



## The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf

Themes: Acceptance, Celebrating Differences, Be Yourself

Reading Level: K Interest Level: Grades P-2

These activities were designed to offer many options for at home or in a classroom. If you are using them in a family literacy program, we encourage you to modify them as needed for your families! Any parts of the text may be copied to accompany take home family activities.

### Before Reading:

- ✓ Look at the front cover with your child. What do you notice? What is the bull doing? (flowers, a bull smelling the flowers, a red cover)
- ✓ Guess at what the story might be about by using the picture on the front cover. This is called making a prediction.
- ✓ Ask, “Why do you think the bull is smelling the flower?” “How do you think the bull is feeling?”
- ✓ Look at the back cover and read the text (story summary). Ask, “What does this little bull, Ferdinand, want to do?” Think about the conversation you had about the front cover, “Why do you think there are flowers on the book cover?”
- ✓ Open the book to the first page. “What do you notice?” (the story pictures are black and white, no color) “Where does the story take place?” (Spain, country setting)

### While Reading:

- ✓ Ferdinand is a bull who wants to sit under his favorite cork tree and smell flowers. This book explores being yourself and celebrating differences. As you read, discuss the book. Here are some optional questions to help your conversation with your child:
  - Where is Spain?
  - What is a “cork” tree? Have you ever heard of this type of tree before?
  - Ferdinand is a very happy bull. What does he like to do?
  - What do the other bulls do?
  - He lives in a pasture. What kind of place is this? (happy? sad? quiet? loud?)
  - Most of the bulls are loud with a lot of energy. Ferdinand is comfortable being quiet and smelling the flowers. When are you loud with a lot of energy? When are you quiet? What is your favorite way to be? Do you have friends that are different than you? (This teaches your child to connect the story [text] to themselves and the world.)

- What is Ferdinand expected to do at the bull fight? What does he do instead? Why do you think he did that? How would you have acted if you were Ferdinand? Do you think it was hard to be different from the other bulls?
- What was the problem in the story? How was the problem solved?
- What words would you use to describe Ferdinand? (content, happy, appreciative, joyful, patient) These types of words are “character traits.” They describe parts of a person—how they behave, think, and feel.
- Encourage your child to say **WHY** they have chosen a specific word to describe Ferdinand and offer new words for them to use. For example, “Yes, Ferdinand does seem **happy**. I think he is **content**. Why do you think this?” (Your child might say, “he is sitting under his tree smelling flowers” or “it is his favorite spot” or “he tells his mom he is not lonely” or “the story says he is very happy.” You are teaching your child to describe traits of the character and to share proof (text evidence) from the story.

### After Reading:

- ✓ Explore a world map and locate Spain and Madrid. You might want to check the distance from your home to Spain where Ferdinand lived!
- ✓ What is a cork tree? Search online using keywords **cork tree** and learn facts about this type of tree! Show your child “corks” so they can feel the texture. There are many craft activities that you can create with cork. Search keywords **cork crafts for kids** to learn how to make sailboats, car wheels, stamps, games, necklaces, and many more fun items!
- ✓ Ferdinand is a Spanish bull. Choose words from the story and look up how to say them in Spanish. Word options: bull/toro, flowers/flores, tree/árbol, cork/corcho, happy/feliz. Children like to make word cards. Using an index card, write the English word on one side and the Spanish word on the other side. Have them add an illustration! Listen to an audio pronunciation of the words and practice saying them.
- ✓ Explore words to describe Ferdinand with flowers!
  - Create paper flowers (Ferdinand’s favorite!) and on each petal or flower write a word to describe Ferdinand.
  - Cut out flower shapes and stems from construction paper. Assemble flowers on a sheet of paper (glue to form a flower garden or Ferdinand’s pasture) or keep flowers loose (to form a bouquet). Decorate flowers with crayons/markers, glitter, decorative tape, etc.
  - Think about the character trait discussion you and your child had while reading the book. Have them write words to describe Ferdinand on the petals or individual flowers.
  - Search online using keywords **paper flowers** to find many options for creating paper flowers.
  - Connect this activity to your child: have them complete the same activity, but create something that is their favorite object (ball? truck? book?). What words would they use to describe themselves? Have them write words to describe themselves on the objects. Connect this to Ferdinand and conversations you had

while you were reading the book or after you finished the story. Ask your child, “How are you different from your friends? Why is it nice that we are all a little different in how we look and act?”

- ✓ Explore words to describe Ferdinand with color!
  - The pictures in *The Story of Ferdinand* are black and white; let’s add color!
  - Using water colors, paint a sheet of paper—encouraging your child to use any colors or patterns they would like. Allow time to dry.
  - Place a template of a bull (body or head) on the painted sheet and trace the pattern. Outline with a marker.
  - Think about the character trait discussion you and your child had while reading the book. Have them write words to describe Ferdinand on the paper.
  - Connect this activity to your child: have them complete the same activity, but outline a person on the paper. What words would they use to describe themselves? Have them write words to describe themselves on the paper.
  
- ✓ Move with your child!
  - This is a silly activity! Ferdinand sits on a bee and starts to run around “puffing and snorting, butting and pawing the ground.” The men think he is a “fierce bull.”
  - Mimic the movements with your child for a silly dance—add some noise and start buzzing, puffing, and snorting! Play music – Spanish music and have a “freeze” dance. Pause the music and freeze in poses!
  
- ✓ Explore Spanish Food!
  - Search online using keywords: **easy Spanish food to make with kids**. There are many simple recipes to make with your child if you want to explore Spanish food. Check out Almendras con Caramelo (Almonds with Caramel), Churros (sweet, fried dough), or Hojaldras (Puff Pastry) to name a few!
  - Create a plate of tapas (small bites/Spanish snacks) to munch on together. Listen to an audio pronunciation of the words and practice saying them.
  - Want to dress up for your “Tapas Party?” Make some “very funny hats” like the men wore in the story!

### Tips for Listening to Audio Books:

- ✓ You and your child can listen to former first lady Barbara Bush read *The Story of Ferdinand* on the *Mrs. Bush’s Story Time* podcast. Here are some listening tips!
  - Get comfortable and cozy! Just like if you were snuggled reading a story, snuggle up to listen to the book!
  - Consider setting up your child with paper, colors/markers, etc. As they listen to the story, encourage them to sketch and color. This is a great activity if your child likes to move!
  - Ask them what their favorite part was in the story; replay that part for them. Why was it their favorite?
  - Encourage your child to create an “audio story time.” Have them choose their favorite story and record them reading it.

### **Mrs. Bush's Story Time Podcast:**

*Mrs. Bush's Story Time* is a podcast for families, featuring original recordings from the radio program of the same name. The podcast brings to life former first lady Barbara Bush's commitment to family literacy and lifelong learning for a whole new generation. Listen to the following stories here: <https://www.barbarabush.org/podcast/>

- ✓ *The Adventures of Frog and Toad* (with Elmo)
- ✓ *Strega Nona* (with The Count)
- ✓ *The Sleeping Beauty* (with the Evil Stepmother from Snow White)
- ✓ *Arthur Meets the President* (with Big Bird)
- ✓ *Corduroy* (with Winnie the Pooh)
- ✓ *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* (with Garfield)
- ✓ *The Ugly Duckling* (with Daffy Duck)
- ✓ *Curious George Rides a Bike* (with Sylvester the Cat and Tweety Bird)
- ✓ *Sukey and the Mermaid* (with Mickey and Minnie Mouse)
- ✓ *The Rough-Face Girl* (with Belle from Beauty and the Beast)
- ✓ *Bedtime for Frances* (with Babs and Buster Bunny)
- ✓ *Jack and the Beanstalk* (with Daffy Duck)
- ✓ *Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock* (with Charlie Brown)
- ✓ *Doctor De Soto* (with Grover)
- ✓ *Chicken Little* (with Donald Duck and Goofy)
- ✓ *Some Fine Grampa!* (with Alan Arkin)
- ✓ *The Story of Ferdinand* (with Bugs Bunny)
- ✓ *Gregory, the Terrible Eater* (with Oscar the Grouch)
- ✓ *Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later)* (with Oprah)
- ✓ *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* (with Mickey and Minnie Mouse)

### **Barbara Bush's Reading Tips:**

Mrs. Bush once said, "Reading helps us grow, head and heart." When parents and children learn together, the possibilities are endless. Parents can best support their children's literacy development by routinely reading with them. In 2016, Mrs. Bush shared her tips for family reading.

Visit <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/55696803/barbara-bushs-family-reading-tips> to read her tips!