

# *Celebrating Florida* by MARION DANE BAUER

Illustrated by C. B. Canga



### Book Summary:

From the swamps of the Everglades to St. Augustine, the oldest European-settled city in the nation, from white sands and manatees to the fireworks above Cinderella's castle in Disney World, you and your students will love tagging along with Mr. Geo as he snorkels, sails, and dances his way across the great state of Florida. Incorporating geographical, cultural, and natural landmarks, *Celebrating Florida* is a wonderful introduction to the state for children and adults alike.

### Discussion Questions for Read-Aloud

- If you were going to visit Florida, where would you go first? Why?
- The Everglades is home to one of the largest swamps in the country. What is special about a swamp ecosystem? Can you name some plants and animals that live in the Everglades?
- Why do you think Florida's nickname is "The Sunshine State"?
- Which is your favorite Florida sports team? Why?
- Because it is so warm, Florida's farms are able to grow some things that most states can't. What are some of your favorite Florida food products?
- Florida is basically a peninsula that sticks out into the ocean—it is mostly surrounded by water! What are some fun things to do along Florida's coastline?
- How did Florida get its name?
- Before Europeans settled in Florida, there were many Native America tribes living there. Can you name some of them?
- Because of its climate and location, along with its sunny skies and warmth, Florida sometimes has very dramatic weather! Can you describe it?
- Florida is home to the very first underwater state park in the country. Would you like to visit? What do you think you would see?

### Teaching Ideas

- **Geography:** Ask your students to imagine they are on a road trip to Florida from wherever they live. What tools will they need to help them? Which roads will get them there the fastest? How long will it take? You will want to have several maps of the United States available for students to use as they plan their trip. You may decide to have them write a story about their journey, making sure that they include geographical information.
- **Native Americans in Florida:** Florida is home to a rich Native American culture. Mr. Geo tells us that the Seminole tribe still practices old customs and honors old leaders. What are these customs? Ask your students to research and write about the Seminole, or another Florida tribe of their choice.
- **Ecosystems:** Florida is home to ecosystems that are not typical for most of the country—from the mangrove swamps to the tropical Florida Keys. Ask students to choose a Florida ecosystem to study.

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- **Fun Facts:** Mr. Geo presents many facts throughout the book. Ask students to research and collect even more fun facts together, and then collect them into your class's own "fun fact" book about Florida.
- **Mapmaking:** As part of a study of maps and mapmaking, ask each student to choose a region of Florida of which to create a map.
- **Space Exploration:** Mr. Geo tells us that Florida is also home to the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral. From Cape Canaveral, we have launched explorers to the moon and robots to Jupiter! See what else you and your students can discover about the Kennedy Space Center.

### A Project: Come to Florida! Designing and Creating Brochures

#### Materials Needed:

- At least one copy of *Celebrating Florida*
- If possible, some other resource materials for students to use, including books and access to the Internet. You may also want to have a few sample brochures.
- Writing and drawing materials, and paper

**Background Knowledge:** Before beginning this lesson, it will be helpful if your students are familiar with the book *Celebrating Florida*. You will want to have discussed in particular the Florida tourism industry so that students are familiar with all that Florida has to offer in terms of vacation opportunities.

**Set up:** Gather your students together in your class meeting place. Have research materials as well as drawing and writing materials accessible to students from their work areas.

**Introduction:** Remind students that as they've discussed, tourism is a big industry in Florida—not only does Florida offer beautiful beaches and opportunities for sailing and fishing, but it is also home to a variety of theme parks. Organize your class into a Florida tourism board and ask them to design and create appealing brochures for their favorite Florida landmarks. You may divide students into groups yourself, or you may ask them to choose their own groups based on interest. You will definitely want to have lots of brochures on hand for students to study so that they are familiar with the structure and contents of a brochure, but you will also want to encourage students to be creative and to make the brochures their own. Students will have a great time with this, and it can be really helpful to discuss ways in which they might make their brochures most appealing to readers, both in terms of visuals and inviting text.

**Work Time:** As students research and plan, you will want to circulate and support them. This work is likely to take longer than one class period to finish. You may choose to devote one (or more, depending on how much time you have) class period simply to research and note taking, and another to the actual creation of the brochure.

**Share:** Students will be thrilled to share their brochures. You may rally them to prepare presentations to the class, pretending that they are representatives of the Florida tourism board and that they working to persuade audience members to come to their state! This is a great way to practice crucial speaking and listening skills.