

WHAT WORM IS THIS? AN ADVENTURE ABOUT *Ascaris lumbricoides*

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The Ascariasis is the most common intestinal parasitosis in Brazil, frequently affecting school-aged children. The lack of sanitation, combined with the socioeconomic conditions of the population, makes this parasitosis very prevalent in our environment. This study was part of a mandatory essay in the Parasitology course, conducted in groups within the Undergraduate Nursing Program, and involved developing a children's book to be used in communities served by extension projects. It also aimed to disseminate knowledge that could empower children in the prevention and promotion of their own health. The book was created with a playful approach to facilitate learning and understanding about ascariasis and its prevention methods. Its creation included a cognitive model designed to stimulate memory, attention, curiosity, and sensory perception. Materials such as EVA foam, fabric, cardstock, and poster boards with printed cutouts of the adult worm and eggs were used, as well as schematic models of organs involved in the life cycle. The language used was based on parasitology textbooks, adapted into children's story formats for better understanding by the target audience. The book's text tells the story of a girl who acquired ascariasis and noticed the presence of the worm in her faeces, prompting her to ask questions about the parasitosis, its transmission, prophylaxis, and ways to share the knowledge. The story unfolds through a dialogue of questions and answers between the girl and the narrator. It is acknowledged that using a children's book to prevent ascariasis among children is one of the most effective and far-reaching educational tools for ensuring understanding of this parasitosis and its prevention. The book was tested with about one hundred and twenty children attended by the "Teresa de Jesus Shelter" in a university extension event, called Parasitosis Prevention Fair. All children showed great interest and curiosity in the story of the book. In addition, great interest and attention was aroused in the topic addressed.

Keywords: parasitology, children's story, prevention.