



Clarion Review

Juvenile Nonfiction

That Sounds Like Fun

Deborah E. Bogosian

978-1-4490-5325-3

Three Stars (out of Five)

The various sounds that many letters have in English can be overwhelming for children, especially for non-native speakers. However, this unique alphabet book demonstrates that learning sounds can be fun.

Each page is dedicated to one sound and contains an English sentence to demonstrate it, a Spanish translation, and a delightful drawing in pastel colors. Many of the sentences are funny. For example, on the page devoted to the “m” sound, Deborah E. Bogosian writes, “Mike made more money than Myra mixing marshmallow mud pies / Mike hizo más dinero que Myra mezclando pasteles de lodo.” The children’s mud-pie stand in the accompanying illustration contains three pies, which are made of mud on marshmallows. Unfortunately, the Spanish translation isn’t as funny since the term for marshmallow is missing.

Bogosian, with a master’s degree in education from Herbert H. Lehman College, is certified in teaching elementary grades, as well as special education and reading through high school. For fifteen years, she ran a tutoring service called the Bee’s Knees. She taught adult-level English as a second language and has written an eBook titled, *How to Survive Your Child’s Educational Experience*.

Illustrator Regina Gelfer holds a bachelor’s degree in graphic design from SUNY Purchase and has been an illustrator, cartoonist, and graphic designer for more than twenty years. She has done freelance work for many companies, including PepsiCo, Avaya, and Marvel Comics. She currently runs GelferGraphics and has written and illustrated another children’s book, *The Kiss Box*.

The translations will assist Spanish-speaking children with unfamiliar English words. English-speaking children can ignore the Spanish, as the book is complete without it. Alternately, they might learn some Spanish, even without pronunciation help.

The supplementary sections, currently labeled as indices, would be better called

appendices. Three of these sections provide a good review of the sounds with example English words accompanied by their Spanish translations. “Index A” gives “llava” as the Spanish word for “key,” even though the standard translation is “llave.” This appears to be one of a couple of typographical errors. In “Index D,” the author provides valuable information on the use and pronunciation of “a,” “an,” and “the,” but she describes all three as referring to a single item, which is contradicted by an example that shows “the” used with a plural noun.

The book has several other minor problems. For example, on the page where a little girl puts two fish into a funnel, the author writes, “Flossy filled the funnel with fresh fish. / Flossy llenó el embudo con peces.” “Fresh” is an unfortunate word choice because the term “fresh fish” gives the impression of fish in a supermarket rather than live ones.

Overall, however, *That Sounds Like Fun!* will show five- to eight-year-olds that English sounds aren’t as daunting as they thought.

Norma D. Kellam