

Book Notes

Escape from Death Valley: The Tale of Two Lucky Burros / Salvados del Valle de la Muerte

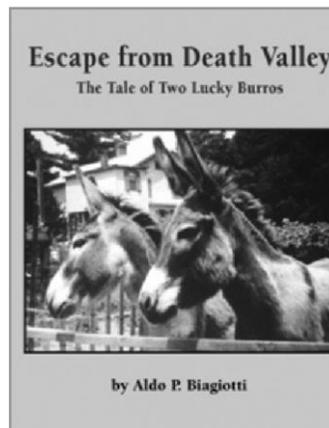
Author and Photographer Aldo P. Biagiotti

16 pages ■ 419 Eng. words ■ 424 Spn. words

Fountas and Pinnell Level M

Intervention Level 23

Descubriendo la Lectura Level 22



Escape from Death Valley

SYNOPSIS

Two wild burros are rescued from Death Valley, California and adopted by a farmer in Connecticut.

WHAT THE BOOK OFFERS

- Nonfiction informational narrative with photographs
- Third person
- Past tense
- Engenders thoughtful reading beyond the text
- Photographs expand the text
- Additional information on burros and historical background in nonfiction note on page 16
- Geography—map, climate, weather, environment, desert
- Animal care

POSSIBLE SKILLS

EMPHASIS

- Setting a purpose for reading
- Comparing and contrasting conditions and circumstances
- Identifying key information; taking notes
- Using appropriately descriptive adjectives
- Understanding responsibility—caring for pets, caring for wild animals, government's role

INTRODUCING THE

BOOK

- Cover and title page: Establish what the readers know about burros. Determine the probable focus of this book from the title and subtitle.

What links do you see between the photograph and the subtitle "The Tale of Two Lucky Burros?" What are you anticipating you will discover in this book? What do you suppose the author will be sharing that will be important information for us to hold on to?

What kind of text do you think this book is? What kind of reading will we need to do? What might you do to help yourself while you read?

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FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION

Pages 2 to 4: *What do you predict we are going to learn from this text? What do you know about adoption and how it might relate to these two burros? Consider the text on page 4: "They were skinny, scrawny, and scared. Their coats were shaggy." How might this information help set a purpose for our reading?*

Pages 6 to 10: *While reading pages 6 to 10, jot down new information that demonstrates how life for Reginold and Dudley changed. Note any information that you feel is important. What information do you think you might need later?*

On pages 14 and 15, the author compares the burros' old life with their adopted life. Think about the main points you noted. Can we use them to compare the lifestyles of burros in the wild with burros on a farm?

FOLLOWING THE READING

- Using the nonfiction note, discuss the United States government's Adopt-a-Horse-or-Burro and Wild Horse and Burro programs. Students could compare this program to other recovery programs. They could prepare questions that they could mail to the program of their choice.
- Discuss the different environment and weather conditions across the U.S.
- Locate California and Connecticut on a map of the U.S. and discuss the distance the burros traveled.
- Use the book's structure for comparison or cause-and-effect writing.

Comparison: Writers explain how two things are alike or how they are different. Different, in contrast, alike, same as, and on the other hand are words and phrases that signal this structure.

Cause and Effect: Writers explain one or more causes and the resulting effects. Reasons why, if ... then, as a result, therefore, and because are words and phrases that signal this structure.¹

¹Tompkins, Gail E. *Teaching Writing: Balancing Process and Product*, third edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000, pages 250-253.

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Additional Comprehension Prompts For Oral or Written Use Before, During, and After Reading	
FINISH THIS THOUGHT	<i>Adopt-a-Burro is a government program that helps . . . If Reginold and Dudley had NOT been adopted, they . . .</i>
USE YOUR MEMORY	<i>In which state do 6000 wild burros still wander the deserts? How did the burros arrive in Connecticut and how did they look? How do you know?</i>
WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?	<i>What was your favorite scene in this book? Why was it your favorite? Why do you think the author called the burros "lucky" in the subtitle on the front cover of this book? What did he mean? Do you think all books should have a subtitle? Why or why not?</i>
BE CREATIVE	<i>Write an adventure story about Reginold and Dudley in Connecticut. What will the problem be? What will the solution to that problem be? Will kids find the adventure funny or silly? Will your adventure have any danger in it? Will Reginold and Dudley talk in your adventure story?</i>
VOCABULARY AGENT	<i>There are lots of words that start with 's' in this book. Below are the words and the pages they are found on. Look up each one in the dictionary or on Wikipedia and write the definition for each: *shots: page 3 *skinny: page 4 *scrawny: page 4 *scared: page 4 *sweet: page 6 *sunshine: page 8 *soft: page 9 *sing: page 12 *surprise: page 13 *southwestern: page 15</i>