

APPLES TO OREGON: BEING THE (SLIGHTLY) TRUE NARRATIVE OF HOW A BRAVE PIONEER FATHER BROUGHT APPLES, PEACHES, PEARS, PLUMS, GRAPES, AND CHERRIES (AND CHILDREN) ACROSS THE PLAINS

Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2007 Grades 3-5

Submitted by Jennifer Rickerby, Graduate Student at School of Library & Information Science, LSU (Professor: Dr. Margie Thomas); and Ashley D. Savoy and Victoria Touchet, Students at University of Louisiana at Lafayette (Instructor: Dorothy Grimsley)

Apples To Oregon: Being the (Slightly) True Narrative of How a Brave Pioneer Father Brought Apples, Peaches, Pears, Plums, Grapes, and Cherries (and Children) Across the Plains by Deborah Hopkinson. Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter. Simon & Schuster, 2004. 40 p.

Summary

Delicious, the eldest daughter of a large pioneer family, narrates this exuberant tale of her family's journey West. They overcome numerous obstacles to take a wagonload of fruit trees from Iowa to Oregon. Despite the hardships described in the book by Delicious, the tone of the narrative is breezy and upbeat. The varied typefaces and full-page cartoon-style illustrations enhance the humorous text. Papa dearly loves his tiny trees. As they cross the Platte River, he howls, "Don't let my babies go belly-up." All the children work together to keep the trees alive as they cross the desert. They walk barefoot on the burning sand while the trees ride in the wagon: "In no time our feet were redder than the poison apple the old witch gave Snow White." Delicious goes to great lengths to help keep the trees alive, searching the desert for water, which she miraculously finds in the boot she had lost. This happy tall tale of a determined family is based on the true story of the Luelling family who transported 700 plants from Iowa to Oregon in 1847. (See author's note in the book.)

Awards

SCBWI Golden Kite Award
Spur Storytelling Award
ALA Notable Children's Book
School Library Journal Best Books of the Year
Bank Street College of Education, Best Books of the Year

Author's Biography

The award winning Deborah Hopkinson was born in Lowell, Massachusetts. Hopkinson earned a Bachelor's degree in English from the University of Massachusetts. She later earned her Master's in Asian Studies from the University of Hawaii. She is married with two children, a son in high school and a daughter in college. The family resides in Corvallis, Oregon. In addition to writing, Deborah works full time as the Director of Foundation Relations at Oregon State University. Her first picture book was *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*. Her books have won numerous awards. For more information on the author, visit the following websites:

<http://www.deborahhopkinson.com/>

http://www.harperchildrens.com/catalog/author_xml.asp?authorid=19412

<http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/clara14.html>

<http://www.downhomebooks.com/hopkinson.htm>

Other Titles by Deborah Hopkinson

Adventure in Gold Town. Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth.

Birdie's Lighthouse. Illustrated by Kimberly Bulcken Root.

Fannie in the Kitchen. Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter.

Maria's Comet. Illustrated by Deborah Lanino.

Our Kansas Home. Illustrated by Patrick Faricy.

A Packet of Seeds. Illustrated by Bethanne Andersen.

Pioneer Summer: Prairie Skies. Illustrated by Patrick Faricy.

Susan B. Anthony: Fighter for Women's Rights. Illustrated by Amy Bates.

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt. Illustrated by James Ransome.

Illustrator's Biography

Prior to illustrating books, Nancy created greeting cards and took a job as a graphic designer at the *New York Times*. When one of the illustrators got sick and could not go on an assignment, she completed the job instead, thus starting off her career as an illustrator. She reports that she loves her job and would not do anything else. Nancy Carpenter resides in Brooklyn, New York with her husband and toddler daughter. Nancy is the honored illustrator of more than ten picture books. In addition to *Apples to Oregon*, she also illustrated another of Deborah Hopkinson's picture books, *Fannie in the Kitchen*. Carpenter loves to sneak her cat into the illustrations in each of her books. For more information on the illustrator, visit the following websites:

<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/carpenter.html>

<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/catalog/author/detail.cfm?authorID=4743>

<http://midcareer.monster.com/qanda/bookillustrator/>

Related Titles

Stories about Pioneers Going West

Boss of the Plains: The Hat That Won the West by Laurie Carlson.

Covered Wagons, Bumpy Trails by Verla Kay.

Dear Levi: Letters from the Overland by Elvira Woodruff.

Fourth of July on the Plains by Jean Van Leeuwen.

The Golly Sisters Go West by Betsy Byars.

Grandma Essie's Covered Wagon by David Williams.

Humbug Mountain by Sid Fleischman.

Mr. Mysterious and Company by Sid Fleischman.

Roughing it in the Oregon Trail by Diane Stanley.

Sunsets of the West by Tony Johnson.

Twister on Tuesday by Mary Pope Osborne.

Wagons West by Roy Gerrard.

Tall Tales

Alligator Sue by Sharon Arms Doucet.

Avalanche Annie by Lisa Wheeler.

The Foot-Stomping Adventures of Clementine Sweet by Kitty Griffin.

Johnny Appleseed by Stephen Kellogg.

Johnny Appleseed by Jane Kurtz. (See web links for Jane's excellent site.)

Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett by Steven Kellogg.

The Shoe Tree of Chagrin by J. Patrick Lewis.

Sitka Rose by Shelley Gill.

Tales from Gizzard's Grill by Jeanne Steig.

Thunder Rose by Jerdine Nolen.

Apples

Apple Farmer Annie by Monica Wellington.

Ida B by Katherine Hannigan. (LYRC 2007 Grades 3-5 Ballot)

Classroom Connections

See these sites for excellent lesson plans.

A to Z Teacher Stuff: Plants

<http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/Themes/Plants/>

Johnny Appleseed by Jane Kurtz

<http://www.janekurtz.com/johnny.html>

Science and Math: Apples

- Pose different questions about apples. See www.deborahhopkinson.com for links to websites with apple facts.
- Using measurements, make applesauce and apple pie with your class.
- Provide different varieties of apples. Have children sample each variety and ask which ones they prefer. Graph the results.
- Before cutting an apple, have the children guess how many seeds will be inside the apple. Compare guesses with the actual number of seeds.
- Cut apples into segments and use to discuss fractions.

Geography: Maps

- Have the students plot the trail the family took from Iowa to Oregon. (See endpapers of the book.) Discuss landmarks along the way. Ask children if they would have taken a different route and have them explain their reasons. If children had taken a different route, have them plot their route. Compare the different routes.

History: Pioneers

- Have the children research the life of pioneers. Help the children come up with a creative way to present the information they gathered. Skits, storytelling, videos, and other media are acceptable. If desired, invite the parents to attend a presentation. Serve applesauce and apple pie the children made, as well as apple juice or cider.

Language Arts: Tall Tales

- See **Tall Tales** <http://www.42explore.com/talltale.htm> Web links about tall tales for elementary students. Includes classroom activities.
- Read aloud a tall tale, such as *Johnny Appleseed*. (See Related Titles for list of tall tales.) Discuss the characteristics of tall tales. Ask students to name other tall tales.
- Have the children make up their own tall tales. Have the children write their tall tales on apple cutouts and place them on a bulletin board or in the hallway.

Art

- Make apple prints: cut an apple in half to reveal a “star” shape and then dab paint onto the apple. Place the apple with the paint on a piece of paper to create an apple print.

Health: Nutrition

- Have the students visit a farmers market or the produce department of a grocery store. Discuss a healthy diet.

Web Links

Information about the Book, the Author and the Illustrator

Bookhive: Apples to Oregon

<http://www.bookhive.org/books/details.asp?id=1896>

Review of the book.

Deborah Hopkinson

<http://www.deborahhopkinson.com/>

This excellent site has links to web sites (many with lesson plans) about topics in all of the author's books.

Downhome Books: Interview with Hopkinson

<http://www.downhomebooks.com/hopkinson.htm>

This site includes an interview with the author.

Harper Collins

http://www.harperchildrens.com/catalog/author_xml.asp?authorid=19412

Short biography of Hopkinson.

Kay E. Vandergrift's Special Interest Page

<http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/~kvander/clara14.html>

Vandergrift's site is an excellent resource for children's literature and includes good information about the analysis of illustrations, literary theory, research and teaching. It includes an article written by Hopkinson about the illustrations by James Ransome in her book *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*.

Houghton Mifflin Education Place: Nancy Carpenter

<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/carpenter.html>

This includes a short biographical sketch of the illustrator.

Monster.com Interview with Nancy Carpenter

<http://midcareer.monster.com/qanda/bookillustrator/>

This is an interesting interview about having a career as an illustrator.

Information and Activities: Apples and Plants

A to Z Teacher Stuff: Plants

<http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/Themes/Plants/>

Site has lesson plans that deal with seeds and plants.

The Activity Idea Place: Apples

<http://www.123child.com/fall/apple.html>

Apple activity ideas for Art, Math, Science, Games, and Songs are given.

Apples

<http://www.42explore.com/apples.htm>

Web links to sites about apples for elementary school students.

History and Legends of Apples

<http://www.whatscookingamerica.net/Fruit/Apples.htm>

This link includes information about apples, including historical facts and legends.

Johnny Applesseed by Jane Kurtz

<http://www.janekurtz.com/johnny.html>

This web site created by Jane Kurtz, the author of the book *Johnny Applesseed*, has excellent book lists, web links and lesson plans related to Johnny Applesseed and apples, many of which may be used with *Apples to Oregon*.

Mother Earth News: One Man's Apples

http://www.motherearthnews.com/Organic_Gardening/2004_Febuary_March/One_Man_s_Apples

Article about Nick Botner of Oregon, a "modern-day Johnny Applesseed."

Powell's Book Store: Apples to Oregon

<http://www.powells.com/cgi-bin/biblio?inkey=75-0689847696-0>

This site includes awards, summary, reviews, related topics, and facts about apples.

Information about Pioneer Life**Mrs. Renz's Fourth Grade Class Web Site: The ABCs of Pioneer Life Book**

<http://www.redmond.k12.or.us/patrick/renz/studentwork/abcpioneerbook.htm>

This site includes a book made by Mrs. Renz's 4th grade class at Vern Patrick Elementary School in Redmond, OR. It includes activities and excellent Oregon Trail links. See Mrs. Renz's site for many more excellent classroom projects.

Oregon Trail

<http://www.42explore2.com/oregon.htm>

Web links about the Oregon Trail for elementary school students.

Pioneer Lesson Plans

<http://www.eagle.ca/~matink/themes/Pioneers/lessons.html>

This is a Canadian site, but it has many lesson plans that are related to U.S. pioneers.

Pioneer Life

<http://www.42explore2.com/pioneer.htm>

Web links about pioneer life for elementary school students.

Pioneer Life Web Center

<http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/Mountain/9112/Pioliife.html>

Guide to learning about pioneer life (1830-1850), comparing it to children's lives today.

Pioneers ThinkQuest

<http://library.thinkquest.org/6400/default.htm>

Excellent information, discussion questions, activities and links for elementary students.

Information about Tall Tales**Tall Tales**

<http://www.42explore.com/talltale.htm>

Web links about tall tales for elementary students. Includes classroom activities.