

# Square Dancing Llamas

“Swing your partner, do-si-do!

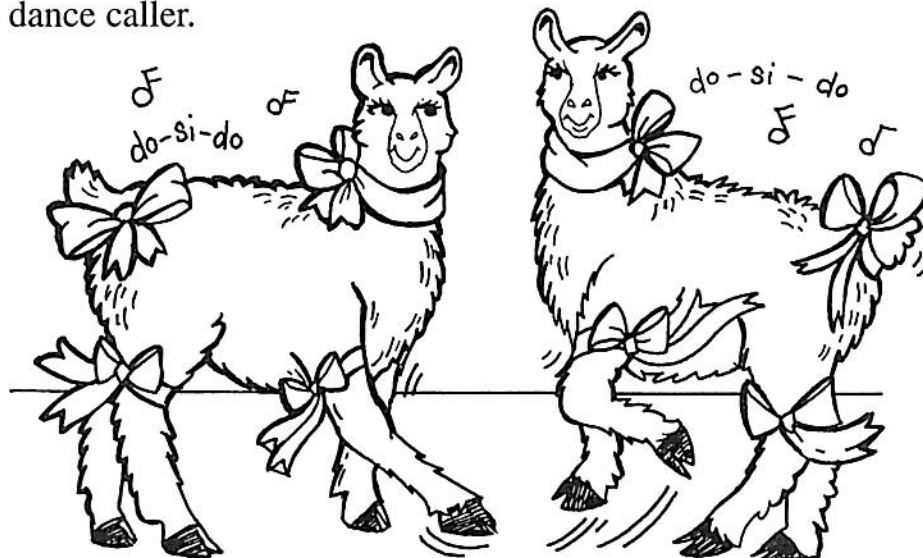
Now turn to the left and don’t let go!”

This is the kind of song that professional square dance “callers” sing. It’s the caller’s job to sing out instructions during a square dance. Then the dancers do whatever the caller tells them to do. Callers need to have strong, clear voices so that the dancers can understand them. Professional square dance callers keep the dances interesting by coming up with new and funny things to sing.

One caller got to sing for some very unusual dancers. Tom Barry had been a square dance caller for many years. One day, he got a telephone call from a woman named Bea Kesling. Bea asked Tom if he would sing calls for llamas. At first, Tom thought Bea was talking about a dance club called the “Llamas.” When she told him she was talking about dancing animals, Tom thought the idea sounded great. He said he’d do it.

Bea knew all about training llamas. Tom “called” while Bea and her friends gave dance lessons to eight of the animals. Bea made the llamas dancing outfits. She dressed them in colorful ribbons like those worn by women square dancers. Each llama danced with a person who guided the animal through the steps. Bea usually danced with a pretty yellow-haired llama she nicknamed “Goldilocks.” The llamas were quick learners. It wasn’t long before they were ready to dance in public.

Their first dance was for some llama ranchers in Lexington, Kentucky. The ranchers knew that llamas were smart and friendly, but they had never seen llamas dance. They didn’t know what to expect. The dancers formed a circle and waited for Tom to start his calls. Tom called and the llamas danced perfectly. Everyone was impressed. The show was a big hit. Tom had succeeded at something no one had ever tried before. Since then, the llamas and Bea have kept dancing to the voice of Tom Barry, the world’s first llama square dance caller.



# Square Dancing Llamas *(cont.)*

## Reading Comprehension Questions

After reading the story, answer the questions. Circle the correct answer.

1. Why did Bea Kesling call Tom Barry?
  - a. He is a llama trainer.
  - b. He is a square dance caller.
  - c. He is a square dancer.
  - d. He is a costume maker.
  
2. Who were the first people to see the llamas dance?
  - a. Zookeepers
  - b. Bea's friends.
  - c. Llama ranchers.
  - d. A group of square dance callers.
  
3. What is another good name for this passage?
  - a. "Baby Llamas and Their Trainers."
  - b. "Callers Who Care."
  - c. "Goldilocks the Yellow-Haired Llama."
  - d. "Swing Your Llama, Do-Si-Do."
  
4. How did Tom probably feel at the end of the passage?
  - a. Sad.
  - b. Angry.
  - c. Proud.
  - d. Hot.
  
5. A good way to answer the question just before this one is to—
  - a. notice that Tom Barry did something unusual.
  - b. notice that the llamas wore colorful costumes.
  - c. notice that the llamas danced perfectly.
  - d. think how you would feel if you watched llamas dancing.