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# Activity Guide

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## Un Sillón Para Mi Mamá

### ABOUT THE STORY

After a fire destroys their home and all their possessions, Rosa, her mother, and her grandmother save all the money they can to buy a big, comfortable armchair that not only brings enjoyment to all three but serves to bring them closer as a family.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR / ILLUSTRATOR

Vera B. Williams began painting at an early age. One of her paintings, done when she was only nine years old, was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. She studied art at Black Mountain College and lived in an artists' community for almost two decades following her graduation. Ms. Williams wrote her first book for children at the age of forty-six while living on a houseboat in Vancouver, British Columbia. Among her books are "More, More, More," *Said the Baby* and *Stringbean's Trip to the Shining Sea*.

### INTRODUCING THE STORY

Explain to the group that Rosa, the story's narrator, lives with her mother and grandmother in an apartment in the city. Ask children to describe the piece of furniture they like the most in their homes, and explain that this book is about a piece of furniture that is very important to Rosa and her family.

(NOTE: Exercises devoted to vocabulary include words in both Spanish and English, enabling you to present them according to the needs of the group and the goals of your lesson.)

### READING ACTIVITIES

#### Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "Why were Rosa and her mother and grandmother saving money for an armchair?"
- "How did the neighbors react after Rosa's family lost all they owned in the fire?"
- "How did Rosa's grandmother manage to save money for the armchair?"
- "How did Rosa and her mother get the new chair home?"
- "Why was the chair so important to Rosa and her family?"
- "What qualities do Rosa, her mother, and her grandmother share?"  
(Draw conclusions)

#### Vocabulary

Many of the furnishings mentioned in the story are listed below in both Spanish and English. Write the words on the board and have children match each Spanish word with its English translation.

Silla	curtains
Sillón	rug

cortinas	light
cama	armchair
luz	table
alfombra	chair
mesa	bed

### CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

#### Art: Design and Furnish a House

Have children draw a plan showing the rooms in their own homes. Then they can draw the furniture for each room. Encourage them to label each piece of furniture with the Spanish and English words from the vocabulary exercise.

#### Language Arts: News Reports

Have children imagine that they are news reporters writing about the fire in Rosa's apartment. Have them write a brief news article describing what happened in the fire. Remind them that a news article should answer the five questions: Who? What? When? Where? and Why?

#### Health: Classifying Foods

Many foods are mentioned in the story. Have children place the items in the list below under one of the headings that follow. Encourage them to include both the Spanish and English word for each item.

fruta-Fruit	Carne-Meat
legumbre-Vegetable	banana-banana
cebolla-onion	biftec-steak
manzana-apple	tocino-bacon
coliflor-cauliflower	pollo-chicken
lechuga-lettuce	uva-grape

#### Math: Counting With Colors

Make copies of the coins used in the story. Divide the children into groups and distribute many of each coin to the groups. Have the groups compete to see which can come up with the most combinations of coins to equal one dollar. To aid them in their calculations, remind them of the following:

2 half-dollars equals \$1	4 quarters equals \$1
10 dimes equals \$1	20 nickels equals \$1
100 pennies equals \$1	

### INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

#### Choosing a Chair

Have children search the Internet using the keywords *home furnishings* or *furniture* to find pictures of armchairs for sale. Children can choose the chair they think their own mothers or fathers would most like and can draw it or print out a picture of it. Ask them to write down why they think their parent would like the chair.