salt dough. Fire or bake the children's creations and use them to "guard" plants either in the classroom or at home.

Invite the children to make their own collage artworks about *Carlos and Diego*. Encourage them to collect and use some natural resources in their artwork. Scan and email the collages to [info@cleanslatepress.com](mailto:info@cleanslatepress.com) with the artist's first name, age, and school. The best collages will be posted on the Clean Slate Press facebook page.

Research to find out more about traditional clothing from Peru.

# Carlos and Diego/Guinea Pigs Galore

## Teacher's Notes continued

### Session 2

Using the Big Book, share-read *Guinea Pigs Galore*, stopping at natural points for discussion. Draw on the students' prior knowledge of Peru and Peruvian culture, guinea pigs and other pets, rainforests, and animal trickster stories.

#### Possible Starter Questions for Discussion and Inquiry

**Peruvian (Spanish) Greeting:** *People in Peru speak Spanish. Does anyone know how to greet someone in Spanish? It is hola.*

**Location of Peru/Geography:** Look at the map on P. 1 of *Guinea Pigs Galore* and note the location of Peru in South America. Compare this map to a world map and find Peru and New Zealand on it. Discuss Peru's location in relation to New Zealand. If any of the children come from Peru or have visited it, invite them to share their experiences.

**Peru, Rainforests, and Peruvian Culture:** Revisit the opening sentence on P. 2 of *Guinea Pigs Galore* – “Peru has mountains, grassy plains, beaches, and rainforests.” Discuss that Peru has a diverse landscape and explain that rainforests occur in tropical regions that also have a large amount of rain. Explain that Peru also has many different lifestyles. Brainstorm what life in Peru might be like in the rainforest or high in the mountains as compared to in the cities.

**Guinea Pigs and Other Pets:** Review PP. 6–7 of *Guinea Pigs Galore* and talk about what is needed to look after guinea pigs and other pets. It may be possible to organize for a guinea pig to visit the class.

**Animal Trickster Stories:** Review P. 8 of *Guinea Pigs Galore* and explain that trickster characters can be animals, but they can also be people or gods e.g., Maui in Māori and Polynesian folk tales is a trickster character as is Nanabozho in North American First Nations folk tales e.g., the StoryWorld book *Nanabozho and the Maple Trees/Maple Madness*.

#### Further Discussion and Inquiry Extension

Using “Passport to Peru!” on PP. 2–3 of *Guinea Pigs Galore* as a model, challenge the students to write a report or a photo essay on New Zealand. Ask them to include information on New Zealand's landscape, plants, animals, people, and cultural features.

Challenge the students to invent a festival for a New Zealand native animal. Which animal would they choose? How would the animal be celebrated? What else would the festival involve? Invite the students to design a poster about their festival.

Working in groups, research to find out more on Machu Pichu and the Incan people. Challenge the students to present their findings as an oral report.

Share-read other folk tales about trickster animals, such as Coyote from North America, Br'er Rabbit from Africa and U.S.A., or Anansi the spider from East Africa, and compare them to *Carlos and Diego*.

Refer to the model on PP. 6–7 of *Guinea Pigs Galore* and ask the children to write pet journals about looking after their pets.