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## **The Quirquincho and the Fox - A Folktale from Argentina**

**Author:** Vidya Mani

**Illustrator:** Greystroke

Level 3



Once upon a time, a fox and a quirquincho (armadillo in Quechua, the language spoken by the Incas who originally inhabited the land) were very good friends. They spent a great deal of time together and had lots of fun.

One day, the quirquincho decided that he was not going to waste his time doing nothing, and instead decided to do a spot of farming. He immediately set out to work and started to build a fence around a plot of land.



His friend, the fox, was quite perplexed by the quirquincho's behaviour. He wondered why his best friend was working so hard instead of having some fun in the sun. Seeing the quirquincho toiling away at the fence, the fox asked, "Why are you making the fence, best friend?"

"To sow some crops and earn some money, fox," replied the quirquincho. The fox was surprised by the answer. He started to suspect his best friend. Why did the quirquincho want to make money?



Was he trying to become richer and more famous than him? Did he want to earn a good name from the other animals and get all the attention?

Soon, suspicions such as these got the better of the fox and he quickly made a cunning plan.

Since he had more money than the quirquincho, he decided the best thing to do would be to join up with his friend, invest in the crops, make him toil, and reap the benefits himself.



This way, he wouldn't have to work too hard but would still end up making more money than the quirquincho. So off he went to his sweating friend and said, "You must have used up all your money buying the land and putting up the fence. Why don't I give you the money to buy the seeds to sow, dear friend? Of course, if I'm paying for the seeds, then I get to decide what part of the crop belongs to me. Fair is fair after all, isn't it?"

The quirquincho was a smart cookie too. He immediately saw through the fox's cunning plans. But he also knew that without the fox's money, there was no way he would be able to grow any crops. So he decided to agree, for the moment.

"Thank you, dear friend – what would I have done without you? All my efforts would have come to nothing if not for a friend like you."

"Ah ha! The silly fool's falling for my plan," thought the fox gleefully. "Okay friend, so you'll do as I tell you to, right?"



Then, this first time, whatever grows beneath the land will belong to you, and everything that grows above it will belong to me," he said greedily. For a moment, the quirquincho was alarmed. But then he said to himself, "I'm not going to let him get away with this... I'll teach that greedy pig a lesson!"

Bright and early the next morning, the quirquincho started to prepare the field for sowing. And guess what he decided to sow? POTATOES! The fox was furious.



When the crop was harvested, all the potatoes went to the quirquincho, while all he got were the leaves! Not to be outdone easily, the fox said, "This crop has been very bad for me. The next time, you take what grows above and I'll take everything that grows below." Again, he felt gleeful for having outwitted his friend.

The clever quirquincho set out to work again. This time round, he tilled the land, watered it and planted... WHEAT! Yet again, when the crop was reaped, all the wheat came to the quirquincho and the fox got only the roots and the leaves!

Now the fox was really angry! Each one of his attempts to get the better of the quirquincho was proving to be disastrous.

“That scoundrel’s really having his cake and eating it too. Does he think I’m going to let him get away this easily? My money’s being spent and he’s the one getting richer... I must teach him a lesson!” So he thought hard and long for a few days.

When he hit upon what he thought was a brilliant plan, he called the quirquincho. “Friend, the last two crops have been no good for me. I’ve spent all my money, but ended up with just leaves and roots which have no value. So it’s only fair that when you sow the next crop, I get both what grows above and below the ground. You can have everything that lies in between!”

Accordingly, the quirquincho got the field ready for sowing. And what do you think he planted this time? CORN!

The crafty fox had been outwitted again.





When the crop was harvested, the quirquincho took all the corn that lay 'in between', while the greedy fox was left with mere roots and stalks. He got so angry with the quirquincho that he spat and fumed and swore never to work with him again!

As for the intelligent quirquincho, he now had enough money to buy his own seeds and didn't need the fox's help ever again.



## **BLAST OFF!**

**Hola!** That's 'hello' in Spanish, the most commonly used language in South America. And Argentina, from where the story of the quirquincho and the fox comes, is part of South America.

So, what exactly is the South American magic all about? The glorious empires of the Incas and the Aztecs were founded here. They flourished amidst a natural world no less magnificent, leaving behind a rich history and heritage.



At the heart of South America lies the Amazon rainforest, which is perhaps the richest ecological region on our planet. Along the continent's middle are the Andes, a spectacular wall of snow-capped peaks and sulphurous volcanoes. Not to forget the glorious, sunny beaches that dot the rugged South American coastline.

No wonder then that this continent is one of the finest travel destinations in the world! And hey, before you say 'hasta la vista baby' (goodbye, until we meet again) and set out to explore splendid South America, watch out for those volatile volcanoes!



## MAKE YOUR OWN 'VOLCANO FUEGO ROJO'!

### YOU'LL NEED:

A paper plate

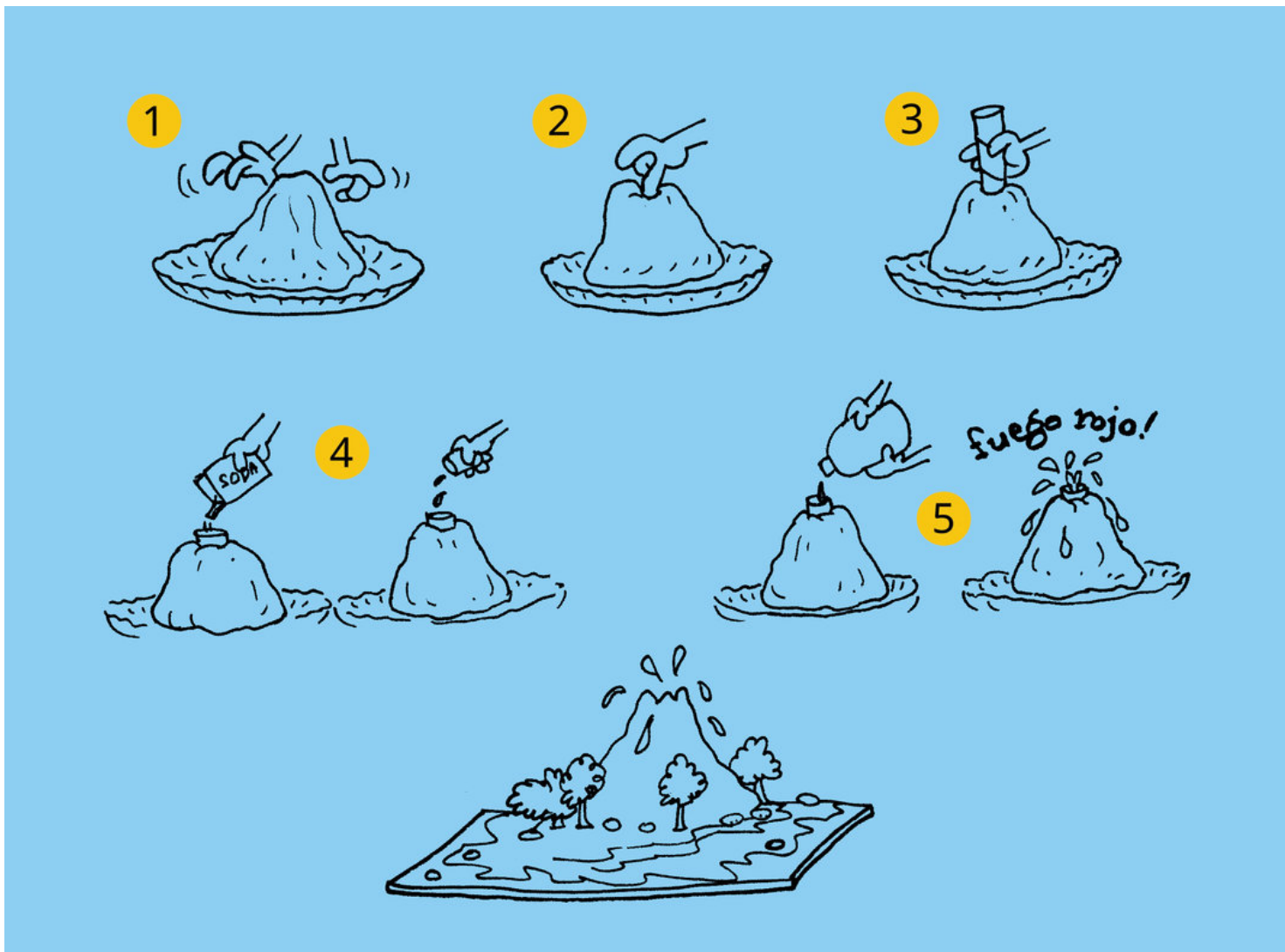
Clay

A short cardboard tube

Baking soda

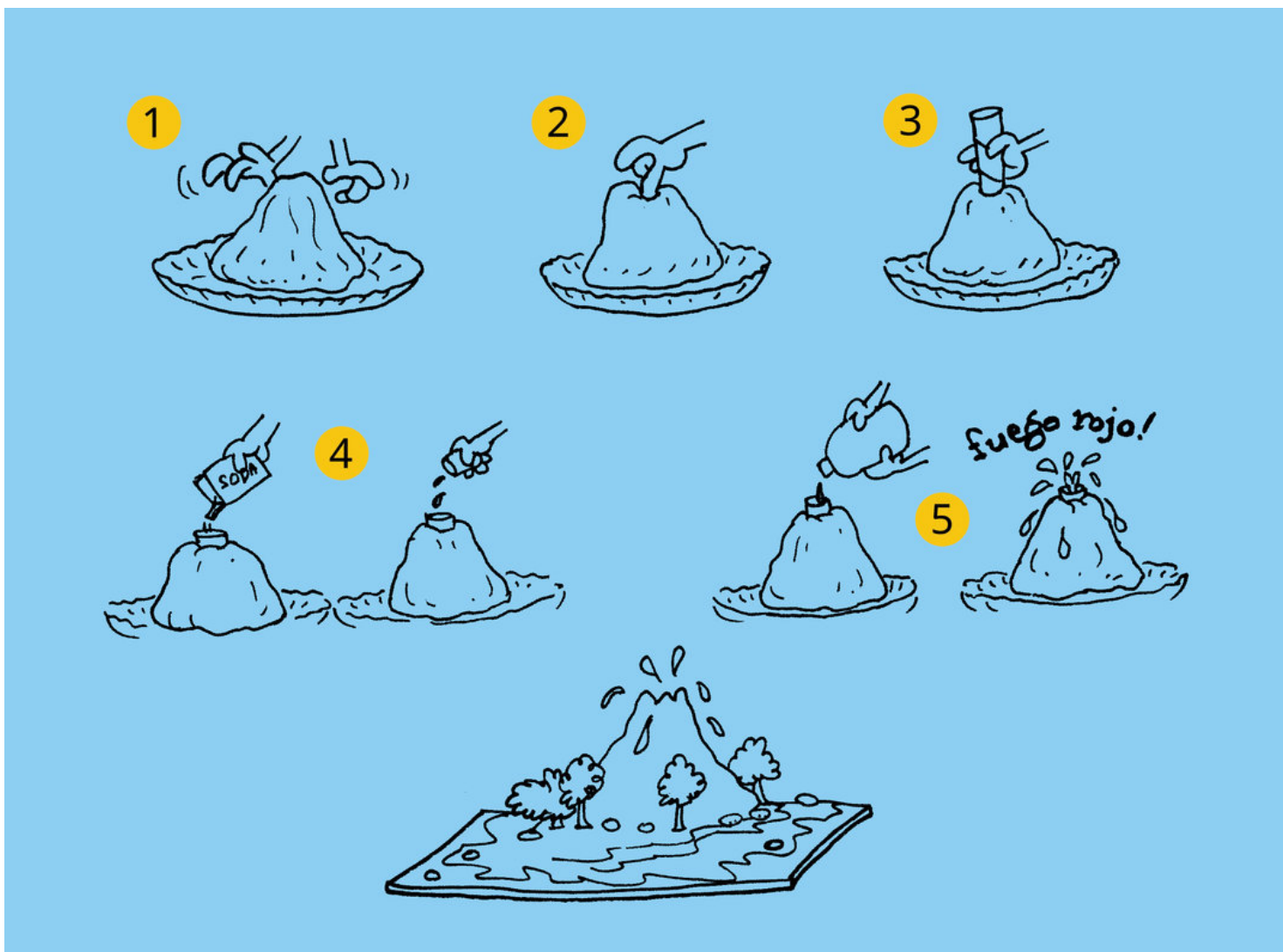
Vinegar

Red vegetable colour



## HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Mould the shape of a volcano using the clay and place it on the paper plate.
2. Make an opening on top of the volcano big enough for the cardboard tube to fit in.
3. Push the tube through the opening.
4. Fill the tube with baking soda and add 6 drops of the vegetable colour to it.
5. Slowly, pour vinegar into the tube and watch your 'fuego rojo' (red fire) erupt! (Beware of angry parents!)



*To make your volcano more realistic, use thick cardboard as a base and surround the volcano with trees, rocks, etc.*

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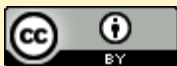


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# **The Quirquincho and the Fox - A Folktale from Argentina**

(English)

A quirquincho and a fox are very good friends and spend all their time together having fun. But one sunny morning, the quirquincho decides to start working, while his friend, the fox, has other plans... Find out this what happens to them in this vibrant land of Argentina.

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.



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