

Musician plays to eager readers

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James Madison Elementary School in Indio celebrated Dr. Seuss' 106th birthday and Read Across America by having singer Mark Guerrero perform and read to more than 100 third- and fourth-graders Tuesday.

Guerrero is the son of famous Latino musician Lalo Guerrero.

Kathleen Klug, the school's academic counselor, said Guerrero was a perfect match because, "I needed someone that could appeal to a large crowd and catch their attention, and pass on the love of reading."

Tere Britton, coordinator of the Coachella Valley BookPALS, said when she called Guerrero and asked him if he would be willing to volunteer his time he said he would be happy to.

The Cathedral City man also offered to sing some friendly tunes to the students first before reading to them.

"I figured I would win them over this way," he said.

The first song Guerrero sang was "La Bamba," made famous by Ritchie Valens.

The students kept asking for more, so he sang tunes from The Beatles, Elvis Presley and some from his father.

The last song the students heard was one of his own, "On the Boulevard."

Guerrero said by the time he finished singing, the kids were ready for some reading.

He read Dr. Seuss' book "Happy Birthday To You!"

"It was really rewarding," he said.



Mark Guerrero, son of Lalo Guerrero, sings Jailhouse Rock to a group of third- and fourth-graders on Tuesday at James Madison Elementary School in Indio before reading them a Dr. Seuss book. The school celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday as part of the annual Read Across America Program. (Crystal Chatham The Desert Sun)