



# DRAGONS LOVE TACOS

Book by Ernie Nolan, music by Chris LaPorte

Based on the book by Adam Rubin  
Illustrated by Daniel Salmieri

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## Classroom Guide Grades 4 - 5

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## How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Dragons Love Tacos* is designed for Texas students in 4th and 5th Grade. It offers activities to help you integrate a performance of *Dragons Love Tacos* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, social studies, music, art, and theatre curricula.

All activities in this guide are linked to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) content standards.

For students outside Texas, this guide's ELA and math activities also are linked to Common Core standards. At the back of this guide, you will find a list of the guide activities and their related Texas and Common Core standards.

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## 1: Discussion Questions

### ***Before the Performance***

*Dragons Love Tacos* is a stage play. What is a stage play?

- How is a play similar to a TV show or movie?
- How is it different?

Who performs the parts (roles) in a play?

- What kinds of skills do you think performers need to have to perform in plays?
- Who else works on plays? (Remember: you may not see them on stage!)

The play is based on a book: written by Adam Rubin.

- Have you read *Dragons Love Tacos* as a class or by yourself?
  - Based on what you read, what do you think may happen in the play?

### ***During the Performance***

When you watch a play, you are a member of the audience. What kinds of things should you do as an audience member? Examples:

- Pay attention
- Laugh when something funny happens
- Clap if you enjoy something

What kinds of things should you *not* do as an audience member? Examples:

- Talk to your neighbor
- Use a cell phone during the performance
- Yell at the actors (unless they ask you to!)

### ***After the Performance***

What did you think of the play?

- If you read *Dragons Love Tacos* beforehand, how was the play similar to the book?
- How was it different?

Describe the performers in the play.

- What did they do to make their characters special (different from the other characters)?
- How did they use their bodies to play their characters (using voice, movement, etc)?
- Did you see anyone else who worked on the play besides the performers on stage?

Describe the characters' costumes.

- What did each character's costume tell you about that character?
- Did any of the performers change costumes?
  - If so, why do you think they needed to change costumes?

Describe the set of the play.

- Did it have a lot of locations?
- Did it look like a place you've been to before?
- How did different lighting change how the set looked for different scenes?

Did the play have music in it?

- If so, was it only in the background, or did it help tell the story?
- What instruments did you hear in the music?

If you were going to direct *Dragons Love Tacos*, how would your production be different than the play you saw by Magik?

## **2: Magik Must-Reads**

For each of our main stage productions at The Magik Theatre, we choose a theme related to the show. Then we create a list of Magik Must-Reads on that theme.

The reading theme for *Dragons Love Tacos* is Food.  
The Magik Must-Reads (Grade 4-5) are:

*The Food Pyramid* by Joan Kalbacken

*Stef Soto, Taco Queen* by Jennifer Torres

*Rutabaga the Adventure Chef* by Eric Colossal

*Bliss* by Kathryn Littlewood

Read them as a class or let students choose two or more to read. Then use these questions for discussion or book reports:

### Theme

- How did the theme of *Unlikely Friendships* show in each book? Explain.

### Setting

- Describe the settings of each book.
- What details can you remember?
- Were the settings similar to a place you know or a place you've visited?
- How were the settings similar to each other? How were they different?
- How were the settings related to the theme of *Unlikely Friendships*? Explain.

### Characters

- Who were the main characters of each book?
- Did any characters show up in more than one book?
- Were the characters of one book similar another book's characters in any other ways?

### Plot

- What did the main characters of the books want most?
- Did anyone or anything stand between the main characters and their goals?
- Did the main characters get what they wanted? How?
- How were the plots of the books similar? How were they different?

### **3: Write Your Own Story**

In *Dragons Love Tacos*, the boy mistakenly gives spicy salsa to his dragon friends, causing them to accidentally burn down his house. However, the dragons are good friends, and they come back to help the boy rebuild his house. Using the brainstorm questions below about characters, setting and plot, create a story about a character whose friends help them during a hard time. Once questions are completed on a separate sheet of paper, write a first draft of your story.

#### **CHARACTERS**

Main character:

Age:

Male or female?:

Physical description:

Personality:

Secondary character:

Age:

Male or female?:

Physical description:

Personality:

Other characters:

#### **SETTING**

Where:

When:

#### **PLOT**

How does your story begin?

How does your main character meet the guest?

What is the main conflict between your main character and secondary character?

What is the climax of your story?

How does your story resolve? (What happens after the climax?)

**3: Write Your Story**

**TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**4: Word Problems**

- The red dragon orders 110 tacos, but some of them are made with spicy salsa. If he gives away 42 spicy salsa tacos, how many normal tacos will he have left?
- The blue dragon orders 100 tacos for her birthday party. If  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the tacos are beef and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the tacos are chicken, how many chicken tacos are there?
- You are making tacos for 5 of your dragon friends. Together, the dragons will eat a total of 75 tacos. If every dragon has the same amount of tacos, how many will each one eat?
- There are three order sizes at the taco restaurant: Small, Medium, and Large. A Large order has 7 tacos, a Medium order has 5 tacos, and a Small order has 3 tacos. If the blue dragon buys 5 Large orders, 2 Medium orders, and 3 Small orders, how many tacos will she have?
- You are making tacos for your dragon friends' pool party. One cup of chicken can make three chicken tacos. If you want to make 27 chicken tacos, how many cups of chicken will you need?
- At the dragons' favorite taco restaurant, a beef taco costs \$4. It costs 50 cents to add cheese, \$1 to add tomatoes, and \$2 to add lettuce. If you order one beef taco and add cheese and lettuce, how much will your taco cost?
- There are a total of 250 tacos at the big taco party. Some are chicken, some are beef, and some are bean and cheese. If there are 89 chicken tacos and 78 beef tacos, how many bean and cheese tacos are there?
- The dragons are playing a game of charades. The First Place prize for charades is 15 tacos, and the Second Place prize is  $\frac{1}{3}$  of this amount. If the black and white dragon wins Second Place, how many tacos will she win?
- At their costume party, 100 dragons dressed up like their favorite taco ingredients.  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the dragons dressed up as taco shells,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the dragons dressed up as tomatoes, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  dressed up as cheese. How many dragons were dressed up as taco shells?
- To help rebuild your house, the dragons need 40 pieces of lumber. If two pieces of lumber are \$15, how much will it cost to buy all 40 pieces?
- The dragons invite 278 dragons to the taco party. If 46 dragons cannot make it to the party, how many guests will there be?
- There are 30 dragons at the pool party. If  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the dragons are black and white and  $\frac{1}{5}$  are blue, how many dragons are neither black and white or blue?

## 5: Dragon Foam

Using a recycled bottle, students can create their own dragon that foams at the mouth. Similar to the more common volcano experiment, this project allows students to express their creativity in designing and building their own dragons inspired by the characters in *Dragons Love Tacos*. Mixing the dish soap, vinegar, and baking soda inside of the “dragon” creates carbon dioxide, causing the vinegar to expand and react with the dish soap to create foam.

- Materials:
- Wide-mouthed plastic bottle\*
- Vinegar
- Dish Soap
- Food Coloring (color of your choice)
- Baking Soda
- Plastic trays or cookie sheets
- Scotch tape
- Scissors
- Liquid school glue
- Spoons or popsicle sticks (for mixing)
- Craft foam sheets or cardstock sheets (for decoration, color of your choice)
- Googly Eyes (also for decoration, size of your choice)



\*The plastic bottles are a good opportunity for students to practice recycling/upcycling by using leftover bottles. Empty juice bottles and cartons, wide-mouthed water bottles, and bubble bottles all work for this project.

### Directions:

- Remove any caps from the bottle before beginning.
- Make the body of the dragons. Using your foam sheets/cardstock, trace out the dragon’s tail and arms. Make sure to make these proportional to the size of your bottle. Using your scissors, cut out these shapes.
- Using your scotch tape, attach the tail, arms, and legs to the outside of the bottle.
- Using your glue, attach the googly eyes to the top of the bottle, near the mouth. Wait for these to dry completely before continuing so that they do not fall off.

### The Experiment:

- Place your decorated bottle on your plastic tray/cookie sheet.
- Fill your bottle up halfway with the vinegar. Add in a large squirt of the dish soap, and a few small drops of food coloring of your choice. Using your spoon, gently mix the ingredients together.
- Add **at least** 1 tsp of baking soda to the bottle (add more baking soda for a larger reaction). This will create carbon dioxide, and the vinegar-soap mixture will expand, making foam come out of the dragon’s mouth.



## **6: Foods Around the World**

Did you know that there are unique traditional foods in almost every culture? Many of these foods have a special historical or spiritual meaning, and are made from ingredients that are very popular in their area or have a special importance within the culture.

As a class, discuss what foods students enjoy eating with their families and what cultures those foods originate from. Then, arrange the class into small groups and assign each group a country known for its food from the list below. Have the students research these foods, choose one popular dish from their country, and have them draw and label a picture of that dish to present to the class.

### **Possible Countries:**

*Mexico*  
*Italy*  
*France*  
*Japan*  
*India*

### **Guiding questions for the activity:**

What does the word ‘culture’ mean?

What culture do tacos come from?

What kinds of food do you find most often in your city? What cultures do they come from?

What is the culture you are studying?

What are the most popular foods in that culture?

What are the ingredients?

Are the dishes eaten at a special time (i.e. for a special holiday or celebration)?

Is there historical significance to these dishes?

What is different about the food from each culture? What is similar? (Compare & Contrast at least two dishes).

On the next page are some accompanying infographics to share with your class groups as a resource to research dishes from their assigned countries.

## 6: Foods Around the World

### FOODS FROM JAPAN



#### MISO SOUP

Miso soup is the base for many different soups, often depending on the season. The broth is made from miso, a seasoning made from fermented soybeans, and *dashi*, a Japanese cooking stock. Common ingredients in the soup include tofu, *negi* (long green onions), mushrooms, seaweed, and fish.

#### UDON

Udon has ancient roots in Japan, believed to date back to the 1200s, when a Japanese monk named Enni brought flour milling machines from China into Japan, allowing flour to be made into noodles like Udon can be served alone, but is often eaten with soup, served cold in the hot months and warm in cold weather.

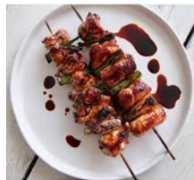


#### SUKIYAKI

Sukiyaki is a one-pot dish popular in Japan, made of thinly-sliced beef which cooks inside of a broth. Sukiyaki is served in the hotpot style, which means it simmers in a pot while at the table, cooking the ingredients.

#### YAKITORI

Because of its portability, Yakitori is a popular Japanese street food, consisting of grilled chicken on a skewer. Yakitori is often sold in Japan at small pop-up stands which sell only one dish, and can be served with salty or sweet seasoning.



### FOODS FROM MEXICO

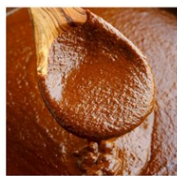


#### TACOS AL PASTOR

Tacos al Pastor, a dish developed in Central Mexico, are made from a variety of meat grilled on a spit, a long pole that rotates the meat as it cooks. Tacos al Pastor became popular in Mexico in the 20th century, when the recipe was introduced by Lebanese immigrants, and the combined cultures created the dish popular today.

#### MOLE POBLANO

While one of the main ingredients in Mole sauce is chocolate, the sauce is actually somewhat spicy to the taste (this variety is made with poblano peppers), and is served with savory foods like chicken and enchiladas. Mole has a long history in Mexico, with many different varieties coming from many regions, although the sauce is said to originate from the regions of Puebla and Oaxaca around the 16th century.



#### POZOLE

Pozole is also a dish with a long history in Mexico, dating back to the pre-colonial Aztec period. Pozole is made from hominy, a food made from dried kernels of maize, which is then cooked in a broth with several varying ingredients, usually including pork. There are three varieties of Pozole: *Blanco*, made with no sauce, *Verde*, made with a green pepper sauce, and *Rojo*, made with red chile sauce.

#### ELOTE

Elote, Spanish for corn on the cob, is a popular street food in Mexico served on a stick with chile powder, shredded *queso fresco*, lime, and butter, sometimes with mayonnaise or sour cream.



### FOODS FROM INDIA



#### TANDOORI CHICKEN

Tandoori chicken gets its name from the *tandoor*, the clay oven in which it is cooked. Dishes similar to tandoori chicken, which is marinated in yoghurt and spices, have existed in India since the Harappan civilization over 5000 years ago.

#### CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA

Although it is popular around the world, the geographic origins of chicken tikka masala are uncertain. While some claim that the dish was created in India itself, others believe it was developed in the United Kingdom by Indian and Bangladeshi immigrants. Chicken tikka masala made similarly to tandoori chicken, being marinated in yoghurt and a variety of spices, often with a tomato sauce.



#### MURG MAKHANI (BUTTER CHICKEN)

Similarly to tandoori chicken, murg makhani is also usually cooked in a tandoor oven, but can also be grilled or roasted. This dish, India's most popular curry, is marinated in a mixture of yogurt, lemon juice, chili paste, and several spices.

#### NAAN

Naan, a flatbread, has origins across Southern Asia and is most commonly found in India, although it is now popular around the world. Naan can be served by itself, topped with sauces and spices, or as a wrap for various meat or vegetable fillings.



## 7: Create Your Own Dragon

You will be designing and decorating your very own dragon! Using materials found around the classroom, you can build your own a taco-loving dragon like those found in the play *Dragons Love Tacos*. You can model yours after your favorite character, or you can create a dragon of your own design.



- Materials:
- Paper Plates\*
- Scissors
- Pencils (for tracing)
- Staples
- Sharpies (colors of your choice)
- Washable paint (optional for decorating dragons, color of your choice)

\*If paper plates are not readily available, this project can also be done using cardstock.

### Directions:

- Fold your paper plate in half and lay it on one side.
- Using your pencil, draw the outline of the dragon's wing. You can create your own shape, or model yours after the picture on the right.
- Using your scissors cut the top part of the wings, but make sure to leave the area at the center (where the plate creases) together. This will fold into the dragon's wings.
- Unfold the rest of the plate, and using the extra material, trace the dragon's head and tail. Again, you can create your own design, or model yours after the template.
- Using your scissors, cut out the head and tail pieces.
- Before assembling your dragon, separate all three of your pieces and decorate them using sharpies or washable paint. If you are using paint, wait for your pieces to dry before moving on to the next step. (The example dragon is decorated using a mix of Sharpies and water-based paint).
- Hold the folded wings and body so that they are standing straight up, and fold down the wings so that they stick straight out around the body.
- Place the dragon head on one end of the body, in between the crease of the wings. Place the tail on the other end in the same way.
- Carefully, use the stapler to staple the bottom of the dragon body together so that the head and tail are secured, and the body does not unfold.

## **8: Exploring Music**

In the play *Dragons Love Tacos*, the dragons use music to communicate with the audience, explaining their favorite taco ingredients and what happens when tacos have ingredients they do not like. As an exploration exercise, play samples of several different musical pieces for your students. Encourage children to add dance/movement to their listening experience.

As an exploration exercise, play samples of several different musical pieces for your students. Encourage children to add dance/movement to their listening experience. Make sure students have room to move around. Point out different tempos and rhythms to encourage change in dance/movement. Help students find the beat of a piece by clapping, marching in place, snapping your fingers, etc.

Using a variety of musical instruments or everyday objects\*, lead students through a discussion of musical qualities:

- Demonstrate musical qualities
  - loud vs. soft sounds
  - high-pitched notes vs. low-pitched notes
  - fast rhythms vs. slow rhythms
- Ask students to emulate your examples using instruments, their voices, or their bodies (e.g., clapping their hands, snapping their fingers, clicking their tongues)
- Ask students to sort instruments
  - sort single-pitch instruments from low-pitched to high-pitched
  - sort single-pitch instruments separately from multi-pitch instruments
- Create a simple rhythmic pattern
  - ask students to repeat it
  - ask students to create and repeat their own simple rhythmic patterns
- Create a simple melody
  - ask students to repeat it
  - ask students to create and play their own simple melodies
- As a class, create a composition with a mood (happy, creepy, sneaky, etc)

*\*Including:*

- *cardboard oatmeal can (with lid)*
- *rubber band*
- *chopsticks*
- *metal spoons*
- *plastic bucket*
- *plastic storage bin*
- *pots and pans*
- *pot/pan lids*
- *wooden spoon*
- *plastic cup with lid, filled ¼ full with dry beans or rice*
- *cardboard tubes*
- *glasses with different levels of water*

**TEXAS**  
**Grade 4**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.16.b.5
2	ELA 110.15.b.2
3	ELA 110.15.b.15-16
4	Math 111.16.b.3-4
5	Science 112.15.b.10
6	Soc Studies 113.15.b.6-7
7	Fine Arts 117.14.b.1-2, 4
8	Fine Arts 117.15.b.1-2, 4

**Grade 5**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.19.b.5
2	ELA 110.16.b.2
3	ELA 110.16.b.15-16
4	Math 111.17.b.3
5	Science 112.16.b.10
6	Soc Studies 113.16.b.6-9
7	Fine Arts 117.17.b.1-2, 4
8	Fine Arts 117.18.b.1-2, 4

**COMMON CORE**

**Grade 4**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.4.5
3	ELA W.4.3, 5
4	Math 4.OA.3

**Grade 5**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.5.5
3	ELA W.5.3, 5
4	Math 5.OA.1-2