

YHBA Novel Resource

The Chicken Chasing Queen of Lamar County
by Janice N. Harrington

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Farrar, Straus and Giroux
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About the Author



Janice N. Harrington

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Janice Harrington was born in Alabama and moved to Nebraska when she was eight years old. Her love of writing comes from childhood favorites like *Charlotte's Web*. Harrington attended the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, graduating with a BS in Education in 1978. She has written various children's books and poetry in her career. Currently teaches in the creative writing program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In the past, she worked as a public school teacher in Nebraska, a public librarian and performed as a storyteller at festivals around the country. She has won many awards for her work, in 2007 she won the A. Poulin, Jr. Poetry Prize from BOA Editions and the Kate Tufts Discovery Award for her first poetry book. She has also won the Ezra Jack Keats Award from the New York Public Library in 2005.

Bibliography

Going North

Even the Hollow My Body Made is Gone

About the Illustrator



Shelley Jackson

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

Shelley Jackson was born in the Philippines in 1963 and grew up in California. She is the author and illustrator of many works across many genres. Shelley received a BA in arts from Stanford University and an MFA in creative writing from Brown University. She currently teaches in the graduate writing program at The New School in New York City. She has written and illustrated many works however most are inappropriate for children.

Bibliography

The Old Woman and the Wave

Sophia, the Alchemist's Dog

Annotation

The young farm girl in *The Chicken Chasing Queen of Lamar County* has one thing in mind...catching Miss Hen. She could catch any chicken she wants but somehow Miss Hen always seems to get away. Every morning she wakes up, eats breakfast, tells stories to Big Mama and when Big Mama isn't looking chases chickens!!! Big Mama warns her not to chase the chickens but she does anyways, she can't help it. Day after day she tries to come up with ways to catch Miss Hen but never successfully does. Soon Miss Hen begins to hide and the girl can't find her. Then

one day while looking for her she hears the soft peep, peep, peep. She moves the grass aside to find Miss Hen sitting on her nest protecting her baby chicks. At first Miss Hen is hesitant but soon realizes that the girl won't hurt her. A new relationship forms as Miss Hen brings her babies back to the farm and the young girl begins taking care of the chicks. Janice Harrington uses words that make a sound to create an exciting story. Words like squawk allow the reading to imagine what it might really sound like if you were to grab a chicken. The illustrator uses cut out paper to create a collage effect; the chickens aren't painted or drawn but rather made of pattern paper. The collage effect along with the realistic paintings of the young girl show what is truly the most important part on the page.

Genre

Realistic Fiction

Point of View

This book is written in the first person point of view

Theme

The theme of the book is friendship. The young girl loves to chase chickens but doesn't think about how the chickens feel when being chased. When she sees that the chicken had babies she changes her view of the chicken and becomes more of a friend to them. She takes care of the chicks by feeding them and keeping other predators away from them. She becomes a friend to them.

Conflict

A young farm girl loves to chase chickens. Big Mama tells her not to chase the chickens but she does anyways. She doesn't want just any chicken though she wants the chicken she calls Miss Hen. Miss Hen always gets away from her because she is faster than her but the girl is determined to catch Miss Hen.

Conflict Resolution

The conflict isn't resolved with the girl catching Miss Hen; it is resolved when she finds Miss Hen sitting on her nest with babies. The girl learns to respect Miss Hen and appreciate that she is now a mother. The girl changes her attitude and begins taking care of Miss Hen and her chicks.

Characters

Young Farm Girl-her name is not given in the book however Big Mama calls her baby. She is a young African American girl that lives on a farm and is full of energy. In the beginning she is proud to be the chicken chasing queen but in the end she learns to love, appreciate and cares the chickens.

Big Mama- possibly the young girl's grandmother. She tries to get the young girl to stop chasing the chickens but doesn't seem too bothered by it. She keeps an eye on the young girl but lets her explore the farm.

Setting

The story probably takes place in the south on a farm. It could either happen in the past or present time, there isn't enough information to know for sure.

Interest/Reading Level

The Chicken Chasing Queen of Lamar County has a lexile of AD 620 and a reading grade level of 3.4. Students ages 4-8 would find this book interesting.

Booktalk

Squawk!!! That's the sound you might hear if you were the chicken chasing queen of Lamar County. The young girl in this book by Janice N. Harrington loves chasing chickens. She is determined to catch Miss Hen, her favorite chicken, but somehow Miss Hen always gets away. The young girl creates the perfect plan despite being told by Big Mama to leave the chickens alone. Will she catch her chicken or will the chicken get away once again?

Vocabulary

plump pg 6: (plump) Well-rounded and full in form

vinegar pg 8: (vin·e·gar) An impure dilute solution

wheelbarrow pg 8: (wheel·bar·row) A one- or two-wheeled vehicle with handles at the rear, used to convey small loads.

dipper pg 18: (dip·per) One that dips, especially a container for taking up water

Indiana Academic Standards

Social Studies: Kindergarten- K.1.1

1st Grade- 1.1.1, 1.1.2

2nd Grade-

3rd Grade-

Science: Kindergarten- K.3.2, K.4.2

1st Grade- 1.4.1, 1.4.4,

2nd Grade-2.4.1, 2.4.2

3rd Grade-3.4.1, 3.4.3

Anticipation Statements

Before		The Chicken Chasing Queen of Lamar County	After		Reflection
Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree	
		If you chase chickens they won't lay eggs anymore.			
		Chickens like to be chased.			
		The girls hates chickens.			
		Chasing chickens can be a fun game.			

Art Medium Used

Shelley Jackson uses mixed-media collage to create the illustrations in *The Chicken Chasing Queen of Lamar County*. She uses a variety of patters, textures and colors to show the bright and cheery personality of the main character. She uses newsprint by cutting out individual letters to write out those high intensity action words like SQUAWK! Along with vibrant paint she uses cloth, loose-leaf paper and lace to bring the illustrations to life. At one point in the book she uses photographs to illustrate what the young girl is thinking about. Eggs, corn, worms, and cornbread are all photographs of things the girl is imagining. While the pictures in the book are beautiful, I think it would be even more beneficial for the students to see the original pieces of art. They would be able to touch and see the different textures and materials used. They could easily use pattern paper and fabrics to create their own collage.

Bibliography

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Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shelley_Jackson

Yahoo Kids Dictionary <http://kids.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary/english>

Amazon <http://www.amazon.com/Chicken-Chasing-Queen-Lamar-County/dp/0374312516>

Barnes and Noble <http://search.barnesandnoble.com/Chicken-Chasing-Queen-of-Lamar-County/Janice-N-Harrington/e/9780374312510>