

# "V" is For Vicunas for Evita

*Find the Letter V,v - 48 times. Find the word, Vicuna,vicuna, vicunas - 13 times. Find the name Evita - 11 times.*

"*Papa, papa!*" the little girl cried. "*Las vicunas no lana!*" Evita threw herself into her father's arms, overcome with sadness.

Pablo smiled. He understood his daughter's great distress. Her mama came chasing after Evita through the herd of vicunas in the *corral*. "Pablo, she ran off when she saw the *shearing* scissors".

"She was so very young at the last shearings, Maria," her husband said.

"*Si,*" Maria answered, "only a baby, really."

"It is good, my little Evita", he said gently. "Again, the Festival of the Shearing of the wild vicunas has begun. Come, let us go see that your precious vicunas are fine."

Evita was almost four years old. She had seen the little animals beyond her village.

Small, graceful, beautiful. Quietly, they ate the short grass of the plains. The great jagged Andes Mountains rose in the distance.

Today, everybody in the village was out for the annual roundup and shearing event of the wild vicunas. The fine wool would bring a good price for the village.

Victor, her brother, and her cousin, Juan, were firmly holding a lively vicuna, who did not like the idea of being restrained. Victor looked up at Evita.

“Come,” he said, reaching out his hand. “Help your vicuna to be still and give us the precious wool that is like gold.”

Evita’s father put her down. She wiped her tears with the back of her hand.

Every eye in the village was watching as she walked up to the struggling vicuna. Kneeling, she put her tiny hand on the frightened animal’s long neck.

She stroked the cinnamon-colored wool. The lovely creature looked up at Evita with big, dark, deer-like eyes. The vicuna became still.

With the large scissors, Victor, and Juan, carefully cut through the undercoat and slipped off the *fleece* of fine wool.

“See, Evita”, Victor explained, “it does not hurt them. The vicunas are good for us.

They give us their wool. We are good for the vicunas. We protect them.”

That day, Evita became a true person of Bolivia. Her love for the country and its wildlife would continue to keep the age old cultural traditions of the past.

Soon, the shearing was done and the vicunas were released back into the wild. How they ran and jumped. How happy they were to be free again.

“It is the way of our people, Evita,” her father said. “No one owns the vicunas.”

He put a fleece of freshly sheared wool into her tiny hands. Evita held the soft wool up high in the air.

“Viva, la Bolivia!” she cried in a strong child’s voice.

And all the people of the village agreed.

THE END



## Glossary

**“Las vicunas no lana”** - “The vicunas, no wool.”

**Shearing** - The act of safely removing the fur of an animal without harming the animal.

**Shearing Scissors** - Special safe cutting tool to shear wool-bearing animals.

**Corral** - An enclosed area to keep animals contained.

**Fleece** - The full coat of fur removed from an animal.

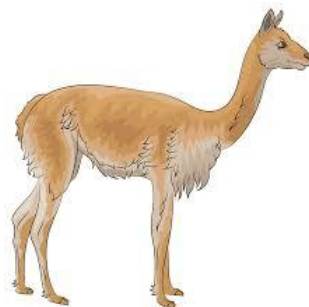
**“Si”** - Yes.

**“Viva la Bolivia”** - “Long live Bolivia.”

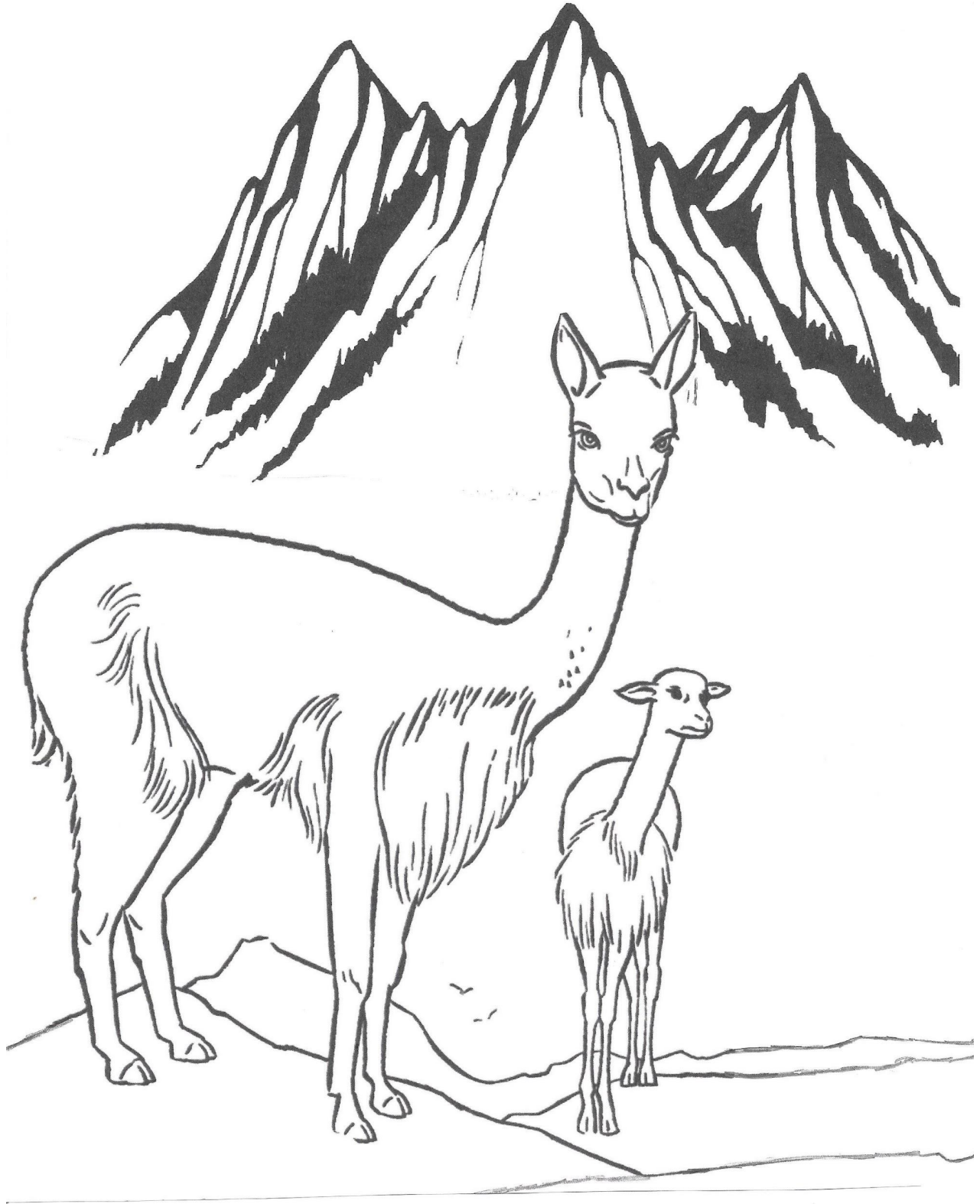
*\*see Letter Story ‘L,I’, A Llama for Luis. This is another story of an animal, in the Vicuna family, that supplies the needs of and maintains the culture of the South American country of Bolivia.*

## Did You Know?

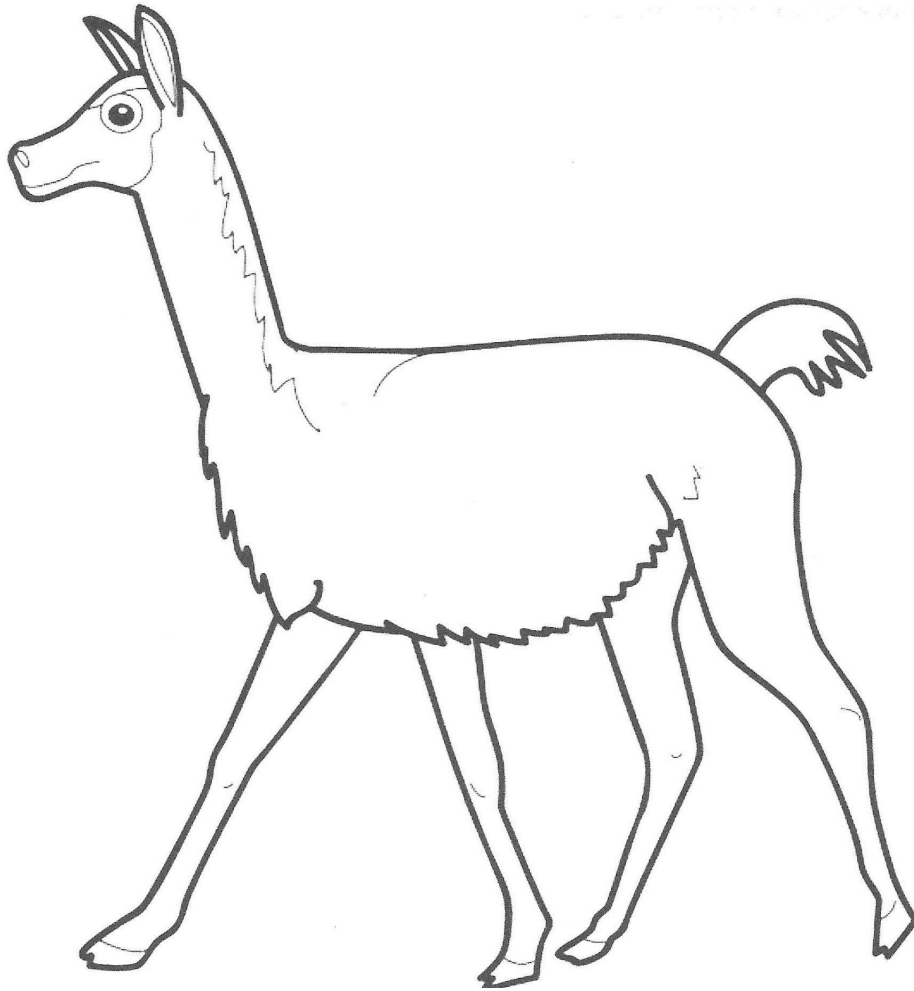
- Vicunas and Guanacos are wild in South America
- Vicunas are in the Camel family with Llamas and Alpacas (and Guanacos)
- Vicunas are the national animal of Peru in South America
- Vicuna wool is the most expensive of all animal wools
- Vicunas were 'endangered' in 1974 (only a few thousand left. They were 'hunted' and destroyed for their wool)
- Vicunas have recovered: now number 350,000
- Vicuna's long teeth are constantly growing
- Vicunas live at high altitudes of 10,000 to 16,000 feet
- Vicunas are shy but very alert and watchful
- Vicunas are 5 feet long, 3 feet tall at the shoulder and weigh 150 pounds
- Vicunas are sheared only when their fur has grown for three years



Color the Vicunas - light brown. Leave the fur (wool) and neck white.



Draw the Vicuna



## Take the Vicunas Quiz

Can you find the regions where the Vicunas live? Color them each a DIFFERENT color.  
*Hint: Vicunas live in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina.*

