

Study Guide



**Yo la Llamo Rusita Rojas
(I Call Her Rusita Rojas)**

by Cristina Ferrari

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Synopsis of the Story

“I Call Her Rusita Rojas” is an adaptation of Charles Perrault’s classic fairytale “Little Red Riding Hood”. In this version, a police inspector tries to solve the wolf’s strange disappearance. The only witness is Rusita, a very talkative, smart, but frustrating girl. She tells the events from her viewpoint, even as the wolf himself appears and disappears to retell parts of the story from his way of thinking. These contradictions leave the inspector struggling to reach a conclusion. During the course of the play, the three characters return to the story’s origin: the pages of a storybook on which a child has fallen fast asleep.

Lively, fun and instructive, the play makes us reflect on the importance of enjoying childhood and a healthy fantasy life.

Spanish Vocabulary with English Translations by Grade Level

Pre-K Through 1st Grade:

abuela (*ah-Boo-eh-la*) grandmother
alguien (*AHL-gee-n*) someone
años (*AH-nios*) years
árbol (*ARE-bowl*) tree
callar (*kah-YAR*) to keep quiet
capa (*CAH-pah*) cape
cara (*CAR-ah*) face
casa (*CAH-sah*) house
cerrar (*seh-RAHR*) to close
claro (*CLAH-row*) clear
colores (*co-LORE-s*) colors
comer (*co-MARE*) to eat
continua (*cohn-TEA-new-ah*) continue
delicioso (*day-lee-see-OH-sow*) delicious
día (*DEE-ah*) day
dormido (*door-ME-dough*) asleep
edad (*eh-DAHD*) age
feo (*FAY-oh*) ugly
flores (*FLOOR-ehs*) flowers
fresa (*FREH-sah*) strawberry
gordo (*GORE-dough*) fat

grande (*GRAHN-deh*) big
grito (*GREE-toe*) yell/cry
(la) historia (*lah ee-STORE-ee-ah*) (the) story
lobo (*LOW-bow*) wolf
mejor (*may-HORE*) better
mundo (*MOON-dough*) world
nada (*NAH-dah*) nothing
niña (*KNEE-niah*) girl
niños (*KNEE-niohs*) children
nadie (*NAH-deeay*) no one
ojos (*OH-hoes*) eyes
orejas (*or-RAY-hahs*) ears
palabra (*pah-LA-brah*) word
pájaros (*PAH-ha-rose*) birds
pequeño (*pay-KAY-nio*) little
perdida (*pair-DEE-dah*) lost
piedras (*pea-AI-drahs*) rocks
pobre (*POH-bray*) poor
pueblo (*POOAI-blow*) town
reír (*ray-EAR*) to laugh
rojo (*ROW-ho*) red

2nd Through 4th Grade:

acercar (*ah-sair-CAHR*) to come closer
amistoso (*ah-me-STOW-sew*) friendly
animalito (*ah-knee-mahl-LEE-toe*) little animal
arco iris (*ARE-co EE-rees*) rainbow
ayudar (*ai-you-DAR*) to help
bosque (*BOWS-kay*) woods
camino (*cah-ME-no*) road/path
cesta (*SAYS-tah*) basket
contestar (*cohn-tais-TAR*) to answer
coser (*co-SAIR*) to sew
cosquillas (*kos-KEY-yahs*) tickling
crecer (*cray-SAIR*) to grow up
cuerpo (*coo-AIR-poh*) body
¡detente! (*day-TEN-tay*) stop!
enojar (*ain-oh-HAR*) to get angry
entonces (*ain-TONE-says*) then
escuchar (*ais-coo-CHAR*) to listen
extraño (*aiks-TRAHN-nio*) strange
fantasía (*fahn-tah-SEE-ah*) fantasy
¡siéntate! (*seeAIN-tah-tay*) sit!

feroz (*fair-ROTHz*) fierce
galletitas (*gah-yay-TEA-tahs*) little cookies
haragán (*are-ah-GAHN*) lazy person
infinidad (*een-fee-knee-DAHD*) infinity
interrumpir (*een-tair-room-PEER*) interrupt
leñador (*lay-nya-DOOR*) woodcutter
loco (*LOH-coh*) crazy
mentir (*main-TIER*) to tell a lie
miel (*me-ALE*) honey
movimiento (*moe-vee-me-N-toe*) movement
nervioso (*nair-vee-OH-sew*) nervous
horno (*OR-no*) oven
panza (*PAHN-thza*) belly
seguir (*say-GEER*) to follow
sencillo (*sain-SEE-;yo*) simple
serio (*SAIR-ee-oh*) serious
silencio (*see-LAIN-see-oh*) silence
soñar (*sew-NYAR*) to dream
tesoro (*tay-SORE-row*) treasure

5th Through 8th Grade:

abalarzar (*ah-baa-lanth-ZAR*) to rush forward
actitud (*ahk-tea-TOOD*) attitude/posture
alimentar (*ah-lee-main-TAR*) to feed
almendra (*ahl-MAIN-drah*) almond
apiadar (*ah-pea-ah-DAR*) to move to pity
aprovechar (*ah-pro-vay-CHAR*) to take advantage
arriesgar (*are-ee-ace-GAR*) to risk
atentar contra (*ah-tain-TAHR COHN-tra*)
..... to commit an outrage against
colibrí (*coh-lee-BREE*) hummingbird
colmo (*COHL-moe*) the height/limit
cómplice (*COMB-plea-say*) accomplice
comportámonos (*comb-poor-TAY-moe-nos*)
..... lets carry ourselves
comprometer (*comb-pro-may-TAIR*)
..... to jeopardize
charlatan/a (*char-la-TAHN/ah*)
..... chatterbox/trickster
de repente (*day ray-PAIN-tay*) suddenly

estómago (*ais-TOE-mah-go*) stomach
fábulas (*FAH-boo-lahs*) fables
gravedad (*grah-VEH-dahd*) gravity
gruñón (*grew-KNEEOWN*) grumpy
insolente (*een-sole-AIN-tay*) insolent
investigando (*een-vase-tea-GAHN-doe*)
..... investigating
muñeco (*moo-NYAI-ko*) dummy/puppet
notorio (*no-TORE-ee-oh*) notorious
ofuscar (*oh-foos-CAR*) to confuse
panecillo (*pahn-ai-SEE-yo*) roll (bread)
paradero (*pah-rah-DARE-oh*) whereabouts
pista (*PEAS-tah*) track/trail
pretigio (*pray-TEA-he-oh*) prestige
prosigue (*pro-see-GEH*) proceed
pruebas (*proo-EH-bahs*) proofs
sospechoso (*soes-peh-CHOE-so*) suspicious
tamaño (*tah-MAHN-nio*) size
tenebroso (*teh-neh-BRO-so*) gloomy/dismal

Spanish Phrases with English Translations

No me acuerdo. (*No may ah-CWER-dough*) I don't remember
Un sexto sentido (*oon SAYKS-toe sain-TEA-dough*) a sixth sense
¡Al punto! (*al POON-toe*) Get to the point!
perder el tiempo (*pair-DARE l tee-M-po*) to lose time
cuentos de hadas (*coo-N-toes day AAH-das*) fairy tales

Vocabulario de Teatro Theater Vocabulary

- Autor** (*auw-TORE*) Playwright: The person who wrote the play.
- Actor/Actriz** (*ahk-TORE/ahk-TREESTH*) Actor/Actress: The men and women who play the parts onstage.
- Director** (*dee-reck-TORE*) Director: The person who picks the actors and tells them what to do.
- Escena/Escenario/ Escenografía** (*ai-SAIN-ah, ai-sain-ARE-ee-oh, ai-sain-oh-grah-FEE-ah*) Scene/Stage/Scenery: All words related to the stage. The scene is the location where each part of a play takes place; the stage is the place where the actors work, and the scenery is what they act in front of.
- Fotografía** (*foe-tow-grah-FEE-ah*) Photography. Photos have to be taken of all shows – for publicity, for program covers, and for reminders.
- Maquillaje** (*mah-key-YA-hay*) Makeup: All actors, both women *and* men, wear stage makeup to make them more visible from the audience.
- Musicalización** (*moo-see-cah-lee-tha-see-OWN*) Music Design: Selecting what music is used for the play.
- Producción** (*pro-duke-see-OWN*) Production: The people who organize everything about the play, including who will direct it, who will design and build the set, and where the costumes come from.
- Sonido** (*sow-NEE-doe*) Sound: Not just music is used during a play; many times there are other sounds involved, too.
- Vestuario** (*ves-too-ARE-ee-oh*) Costumes: What the actors wear to make them look different.
- Utilería** (*oo-teel-air-EE-ah*) Properties: everything that an actor uses onstage (such as the Old Woman's embroidery).

Biography of Neher Jacqueline Briceño Director



A Venezuelan, Neher Jacqueline Briceño began acting in 1973 when she joined the University Theater children's theater group at the University of Carabobo in Venezuela. Later she found that she liked other parts of theater better, and became a producer, director and writer.

She was worked in children's theater for 20 years, including more than 40 productions. She has won many awards for her artistic work. In 1997, now living in Miami, she started the Miami Children's Theatre, which was invited to perform at Teatro de la Luna's 2nd International Festival of Hispanic Theater. She has written and directed many of la Luna's plays for children, including 'The Adventures of Pinocchio,' 'The Sleeping Beauty,' 'Hansel and Gretel', 'ABE: a Dream Fulfilled', 'The Cat and the Seagull' and 'Drops of Water'.

Performance Related Classroom Activities by Grade Level

Pre-K Through First Grade:

Spanish/Colors: What color is the cape worn by Rusita Roja? Have students find other items in the classroom (or their clothes) that are the same color. Practice saying the word “rojo” together.

Science/Art/Spanish: Much of the story takes place in the woods (*el bosque*). Ask each student to draw and color a tree (*un árbol*), then cut out the trees and create a forest of all of them on a bulletin board or large paper. As the students are working, you can talk about other things that live in the woods (ex. “Do penguins live in the woods? How about squirrels?”).

Spanish/English Vocabulary: Many of the vocabulary words are parts of our faces. How many can the students identify in English and in Spanish?

Safety/Critical Thinking: Was it wise for Rusita Roja to talk with the Wolf? Ask students why talking to strangers is a bad idea or a good idea.

Second through Fourth Grades:

Spanish/Critical Thinking/Imagination: The Inspector thinks Rusita Roja is telling lies (*mentiras*). Ask students why it might seem like she is lying. Using the Spanish word, ask students how they might talk about their trip to school so it might seem like a lie.

English/Spanish: Why is Rusita Roja given that name? Ask students if they have ever called something by an incorrect name when they were younger (ex. “pisgetti” instead of “spaghetti”).

Science/Spanish/Critical Thinking/Art: The Wolf (*Lobo*) is the villain of the play. Are wolves really evil? Where do wolves live? What are their families like? Do students know any stories where wolves are good (ex. “The Jungle Book” by Kipling, and Disney’s film adaptation). Ask students to draw and color a wolf; not the actor playing him, but what they think the Wolf really looked like.

Spanish/Literature: Food is very important in this story, from Rusita Roja’s description of the delicious things in her basket (*miel de la más rica y pura, pasteles de fresa, panecillos de almíbar, dulces de almendra*) to the Wolf eating both the Granny and Rusita Roja. What other stories do the students know where food is important (ex. “Snow White” and the poisoned apple)?

Fifth through Eighth Grades:

Spanish/Writing: There are many legalistic terms in the play (*cómplice, investigando, proseguir, pruebas*). Ask students to use these words, either in English or Spanish, in a short story they write either alone or with partners.

Spanish/Vocabulary/Critical Thinking: Using some of the adjectives in the vocabulary (*sospechoso, tenebroso*), have students create characters with those characteristics. They can either write about the characters or act them out.

Literature/Critical Thinking: This play is loosely based on Charles Perrault’s “Little Red Riding Hood”. How is Perrault’s version different from that of The Brothers Grimm, or other versions of “Red Riding Hood”?

Spanish/English/Critical Thinking: One of the vocabulary phrases is “a sixth sense” (*un sexto sentido*). What does this mean? When might a sixth sense be useful?