

**GRANNY TORRELLI MAKES SOUP
BY SHARON CREECH**

**Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2006
Grades 3-5**

Submitted by Maranda G. Howell, Graduate Student
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Title: Granny Torrelli Makes Soup
Author: Sharon Creech
Illustrator: Chris Raschka
Publisher: HarperCollins Children's Book Group, 2003
Pages: 160

Summary

Twelve-year-old Rosie, just had a fight with her best friend Bailey – a boy she's known all of her life. Rosie and Bailey have always had their ups and downs (many stemming from Bailey's blindness), but it seems that lately things are growing so much more complicated: Why doesn't Bailey want her to learn to read Braille? Why does she care if the new girl Janine shows an interest in Bailey? While making "zuppa" (soup) with her Granny Torrelli, she recounts her lifelong friendship with Bailey. Granny Torrelli is as comforting and easy to digest as the food she prepares. She shares with Rosie many years of candid wisdom gathered from her own colorful (and often very similar) experiences as a young girl; thus, teaching Rosie that with good friends and good food, "Tutto va bene!" (All is well!)

Reviews

"High marks for its unique voice (make that voices) and for the way the subtleties are woven into the story. Chris Raschka contributes a colorful jacket painting and a few inside sketches to brighten things up even more." Ilene Cooper (Booklist, September 1, 2003, Vol. 100, No. 1)

"Creech's voice and phrasing in this book is wonderful and begs to be read aloud." Joan Kindig, Ph.D. (Children's Literature)

Horn Book Guide (Spring 2004, Volume 15, No. 1) Rating 2, Superior, well above average.

Awards/Recognition

Parent's Choice Award Recommended 2003 Fiction United States
Best Children's Books of the Year, 2004; Bank Street College of Education

Booklist Book Review Stars, September 1, 2003
Children's Catalog, 18th Edition, Supplement, 2004; H.W. Wilson
The Children's Literature Choice List, 2004; Children's Literature
Editors' Choice: Books for Youth, 2003; ALA-Booklist
Notable Children's Books, 2004; ALA-ALSC
Publishers Weekly Book Review Stars, June 16, 2003
School Library Journal Book Review Stars, July 2002

Author's Biography

Born in South Euclid, Ohio, Sharon Creech is the author of the Newbery Medal Book *Walk Two Moons* and the Newbery Honor Book *The Wanderer*, as well as several other titles. Additionally, she has written two adult novels (*The Recital* and *Nickel Malley*) under the pseudonym of Sharon Rigg and a play (*The Center of the Universe: Waiting for the Girl*) produced in New York, 1992. After teaching in Europe for eighteen years, she returned to the United States and now lives in Pennington, New Jersey with her husband Lyle. (Source: Contemporary Authors Online, Gale, 2003.)

Other Titles by Sharon Creech

Absolutely Normal Chaos
A Baby in a Basket: New-Baby Songs
Bloomability
Chasing Redbird
A Fine, Fine School (Picture Book)
Fishing in the Air (Picture Book)
Heartbeat
Love That Dog (Christopher Award)
Pleasing the Ghost
Ruby Holler (Carnegie Medal)
Walk Two Moons (Newbery Medal)
The Wanderer (Newbery Honor)

Classroom Activities

- Make Soup: Set up a day to make Granny Torrelli's Chicken Zuppa. Recipe available at:
http://www.harperchildrens.com/catalog/book_essay_xml.asp?isbn=0060292903 Have students bring the necessary items (ingredients, bowls, napkins, utensils, etc.) to prepare and eat in class.
- Family Tree: Students can explore their own heritage by creating a family tree. Have students examine their ancestral roots and share with the class information about where their family originated (customs, foods, etc. of their culture).

- Traditional Foods: Have students bring a traditional dish (family recipe or something that is traditionally eaten by people from their culture of origin.) Have students tell why it is special to their family or people of their culture eat, what ingredients are used, etc. Students need bring only enough for each person to sample.
- Compare and contrast this book with the other book on the LYRC ballot about a grandmother: *Snowed in with Grandmother Silk*.
- Show the students samples of Braille and discuss how visually impaired people read. Contact Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped section of the State Library to borrow Braille books. 1-800-543-4702.

Web Sites

HarperChildrens

http://www.harperchildrens.com/catalog/author_interview_xml.asp?authorid=11974 Interview with Sharon Creech.

HarperTeacher

http://www.harperchildrens.com/teacher/catalog/guide_xml.asp?isbn=0060292903 This site includes a summary of the book, discussion topics for teachers, chapter excerpt, and author information.

Sharon Creech

<http://www.sharoncreech.com>

Author's site includes biographical information, discussions and "tidbits" about her books and lesson plans for many of Creech's novels. No lesson plan for *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup*.

Nancy Keane's Booktalks

www.nancykeane.com/booktalks

Five different booktalks about *Granny Torrelli*.

Teen Health—Visual Impairment

http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/sight/visual_impairment.html

Discusses medical facts about blindness and other visual impairments.

Braille Bug

<http://www.afb.org/braillebug/>

Sighted children grades 3-6 can learn about Braille though its history as well as fun games and activities like "the name game" in which kids type words into a braille translator. Sponsored by the American Foundation for the Blind.