



Maria Had a Little Llama / María Tenía Una Llamita

Angela Dominguez (Illustrations)

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Everyone knows about Mary and her little lamb. But do you know Maria?

With gorgeous, Peruvian-inspired illustrations and English and Spanish retellings, Angela Dominguez gives a fresh new twist to the classic rhyme. Maria and her mischievous little llama will steal your heart.

Maria Had a Little Llama / María Tenía Una Llamita Details

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ISBN : 9780805093339

Author : Angela Dominguez (Illustrations)

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Cultural, European Literature, Spanish Literature, Animals



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From Reader Review **Maria Had a Little Llama / María Tenía Una Llamita** for online ebook

Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says

Cute bilingual (English/Spanish) version of the nursery rhyme "Mary had a little lamb," set in Peru with a little llama instead of a lamb. The illustrations are colorful and cheery, though I didn't like how the llamas' faces were drawn. Nevertheless, recommended for a bouncy, happy readaloud.

Betsy says

Ladies and gentlemen, I stand before you a humbled woman. A woman who "knew" certain facts but, until she saw them working in her own personal life, was made up of knowledge that was almost entirely speculative. Case in point, as a children's librarian I "knew" (there are those quotation marks again) that nursery rhymes were important to children. But until I had spawned my own sprog I never really saw their power at play. All it took was one little sing/reading of Tomie de Paola's board book version of *Mary Had a Little Lamb* and we were off! Suddenly my kiddo had to have every possible version of that same song. So we grabbed titles like the Kate Willis-Crowley *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, the Laura Huliska-Beith *Mary Had a Little Lamb*, and even the somewhat misleading *Mary and Her Little Lamb* by Will Moses. Read enough of the same thing to your kid over and over again and they'll open to reinterpretations. So when *Maria Had a Little Llama* walked into my life I was on board. It's beautiful, bilingual, and a one of a kind little specimen that I'm pleased to report now has a home on my shelves. If you're burning out on the same-old, same-old, consider cranking it up a notch by ditching the familiar for a little Maria/llama action. You'll be glad you did.

How does that old tune go? Ah yes. "Mary had a little lamb / its fleece was white as snow / And everywhere that Mary went / the lamb was sure to go." Of course, should one choose to set the book in Peru, the lyrics could take on a slightly different tone. Instead of Mary we now have Maria. Instead of a little lamb, it's a little llama. And though the bones of the song are the same (the school, the children, the laughing) author/illustrator Angela Dominguez imbues her book with a distinctive one-of-a-kind flavor and feel.

It's a surprise to few that children's books containing Latino characters are rare beasts. In spite of a significant population nationwide, try coming up with a single early chapter book series starring a Hispanic kid. Go on. Name me one. Picture books fare a little better, but usually there's a didacticism lurking in the wings. A book that contains Spanish words is so often trying to teach those words that the storytelling gets lost in the process. Naturally there are exceptions to this (if your local library doesn't own a single Gary Soto written Chato title then I advise you to petition them immediately if not sooner) and Angela Dominguez has penned one such book.

Recently I was in Spain and I encouraged my kiddo to count to ten in Spanish for a waiter at a restaurant. When she finished he asked how it was possible that she knew Spanish. I told him that they teach Spanish in daycares these days and he looked puzzled, "Why?" I could have launched into a long explanation about the benefits to the human brain of knowing more than one language, but why get into that? Still, the fact of the matter is that more and more kids are learning Spanish every day and as a result the demand for books that cater to their growing knowledge are in the increase. Add the fact that *Maria Had a Little Llama* sports a familiar tune we all know only sweetens the deal, really.

Some bilingual books for kids feel like afterthoughts. Sometimes this makes sense since the books were originally published in one language and then became bilingual in subsequent printings. But some books just don't adequately prepare for dual languages even when they come out as bilingual the first time. I don't want to get to deep into the world of typography, page layouts, and design, but suffice to say when you know you'll have to make additional space in a book for a translation, inform the book's artist. In this particular case, Dominguez is both author and illustrator, so she was prepared from the get-go. Part of what I like so much about *Maria* is the fact that the Spanish lines are apparent and easy to read while also occupying their own space. The English words tend to be in bold with the Spanish slightly less dark below. Then as you read the book the words leap around the page. My favorite comes when we get to the lines "That was against the rules / Eso iba contra las reglas". Dominguez cleverly places these words on a little framed blackboard hanging on the wall, as if the allusion to the rules were the rules themselves. But what makes it nice is that the attention paid to one language equals the attention paid to another. It's the moment that clarifies best that this book was meant to be bilingual from the moment it was conceived. Awesome.

Then there's the art. Picture books set in Peru are not as common as all that on my library shelves. The notable exception I suppose would have to be *Love and Roast Chicken* by Barbara Knutson, which is a delightful folktale that involves the deliciousness of guinea pigs as part of the plot. *Old MacDonald* by Jonas Sickler, a lovely little indestructible book, shares the most in common with *Maria* since it sets its own nursery rhyme in a similar setting (and yes, there are llamas galore). Part of what I liked so much about Dominguez's book was how seamlessly she integrates the background into the story. There are loads of clever details about the region worked in (at one point Maria walks past a map that shows everything from the Andes to Inca Trails to Machu Picchu) but they don't feel forced. You are thoroughly immersed in Maria's world, until an extraordinary wordless two-page spread when it is clear that the author/illustrator wants you to pay attention to something other than the words. The shot is taken from above, looking down over the roofs and houses to a market square where Maria and her llama approach their school. The watercolors do an excellent job of bringing out the reds and purples found in some of the clothing. I also loved that when we reach the last page of the book, not only is the clothing accurate to the region but the instruments some of the folks are playing are completely out of my wheelhouse. I found myself wishing that for all that I loved the book's sparse, spare feel, it would be great if there was a tiny Afterword explaining what these instruments were. Particularly that harp-like thing on the big guy's shoulder that's tied around him by purple bands of ribbon.

Yeah, it sort of works on every level. You can sing it (and therefore use it in a storytime VERY easily), it's remarkably beautiful, the design works, the multiple languages are awesome, and it stars a kid from South America, which is a rare bright jewel in the publishing marketplace these days. All told, it's a classy and successful effort. Beautiful from tip to toe, and necessary, this is one of those purchasing no brainers. You're just gonna love it anyway. Might as well go out and buy this sucker. Satisfaction guaranteed.

For ages 2-7

Edward Sullivan says

A charming bilingual retelling of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" with a Peruvian setting.

Julie Hetu says

Title: Maria Had a Little Llama

Author: Angela Dominguez

Genre: Nursery Rhyme, fiction

Theme(s): Spanish, llamas, rhyme

Opening line/sentence:

“Maria had a little lama

Maria tenia una llamita

Whose fleece was white as snow.

Cuya lana era tan blanca como la nieve.”

Brief Book Summary:

This spin off of Mary Had a Little Lamb introduces Maria, a girl who has a little llama. In this story, Maria takes her llama to school with her where all the other children laugh and love the llama. This book allows English language learners to be able to follow along with the story due to the Spanish translation along with the English story.

Professional Recommendation/Review #1:

Carolyn Phelan (Booklist)

Dominguez, a Mexican American illustrator, adapts the familiar rhyme Mary Had a Little Lamb to a new, Peruvian setting and offers each verse in both English and Spanish. When Maria's white llama follows her to school, the students are amused, but the teacher sends him outdoors. He waits patiently while the teacher explains that the llama loves Maria because Maria loves the llama. Kudos to Dominguez for using the entire poem rather than just the familiar opening verses. On the other hand, there is no mention of the original authorship. Using distinctive features of Andean dress, culture, and landscape (at one point the characters stand of a map of Peru), the gouache-and-ink illustrations feature bold lines and simple forms. Dominguez uses color effectively, with the white llama and Maria's bright red cap making them easy to spot. With its cheerful combination of fresh and familiar elements, this distinctive version of the rhyme makes a fine addition to library collections, particularly where there is a demand for bilingual picture books

Professional Recommendation/Review #2:

Kirkus (Kirkus Reviews, June 1, 2013 (Vol. 81, No. 11))

Mary had a little lamb, and now María has a little llama in this bilingual presentation of a classic children's rhyme, set in rural Peru. Dominguez presents a straightforward version of the familiar rhyme, adding just enough new elements to transform it into a story. The text flows rhythmically in both the English and the Spanish, which are placed together on the page with the English in bold and positioned above the Spanish. The amount of text per page is brief and appropriate for a bilingual read-aloud. The landscape and imagery transport the readers to Peru, a part of the world not often seen in picture books. The warmly affectionate gouache-and-ink artwork uses bold outlines and an earthy palette. Shifting perspectives and amusing details encourage investigation before turning the page. For example, readers can explore the map of Peruvian landmarks that María visits, count the hours on the floating clocks as the llama waits for school to end, or make up their own stories about what is happening on the wordless spread of the town square as María makes her way to school. Though readers may desire a less abrupt ending, the setting choice and spirited illustrations make up for this lack of creativity in the text. A fresh and enjoyable reimagining of a traditional children's rhyme.

Response to Two Professional Reviews:

Both reviews take a liking to the idea that the illustrations really add to the book itself. The colors and culture of the illustrations are admired in these reviews ties in the familiarity of the rhyme with a whole new culture. This book shows a good representation of a picture book where there are young English language learners.

Evaluation of Literary Elements:

This book has been designed for English language learners to be able to follow along with a nursery rhyme in English. This book allows early readers to connect with the illustrations and potentially learn about a certain culture through these illustrations. Although this nursery rhyme has a minimal plot, the rhyming pattern allows children to flow through the book and illustrations.

Consideration of Instructional Application:

Using this nursery rhyme, English language learner children could create their own nursery rhymes in their native language and then provide an English translation. On top of this, children could also create their own illustrations that will allow them to show the culture just like Maria Had a Little Llama. Children may also choose to reenact the story or create a dramatic performance of their nursery rhyme.

Anna-Marie Hodes says

Angela Dominguez's Maria Had a Little Llama represents an endearing, multicultural take on the classic poem Mary Had a Little Lamb. The story replicates the original Mary Had a Little Lamb but inserts various aspects of Peruvian culture – the attire, the street life, and the structure of the escuela can be seen through the beautiful illustrations and colors throughout each page. The story's pages take you through Maria's journey to and from her one-classroom school as she passes street markets with various fresh foods and people wearing colorful shawls, ponchos, and hats. Underneath each passage is the Spanish translation of each verse in the poem. The fun and exciting illustrations combined with the unique translation of each verse adds originality of Dominguez's poem/storybook. The addition of Dominguez's poem in the form of her exciting and colorful storybook should be seen in every classroom because of the cultural versatility it would supply for a classroom. Elementary students of all ages could enjoy this book while also tending to the students of different cultures who would feel included in the classroom literature. I know that Maria Had a Little Llama / María Tenía Una Llamita will have its place on my bookshelf in my own future classroom so that students of all backgrounds and cultures can feel important and included. I highly recommend all teachers do the same!

Jenna Bailin says

Reading Log

Title: Maria Had a Little Llama/María Tenía Una Llamita

Author: Angela Dominguez

Genre: Nursery Rhyme

Theme(s): Nursery Rhyme, Bilingual, Animals, Multicultural

Opening line/sentence (type directly from text):

"Maria had a little llama. María tenía una llamita."

Brief Book Summary (2-3 sentences in your own words):

This book is a twist on the classic "Mary had a Little Lamb". Instead of a the stereotypical white, blond haired, blue eyed Mary, who lives in the Midwest, we are given a POC protagonist, María, who is from Peru. The book is both in English and Spanish, and follows the classic narrative of "Mary had a Little Lamb" but incorporates elements specific to Peru and Peruvian culture.

Professional Recommendation/Review #1 (cut & paste, details below):

Kirkus Reviews: <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-re...>

“Mary had a little lamb, and now María has a little llama in this bilingual presentation of a classic children’s rhyme, set in rural Peru. Dominguez presents a straightforward version of the familiar rhyme, adding just enough new elements to transform it into a story. The text flows rhythmically in both the English and the Spanish, which are placed together on the page with the English in bold and positioned above the Spanish.”

Professional Recommendation/Review #2 (cut & paste, details below):

Hornbook: <http://www.hornbookguide.com/cgi-bin/...>

“Dominguez, Angela Maria Had a Little Llama / María tenía una llamita

32 pp. Holt 2013. ISBN 978-0-8050-9333-9

(2) PS This bilingual picture book, a riff on "Mary Had a Little Lamb," is set in the Peruvian Alps. The text mirrors the traditional tale, and both languages (English and Spanish) appear on the same page or spread. Bold ink and gouache illustrations include plentiful cultural clues (e.g., the market, village, musical instruments), and Maria and her llamas' personalities shine through.”

Response to Two Professional Reviews (3-4 sentences in your own words)

One thing I didn’t even notice in the book until I read the Kirkus Review was that the English print was bolded and above the Spanish print. I think I am privileged as an English speaker to not even see that the author clearly placed an emphasis on the English than the Spanish, and I feel a little less enthused about the book than I was before. Despite this, I would still use book in my classroom because I like how it has adapted a nursery rhyme from the US to a different culture. The rhyme remains similar but it has a Peruvian twist. I also dislike how Hornbook refers to the Andes mountains as the “Peruvian Alps” because I feel like that is a way of whitewashing the place, people and cultures that stem from the Andes.

Evaluation of Literary Elements (3-4 sentences in your own words):

The pictures are really colorful and vivid. Maria and her llama both stand out to the reader due to the author’s choice of colors. Maria wears a bright red hat on her head and her llama had “lana era tan blanca como la nieve” (fleece as white as snow). I spent my summer in the Andes mountains and the drawings of the large green mountains are realistic and evoke memories of my time there. In my classroom, which could possibly be an ESL classroom, I would use this book to show my Spanish speaking ELLs and other students that I value my students’ home language/other languages other than English. Additionally, students develop literacy skills more proficiently in their second language if they have proficient literacy skills in their first language, so this book would be one way I could incorporate non-English/bilingual texts in my classroom.

La Tonya Jordan says

This is a spin on the nursery rhyme "Mary had a little lamb. " This story goes as follows: Maria has a little llama whose fleece was white as snow. And everywhere that Maria went, the llama was sure to go. He followed her to school one day. That was against the rules. It made the children laugh and play to see a llama at school. A classic retold.

Quote

"Why does the llama love Maria so?" the eager children cried. "Maria loves the llama, you know," the teacher did reply.

Shannon says

Loved this, but was so put-off by the cover flap description, I bumped it down a star. "Everyone knows the story of Mary Had a Little Lamb." I dunno, it just left a bad taste in my mouth — my kids very well might not know the tale of whitey white white girl Mary, and this shouldn't be relegated to just another "ethnic version" of an Anglo tale.

Samantha Jenson says

This book caught my attention shortly after finding it! The front cover includes a picture of Maria, the main character, embracing her llama. The title is in text that makes it seem as if a child themselves wrote the bubble letters, which got me intrigued as well. This book piggy bags off of the popular poem "Mary Had a Little Lamb", and begins with very similar lines. Maria brings her pet with her throughout her day to day activities which was never a problem, until he followed her to school. While the llama did not complete his school day, the teacher and students came to an agreement that the girl and the llama were best friends. This was okay as long as he did not come into school anymore. One thing that makes this book differ from others is that under each English line, is the same line only in Spanish. This makes this book unique in that Spanish speaking and English speaking children can read this same book. There is only a small amount of text on each page, and would be a great book for children just learning how to read, as well as any age of person learning to read in either Spanish or English.

Erika L. says

I read this book for the Family Storytime at SH! It is in English and in Spanish. Before I started reading, I asked the kids if anyone knew the nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Afterward, I asked them if they could help me tell the story! I said the book was called "Maria had a Little..." and showed them the cover. One kid screamed "LLAMA!" And I said, yes! She responded with, "I KNEW IT WAS A LLAMA!" While reading, I did the same kind of thing: "Whose fleece was white as..." (while pointing the the llama) and the kids said "SNOW!" On the page where she is walking to school, I asked the kids if they could guess which building was the school. After a few guesses, I pointed to the building and said, "That word says ESCUELA, and that means school in Spanish. Can you say escuela?" I loved the illustrations, which the front cover describes as Peruvian-inspired. It was a short book, but it was the perfect length for a family or toddler storytime.

Samantha says

Maria Had a Little Llama is a great take on a familiar nursery rhyme. Kids who know Mary and her lamb will enjoy this story. The illustrations are gorgeous and reflect the Peru that I've seen in photos. There aren't very many books set in Peru and I'm happy to see one that is tasteful and beautiful. I love seeing the small

Peruvian elements like the chullo Maria wears and the pipes she plays, in addition to her llama. I can't wait to read this with my future kiddos one day and introduce them to their dad's home country. And bonus, it's written in Spanish as well!

Sylvia says

An adorable retelling of "Mary had a Little Lamb".

"Maria had a Little Llama" takes place in Peru, and the story is written in English and Spanish. I used it for my practice bilingual story time and found it to be a lot of fun!

Taylor Nelson says

Summary:

This book was about a little girl named Maria who had a llama. This llama was as white as snow and followed Maria wherever she went. One day the llama followed Maria to school. The only thing was that it was against the rules to have a llama at school. The teacher had to send the llama away, but it waited for Maria outside of school. Maria was happy to see her llama and professed her love for her llama.

Evaluation:

This book is super cute. I love how they interpreted what was said in English into Spanish. The book gives a cultural twist of Mary had a Little Lamb.

Teaching Idea:

When researching more about this book, I discovered it was set in Peru. This would be a good book to introduce some of the Peruvian culture. Some things the teacher could introduce to her students are the different kinds of music, clothing, foods, etc. found there. This would be a good activity for younger kids. At one school where I interned, they had a dat to celebrate Hispanic culture. The Hispanic families brought in different kinds of foods from their countries to introduce to the teachers. I think this would be a fun idea to do with the students. The teacher could take one lunch period and have parents from different cultures come in and talk about their culture. The teacher could also bring in some different foods while having the students listen to some of the music. The teacher could also read some Latinx books.

LauraW says

This is a sweet book that takes the familiar nursery rhyme, Mary Had a Little Lamb, and changes it to be about a little girl named Maria, who has a white llama. The illustrations look to be Peruvian (or perhaps Bolivian). The text is in two languages, English and Spanish.

Recommended for teachers who have their students re-write familiar folk tales and nursery rhymes for different cultures and time periods. Pair with a book that has the original, in case the children are not familiar with it.

McKenna says

Summary:

This spinoff of Mary Had a Little Lamb, shows Maria and her llama and their adventure to school. When her white as snow llama follows her into school and breaks the rules, he must wait outside for her. Thankfully, he's waiting patiently when she comes out and all her friends wonder why he stuck around. Oh how sweet friendship is!

Evaluation:

The rhyme and rhythm throughout this book make it very easy to read and comprehensible for even the youngest students. The rhyme throughout makes the book sound like a nursery rhyme, which will make students more eager to read it. The images are beautifully drawn and the use of Spanish underneath the English adds culture and the opportunity for students to learn some common Spanish terms.

Teaching Idea:

This book can be used as a culture lesson. The teacher can first read the book aloud, and then have the students mimic the Spanish quotes. Students will be exposed to another language and can then delve into the culture further. Students could then create their own nursery rhyme using their name and an animal of their choice.
