

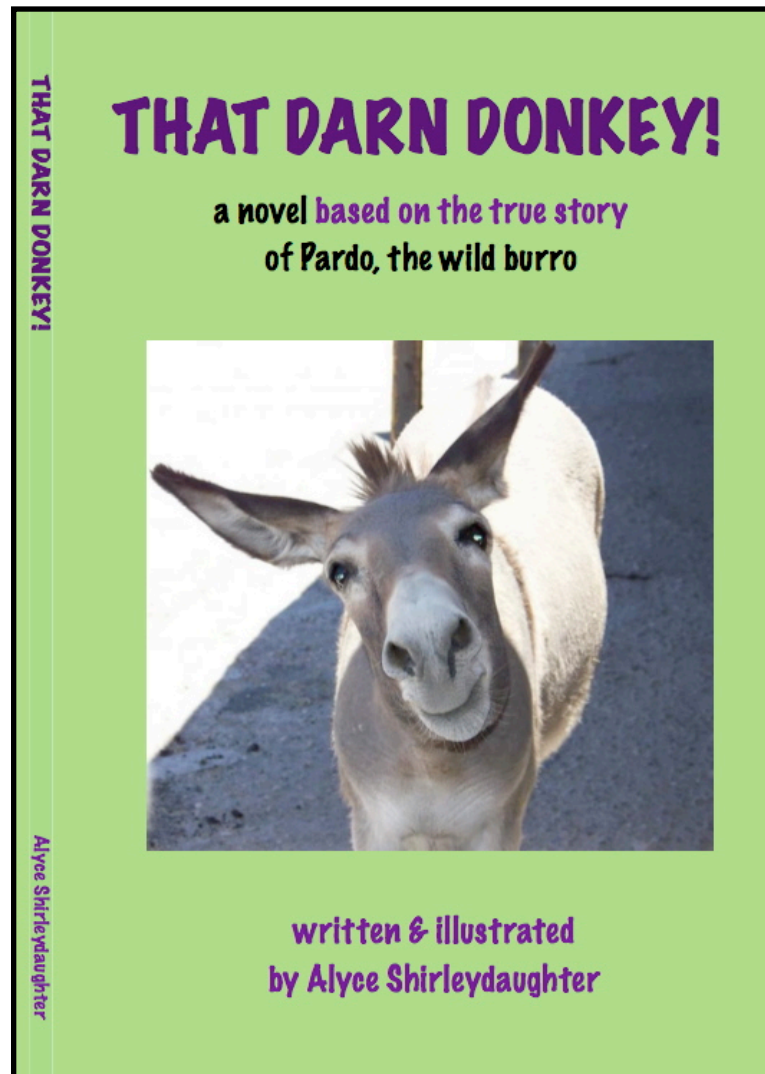
TEACHER'S GUIDE

That Darn Donkey!

a novel based on the true story of Pardo, a wild burro
by Alyce Shirleydaughter (aka LouAnne Johnson)

Reading Index Scores for
That Darn Donkey! :

Flesch-Kincaid	2.7
SMOG	3.4
Gunning-Fog	4.1
Coleman Liau	7.9
Avg. Grade Level	3.9
Reading Ease	89.6



Comments or questions?
Contact the author at: alyce@alycebooks.com

Chapter 1: What Does an Adventure Smell Like?

Synopsis:

Pardo - a 2-year old wild burro who weighs 350 lbs - lives in Black Rock Canyon with his older cousins, Francisco (Frankie) and Luis (Louie), who constantly remind him to use his noodle. Pardo also has a cousin named Vincent who is the leader of a herd of wild horses (mustangs). Francisco claims that he doesn't like horses because they blow spit and boogers from their squishy lips when they talk, but Pardo knows that Frankie is really jealous because he doesn't like having to run behind the horses, "sucking up their dust like a fat furry four-legged little vacuum cleaner." Pardo wishes he could have an adventure like Frankie and Louie do. The next day, Pardo gets his wish - he meets his first cowboys. Cowboys are humans and humans mean trouble, Louie warns him, but Pardo doesn't think they look like trouble. He thinks they look interesting.

Vocabulary Words:

prowl adventure canyon "use your noodle" reflection flutter mustang
 yucca burro bray inhale waggle scraggly

Pre-Reading Questions:

What is a burro? (*A donkey -they can be male or female -females are called jinnies.*)

What is the climate like in the desert?

(It is very dry and is always warm or hot in the lower elevations. In the winter, the mountains can be very snowy and cold.)

What is a mustang? (*a wild horse*)

Post-Reading Questions:

What is special about Pardo?

Why doesn't Frankie like horses?

Why doesn't Pardo know what a human is?

Why does Pardo say Haw-hee instead of Hee-haw? (*because donkeys make the loudest sound when they inhale - the haw sound and the hee is when they catch their breath - so they actually say HAW-hee*)

What do you think will happen next?

Chapter 2: Ay Caramba and Glory Be!

Synopsis:

Pardo's adventure gets more exciting when the cowboys round up the burros to be adopted. Two cowboys approach Pardo. He feels sorry for them because their front legs are so short they have to walk on their back legs. Pardo figures out from her different smell that one of the cowboys is actually a cowgirl. The cowgirl gives Pardo a carrot and he falls in love at first bite. Louie tries to warn Pardo to run, but Pardo wants to stay with the cowgirl and her carrots. Louie ends up getting captured along with Pardo - now they are both in a pickle.

Vocabulary Words:

scent delicious leafy chomp wavy bulging rotate fella impressed
greedy lasso savor wiggle "in a pickle"

Pre-Reading Questions:

What language is "ay caramba"? (*Spanish*)

What does ay caramba mean? (*It's an exclamation of surprise - like "yikes!"*)

What does "glory be" mean? (*It is also an exclamation of surprise*)

What kind of manes do burros have? (*short and fuzzy*)

What do wild burros eat? (*wild grasses, scrub brush, some kinds of cactus*)

What do you think about carrots? Do you like them? Why?

Post-Reading Questions:

What does Pardo think about carrots? What do *you* think about carrots?

What happens when Pardo smiles his best smile at the cowgirl?

Why does Pardo feel sorry for the humans?

What does Pardo think when he first sees the rope?

Why doesn't Louie escape when he has a chance, instead of waiting?

Have you ever been "in a pickle?"

What do you think will happen next?

Chapter 3: Smarter than the Average Burro

Synopsis:

Luis is very angry that they were caught. He tells Pardo that when he's in a pickle, he must use his noodle to think of a good solution. Louie's solution is for them to stand with their backs to the gate and pretend they are sleeping. Secretly, they will back up to the gate and make their get-a-way. Pardo loves Louie's idea, but he is distracted by the cowboy's coffee (he thinks it's dirty stinky water) which makes him thirsty. He misses his chance to escape with Louie. This time, Louie doesn't wait. He takes off, calling "hasta luego." Then the cowgirl arrives and introduces Pardo to his new owners, Mr. Diaz and his son Manny. At first, Pardo is intrigued because Manny is short, like he is, but Manny complains that Pardo is dusty and says he's going to name him Donkey Boy. Pardo thinks the name is silly and he is considering biting the boy when he notices that Manny is holding a carrot behind his back.

Vocabulary Words:

stomp hoof tricky swish flick recognize impressive squint
familiar piñon wrinkled adjust environment congratulations tempted

Pre-Reading Questions:

What does "loco" mean? (*crazy*) "hasta luego"? (*until later or see you later*)
How would you feel if you were rounded up and stuck inside a fence?
Have you ever seen a sunrise? How did it look?

Post-Reading Questions:

What are the cowboys drinking? What does Pardo think it is?
What would you name Pardo, if he had to have a different name?
Why does Pardo decide not to bite Manny on the butt?
Do you think Pardo will ever see Luis again?
What do you think will happen next?

Chapter 4: Coyotes are Skinny, Scraggly and Shifty-Eyed

Synopsis:

Pardo follows Manny and his carrot into the back of a truck. They drive a long ways and Pardo is put into a small pen. Mr. D sends Manny to get a water bucket, but Pardo thinks it is going to bite the boy. He tries to warn Manny and Mr. D thinks Pardo is going to bite Manny. Mr. D brings a green rope into the pen and it shoots water into the bucket. Pardo thinks it is a water rope. He smiles at Mr. D who once again thinks Pardo is planning to bite. Pardo decides he needs to use his noodle and escape. As he is checking for gaps in the fence, a black-haired cowgirl walks by, leading a coyote on a string. Pardo has never seen a dog. This coyote isn't normal. Coyotes are scraggly and skinny and dirt-colored, but this coyote sleek and black except for a white circle around one eye. The cowgirl smiles at Pardo, but he is afraid to smile back. He doesn't want to scare her. As they leave, the little coyote winks at Pardo who is amazed.

Vocabulary Words:

clang coyote ridiculous intention upright whoa tiptoe clatter embarrassing
spurted boulder strolled scenery appreciate wrinkles interrupted scraggly
shifty-eyed jealous

Pre-Reading Questions:

Have you ever seen a coyote or a photo of one? How did it look?

What does "cuidado" mean? (*be careful*)

If a burro smiled at you, would you be afraid? Why or why not?

Post-Reading Questions:

Why is Jack jealous of Pardo?

Why does Pardo think Jack is a coyote?

What happens when Pardo smiles his best smile at Mr. D?

Pardo does his best thinking in the shade - where do you do *your* best thinking?

What do you think will happen next?

Chapter 5: **Stubborn as a Mule? Haw!**

Synopsis:

Mr. D puts a blanket on Pardo - he shakes it off. Mr. D says Pardo is useless. Manny says maybe he's scared, but Mr. D says Pardo is as stubborn as a mule. This offends Pardo because a donkey and a mule are two different breeds and he thinks everybody should know. Mr. D puts the blanket on Pardo again. This time after he kicks off the blanket, Pardo nips Mr. D in the butt. Mr. D yanks Manny out of the pen and leaves Pardo locked up in the sun with no water in his bucket. When Manny reminds his father that they forgot Pardo's water, Mr. D says "let him get thirsty." Pardo tries to break out of his pen, but he can't. He can't get any water out of the water rope. So he brays and brays.

Vocabulary Words:

blossoms ocotillo crumple useless stubborn mule particular
 enormous encounter situation selfish

Pre-Reading Questions:

What is a mule? (*A mule is half-donkey and half-horse and cannot reproduce.*)

Is a donkey a mule? (*No, a donkey is 100% donkey.*)

What happens if an animal or a person stays out in the sun with no water for a long time?

Post-Reading Questions:

Why is Pardo afraid of the blanket?

What could Mr. D have done to help Pardo get over being afraid?

Why does Pardo get so upset when Mr. D calls him a mule?

Why does Pardo believe that donkeys are not stubborn?

How many ways does Pardo try to escape from his pen?

Chapter 6: What's all the Honking About?

Synopsis:

Pardo hollers until he is exhausted and dizzy. He hears a horse whinny. He thinks it must be Vincent coming to rescue him -- but it's the black-haired cowgirl riding a big palomino mare and a smaller cowgirl (Brianna) riding a paint (pinto) pony. They see that Pardo has no water. They steal Pardo and take him to their ranch. They put him in a big round pen with the mare, Dez, and the pony, Pinto Bean. Dez is unfriendly, but Pinto Bean likes Pardo. Dez guards her hay, but Pardo doesn't want it. He prefers scrub brush and wild grasses, his regular diet. He has just flopped down onto the dirt to roll around and scratch his back when he hears Mr. D's truck thundering down the road. Uh-oh!

Vocabulary Words:

horizon hoofbeats whinnied wondrous palomino paint pony plink
 clucked tongue vacuum arroyo sloping dismount snickered
 cottonwood precious

Pre-Reading Questions:

What sound does a horse make? (*whinny*)

What is a "paint" pony? (*a horse with splotches of color; a pinto*)

What is a palomino? (*a light tan or cream-colored horse with a light mane*)

What is an arroyo? (*a dry river bed that may fill quickly with water during storms*)

Post-Reading Questions:

What do you think about the cowgirls taking Pardo? Is it stealing?

Is there ever a good excuse for stealing something?

Why does Pardo think Brianna chewed her way out of a wire fence?

What is really on Brianna's teeth? Is it fence wire?

Why doesn't Pardo want to eat the mare's hay?

What do you think will happen when Mr. D arrives at the ranch?

Chapter 7: A Big Horse Makes a Good Hiding Place for a Little Burro

Synopsis:

Pardo hides behind the palomino mare. He peeks under the mare's belly to watch. Mr. D tells Mrs. Yazzie that she is welcome to keep Pardo because he is worthless and dangerous. Mrs. Yazzie says that it was wrong to leave Pardo without water. Mr. D says he is sorry, but he was angry because Pardo bit him and he wasn't using his noodle. He doesn't have the patience to train a wild animal and he's afraid Pardo will hurt Manny. Brianna sees that Manny is sad, so she tells him he can visit the little burro anytime he wants. Manny waves goodbye and calls Pardo "donkey boy" which makes Jack and Brianna laugh at him. Pardo doesn't care. He has a good home now. He has everything a little burro could want...but he misses being a wild burro.

Vocabulary Words:

furiously squeezed slumped worthless patience concussion circumstances
occasional gallop

Pre-Reading Questions:

What does the Spanish word "bastante" mean? (*enough*)

What does the Spanish word "mijo" mean? (*my son*)

How do you think Mr. D is feeling while he is driving to the ranch?

Post-Reading Questions:

Where does Pardo hide when he sees Mr. D's truck coming?

What does Mr. D say that surprises Pardo?

Were you surprised, too? Why or why not?

What kind of person is Mr. D? Why do you think that?

Why does Brianna offer to let Manny come visit Pardo?

Why is Pardo unhappy in his nice new home?

Chapter 8: Time to Really Use Your Noodle

Synopsis:

Pardo tries to forget about his old life and think positive. A sudden thunderstorm causes the arroyo to flood. The pony opens the latch on the gate and runs away. Pardo runs down the hill to where the fence crosses the arroyo and sees that the water has knocked down the fence, creating a space big enough for a burro to escape. He stands under a piñon tree, thinking. Jack runs down and barks at him. Then Pardo sees that Brianna and Mrs. Yazzie and Pinto Bean and Dez are all standing in the rain, their hair matted down, mud splashed all over their legs. They are watching him, waiting. Nobody says a word. Now Pardo really has to use his noodle and decide whether to go and try to find his old herd. He thinks with his heart and see that his new “herd” is a “good-looking bunch.” He chooses to stay.

Vocabulary Words:

positive dozens whiner buffalo grass snoring lightning stretches
smashed crabby wheezed churning absolutely piñon

Pre-Reading Questions:

What does it mean to “think positive?”

Have you ever been outside in a storm with thunder and lightning?

Are you scared of lightning and/or thunder? Are your pets scared?

Post-Reading Questions:

What does Pardo like about living at the Y Bar Z?

Why isn't Pardo jealous when Brianna rides Pinto Bean?

Have you ever had a pet who could open a gate, like the pony does?

Why does Pardo decide to stay instead of escaping?

Why does Pardo say that his new herd is a “good-looking bunch” when they are all wet and covered with mud and looking terrible?

RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION AND PHOTOS OF WILD BURROS

General information about donkeys and a nice selection of photos:

[http://donkeyrescue.donordrive.com/index.cfm?
fuseaction=cms.page&id=1018](http://donkeyrescue.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=cms.page&id=1018)

<http://www.tribeequus.com/burros.html>

http://www.desertusa.com/magjan98/jan_pap/du_wildburro.html

To learn about the U.S. Department of the Interior programs for wild horses and burros, visit:

<http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram.html>

The Bureau of Land Management has placed nearly 225,000 wild horses and burros into private care since the adoption program began in 1971. You can learn about the BLM's wild horse and burro adoption programs at:

[http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/wild_horse_and_burro/
What_We_Do/wild_horse_and_burro0.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/wild_horse_and_burro/What_We_Do/wild_horse_and_burro0.html)

For photos and information about rescuing wild burros, you can visit these rescue group websites:

<http://www.wbrpp.com>

<http://www.donkeyland.org/home.php>

http://www.shadowridgedonkeys.com/wild_burro_rescue.htm