

**Dale, dale, dale: Una fiesta de números**  
**Hit It, Hit It, Hit It: A Fiesta of Numbers**  
**By René Saldaña, Jr.**  
**Illustrated by Carolyn Dee Flores**

*Developed by the Texas Book Festival for the Reading Rock Stars program*



## Meet the Author

René Saldaña, Jr. is the author of several acclaimed novels for young people that depict life in Mexican-American communities. He is the author of the acclaimed Mickey Rangel Mystery series of bilingual books for intermediate readers: *The Lemon Tree Caper / La intriga del limonero*, *The Case of the Pen Gone Missing / El caso de la pluma perdida*, and *The Mystery of the Mischievous Marker / El misterio del malvado marcador*. His book *Dancing with the Devil and Other Tales from Beyond / Bailando con el Diablo y otros cuentos del más allá* is a bilingual collection of tales featuring supernatural elements rooted in Latino folklore. His other books include *The Whole Sky Full of Stars* (Random House, 2007), *Finding our Way: Stories* (Wendy Lamb Books, 2003) and *The Jumping Tree* (Delacorte, 2001). He lives in Lubbock, Texas, where he teaches in the College of Education at Texas Tech University.

## About the Illustrator

Carolyn Dee Flores is the illustrator of *Canta, Rana, canta / Sing, Froggie, Sing* and *Dale, dale, dale: Una fiesta de números / Hit It, Hit It, Hit It: A Fiesta of Numbers*. She is a graduate of Trinity University and a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. She lives and works in San Antonio, Texas.



# FUN FACTS

- René's favorite book in Pre-K and Kindergarten was *Wet Albert* by Michael and Joanne Cole.
- Carolyn's favorite book when she was in Pre-K and Kindergarten was *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss and *Space Air*, a book she wrote herself and still keeps with her.
- René said his favorite thing about birthdays was "collecting the broken parts of the piñata. Sure, there was the candy that all the kids would fight over, but being able to get a piece of the piñata was always fun."
- Carolyn's favorite thing about birthdays is feeling like something special is about to happen.
- René's favorite colors are blue and yellow!
- Carolyn loves every color. Her favorite thing to see in the world is a box of crayons with all the different colors side by side!

## *Dale, dale, dale / Hit It, Hit It, Hit It*

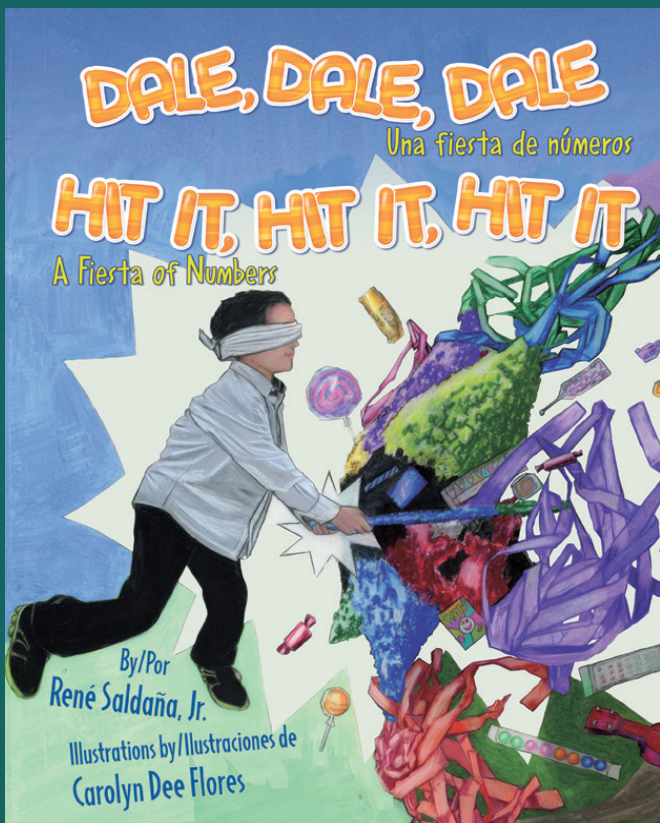
### Summary

This picture book illustrates snapshots of Mexican-American cultural traditions and birthdays. Follow Mateo as he counts objects needed for the party! The book ends with a birthday party favorite: a piñata! Sing the traditional song *Dale, dale, dale* with Mateo.

## Before Reading Activity

Have students brainstorm what they do to prepare for a birthday party. What items do they bring or make? Keep this list for an after-reading activity.

## After Reading



### Pre-K

Use the brainstorming activity your class did before reading. Have each child pick something from their own list. Have them draw a picture of what they would take to Mateo's party.

### Kindergarten

Have the students label the objects in their picture in English and Spanish.  
Example: cake/pastel

# Discussion Questions

- Look at the pictures in the book. Do you recognize things you have seen at birthday parties?
- What is the title of the book? Why do you think this is the title? If you had to change the title, what would you call it? Why?
- Who is the author? What does an author do?
- Does your family sing songs or dance at birthday parties? What songs do they sing?
- Besides birthdays, does your family throw parties for any other occasion? What is this occasion?
- What tools does a writer need in order to write?
- What tools does an artist/illustrator need in order to draw?
- Who is in the picture on the cover? Why do you think this is?
- Who is the illustrator? What does an illustrator do?



*Dale, dale, dale / Hit It, Hit It, Hit It*

## Kindergarten

- Use birthdays to talk about counting, addition and subtraction. Use birthday candles to show grouping. Use the children's ages or birthday dates to add and subtract.
- Have students draw or color a printout of a cake or piñata. Have them draw and number how many candles would be on their cake. If they color piñatas, have them estimate how many hits it would take to break one.



## Pre-K

- Use birthday candles as a visual counting tool. Practice counting with your students.
- Have students draw or color a printout of a cake or piñata. Have them draw and number how many candles would be on their cake. If they color piñatas, have them estimate how many hits it would take to break one.

## Fun Science Experiment for All Ages

A new way to inflate a balloon!

**What you will need:** empty soda/water bottle, 1 Kleenex, 12-inch balloon, vinegar, baking soda

**Directions:** First, explain to your students that baking soda and vinegar will react once they mix. Ask your students what they think will happen if they are mixed. Fill the water/soda bottle about halfway with vinegar. Fill half of a Kleenex with 2 tablespoons of baking soda. Drop it in the bottle and put the balloon over the top of the bottle. Watch the reaction!

*Dale, dale, dale / Hit It, Hit It, Hit It*

## **Activities**

### **Writing**

Have students create birthday cards for the main character, Mateo.

### **Art**

Have students color their own piñata.

