



Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos

by Monica Brown and illustrated by John Parra

This inspiring picture book biography talks about the accomplishments of world-renowned Mexican artist, Frida Kahlo, by examining her relationships with her animalitos—her little animals—throughout her life. Through vibrant illustrations and text, readers will learn about Frida’s many admirable qualities, her use of self-reflection, and her determination to succeed and create art despite setbacks.

BEFORE THE READ-ALoud

Have students consider the following question **as a class**:

How are you inspired by the world around you?

Invite students to share their answers.

Then have students **turn and talk** with a partner: *Think of a quality you have that you love. What quality is that? How can you share this special quality with others?*

Show the title and cover of the read-aloud book *Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos*.

The subject of the book we are about to read, Frida Kahlo, was a very famous artist. In this book, we will learn about Frida and the pets she had throughout her life, and how the qualities of these pets inspired her. Frida was determined to be an artist and see the beauty in life even when faced with difficulties.

Academic Vocabulary

heritage (p. 5) inherited traditions and culture

independent (p. 10) not needing support

spirited (p. 18) full of energy and enthusiasm

roam (p. 20) move about aimlessly

inspiration (p. 22) something that fills someone with an urge to create

DURING THE READ-ALoud

As you read aloud the whole book, you may wish to pause and discuss the following questions, either as a whole class or through turning and talking between partners. These questions will allow the class to explore the library’s themes as well as comprehension strategies.

pp. 2–5 *Frida and her pets are called “special,” and Frida is compared to the “colorful” Bonito. How do these descriptions, along with the illustrations, help you understand the kind of person Frida was? (Visualize)*

pp. 6–9 *When Frida was sick in bed, she drew a doorway in the mist on her window. Did Frida really walk through the door? What do you think she did? What does this tell you about Frida’s imagination? (Make Inferences)*

pp. 10–15 *When Frida must stay in bed again after her accident, her mother installs a special easel for her to use. What does this easel remind you of from Frida’s childhood? What has Frida learned about herself and her interests? (Connect Events)*

pp. 16–21 *What do you find special about La Casa Azul? What details in the book make Frida’s home come alive? (Setting)*

pp. 22–25 *Frida’s life had many ups and downs. What remained a constant in Frida’s life? What made her happiest, and how did she express that? (Problem and Solution)*

pp. 26–31 *Today, La Casa Azul is open to visitors, and some animalitos still roam the property. The magic Frida made there can always be found in her paintings. What is it about your home and the people, animals, or sights around you that inspire you? (Make Connections)*



Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos

AFTER THE READ-ALOUD

Class Discussion / Talk About It

After completing the read-aloud, allow time for class discussion. Sit in a circle or in another configuration that is comfortable and allows for class interaction.

Acting as a facilitator, invite children to have *accountable discussions*: remind them to use evidence from the text, their own inferences, personal connections, and other text connections in order to learn from one another.

- *Frida's family members, especially her parents, encouraged her creativity and taught her to look at the world in new ways. Who in your life encourages you? (Building Relationships)*
- *Frida said, "Feet, what do I need you for when I have wings to fly?" When Frida had to stay in bed after her accident, she made the decision to continue to create and paint. Think about a time you had to make the best of a situation, like a rainy day, even when it was not ideal. How did it feel to still make something positive? (Making Decisions)*
- *Like her cat, Frida was independent. She enjoyed being active and was motivated to play in the park, even if others made fun of her. What is a quality of Frida's that you admire? How are you like Frida? (Managing Myself)*
- *At La Casa Azul, Diego Rivera made Frida's animalitos a pyramid to climb and play on. Diego saw how important Frida's pets were to her and made them something special. What is something you can do to show someone you care about them? (Respecting Others)*
- *Frida Kahlo knew that painting made her happy. She painted while she was happy, but she also painted while she was sad or hurting. What is a hobby of yours that will always make you feel better and make your life better? (Understanding Myself)*

Activity Bank

Writing Activity

(with Graphic Organizer) Think of the qualities that Frida embodied. What qualities do you have that you find most unique? Why are these good qualities to have? What have you learned about yourself? Write a short essay about these qualities. You may also draw some illustrations that show these qualities. **(Understanding Myself)**

A Self-Portrait Collage

(The Arts) Have students work in small groups to plan and create collages of self-portraits. Remind students that Frida Kahlo often used herself as a subject, and painted herself in a variety of ways. Have students use art materials to create their self-portraits, and combine their portraits with the portraits of their group members to create a self-portrait collage. What stands out about each individual portrait? What makes the portraits special when they're combined? Invite students to move around the room and view the collages of each small group, and share the features they find most interesting. Celebrate the features that make each self-portrait unique. **(Respecting Others)**

Name: _____

Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos

Some unique qualities I have are...
