

The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County

Author: Janice N. Harrington

Pictures: Shelley Jackson

Farrar, Straus, and Giroux- 2007

About the Author



<http://us.macmillan.com/author/janicenharrington>

Harrington grew up in rural Alabama, eventually moving to Nebraska, which provided the backdrop for the themes in her literary works. She has earned degrees in Education and Library Science. She has worked as a teacher, librarian and professional storyteller.

Harrington had a fascination as child to catch a chicken on her grandmother's farm. She was a self-proclaimed "wicked child". Harrington's experiences on her grandmother's Alabama farm are retold in her book, *The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County*.

Author of...

Going North

Roberto Walks Home

Even the Hollow My Body Made is Gone

Multiculturalism in Library Programming for Children

Author Awards:

A. Poulin, Jr. Poetry Prize

Kate Tufts Discovery Award

2007 National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry

Ezra Jack Keats Award

Awards:

Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year

CCBC Choice (Univ. of WI)

Children's Books: 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing, New York Public Library

Irma S. and James H. Black Award Honor Book

Parents' Choice Award Winner

Charlotte Zolotow Award / Highly Commended Booklist Editors' Choice

Horn Book Magazine Fanfare List

Kirkus Reviews Editor's Choice

Arkansas Charlie May Simon Master List

Capitol Choices Noteworthy Titles for Children and Teens

Illinois Monarch Award: K-3 Children's Choice Award Master List

Indiana Young Hoosier Award Master List

Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Award Maser List

Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award Master List

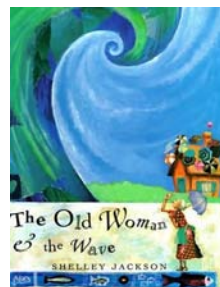
Tennessee Intermediate Volunteer State Book Award Master List

Vermont Red Clover Children's Choice Award Master List

Virginia Young Readers Award Master List

About the Illustrator:

Shelley Jackson



<http://ineradicablestain.com/latest.html>

Shelley Jackson has written a collection of short stories titled *The Melancholy of Anatomy*, the hypertext novel *Patchwork Girl*, *The Old Woman and the Wave*, and *Skin*. *Skin* is unique in that it is a story published in tattoos on the skin of more than two thousand volunteers.

Annotation:



Janice Harrington depicts her life growing up in rural Alabama in *The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County*. The chicken-chaser, as she calls herself, loves to chase chickens. Each day she defies Big Mama and heads out after having breakfast and telling Big Mama stories to do what she does best- chase chickens.

As good as she is at chasing chickens she has one conquest she has yet to conquer. There is one very special chicken that continues to elude her...she calls her "Miss Hen". Miss Hen is just as good at getting away as "the Queen" is at trying to catch her. A lot of thought and planning goes into her daily quest to catch Miss Hen.

One day Miss Hen is nowhere to be found. The Chicken-Chasing Queen searches until she eventually finds her in the tall grass. Not only does she find her, but she finally has a chance to catch her! She realizes Miss Hen has a family of her own and she quickly changes her focus.

The Chicken-Chasing Queen now tends to Miss Hen's chicks by feeding them corn and insects that she catches. She declares she will teach the young chicks to be fast so they will never be caught by a chicken chaser.

The author's background as a teacher, librarian and professional storyteller helped to make this a read aloud that you will want to read again and again. The patchwork words and pictures create a stunning addition to the story. Shelley Jackson creates beautiful pages of collage, paint and photos that entice the reader to turn the page to see what is next.

Genre:

Fiction/ Animals

Point of View:

First Person- told by the chicken-chaser

Theme:

Family Stories/ Farm Life/ Chickens/ African Americans

The title is very self explanatory in that the book is about a chicken-chaser who believes she is the best.

Conflict:

There is an external conflict between the chicken chaser and Miss Hen. In the middle of the story the chicken-chaser has conflict within herself.

Conflict Resolution:

The chicken-chaser discovers that her prized Miss Hen is now a mother. Miss Hen comes to realize that the girl only wants what is best for the baby chicks.

Characters:

Chicken-Chaser- young, pigtailed, African-American girl who loves to chase chickens

Big Mama- the Chicken-Chaser's grandmother

Miss Hen- plump mother hen with shiny feathers and long yellow legs who can run fast and elude the Chicken-Chaser

Mr. Rooster- male chicken on the farm that is chased by the Chicken-Chaser

Chicken Ladies- other female chickens on the farm that are chased by the Chicken-Chaser

The chicks- Miss Hen's babies that are small fuzzy chicks and the object of the Chicken-Chasers affection

Setting:

Rural Alabama 1960's

Interest Level/Reading Level:

IL- K-3 RL- 2.6

Booktalk:

I am The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County. I have one thing and one thing only I want to do each day- CHASE CHICKENS! Big Mama tells me, "Don't you chase those chickens. If you make those girls crazy they won't lay eggs." There is only one I want, Miss Hen, and she is the most beautiful of them all. But, something happens and she keeps disappearing. Where does she go? I search all over until finally I discover something I never expected.

Discussion Questions:

Pre-Reading- What is in the girl's hair?

Would you want to be a chicken-chaser? Why?

Pg. 1 What could happen if the girl chases the chickens?

Pg. 3 How do you think the chickens feel about the girl standing and watching them?

Pg. 4 Do chickens liked being chased?

Pg. 6 Describe Miss Hen.

Pg. 8 What would you do to try to catch the chickens?

Pg. 10/11 Looking at the pictures, which one do you think is Mr. Rooster. Why?

Pg. 12/13 Is it nice to chase animals? Why/why not?

Pg. 15 What would you think of if you were trying to have "chicken thoughts"?

Pg. 16 What sound do you think a chicken would make if it were being chased?

Pg. 18/19 Where else should the girl look for Miss Hen?

Pg. 20 What do you think she sees that is yellow?

Pg. 23 Will the girl grab Miss Hen?

Pg. 24 Why does the girl change her mind?

Pg. 26 Why do you think the illustrator put music notes on the fence?

Pg. 28/29 How do you think Miss Hen feels now?

Pg. 30 Will the girl go back to being a chicken-chaser?

Post-Reading- How did the girl change throughout the story?

Language:

stockings (6) differently colored part of an animal's legs

long-fingered feet (6) long thin toes with sharp nails

cookstove (20) outdoor stove for cooking in the summer

molasses-easy (20) very slowly and carefully
 hunkers (23) sits down close to the ground

Indiana Academic Standards:

English k.1.1, k.1.2, k.1.3, k.1.4, k.1.5, k.2.1, k.2.2, k.2.3, k.2.5, k.3.1, k.3.3, k.3.5, 1.1.3, 1.1.15, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 2.1.6, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4, 2.2.5, 2.2.6, 2.2.9, 2.2.10, 2.3.1, 2.3.5, 2.3.6, 2.3.7, 2.7.1, 2.7.8, 3.1.3, 3.1.6, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.6, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.3.6, 3.3.8

Science k.1.1, k.3.2, 1.1.2, 1.4.2, 1.6.2, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 3.4.3

Social Studies k.3.6, 1.1.1

Visual Art k.1.3, 1.2.1

Anticipation Statements:

Before		Anticipation Guide	After	
Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree
		It is okay to break rules if you get to do something you love.		
		You have to be very quiet when you are trying to catch a chicken.		
		Chickens are easy to catch.		
		A mother chicken is called a hen.		
		All chickens have shiny feathers.		
		Chickens can have many different colored feathers.		
		It is okay to tease animals by chasing them.		

Art Medium:

Mixed Media Collage

The artist has used a combination of painting, drawing, photographs and collage technique to give color and life to a chicken farm. The various materials used in the collage pictures can be pointed out to students as everyday materials they see at home and school. The artist uses cut out letters to emphasize the sound that the chickens make as they are being

chased. Photographs are used to depict the items the girl is picturing in her mind which children can relate to.

Read-Alikes:

Going North, Janice N. Harrington

Henrietta and the Golden Eggs, Hanna Johansen

Amazing Grace, Mary Hoffman

Bigmama's, Donald Crews

Curriculum Connections:

Students will complete the following webquest to learn about other animals that lay eggs. As they do their research they will learn where the animals live and make a book with scientific facts and illustrations to correspond to the information.

First Grade English: 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.4.6, 1.5.2

Science: 1.1.1, 1.6.2

Social Studies: 1.3.2

Art: 1.6.2, 1.6.4

<http://warrensburg.k12.mo.us/webquest/animals/>

Materials needed:

Chickens Aren't the Only Ones by Ruth Heller

Computer with internet access

8 pieces of paper stapled to make a book for each student

Pencil, Crayons, Colored Pencils

Finger Play Songs:

Kindergarten/ First Grade Music: k.1.1, k.1.2, k.1.4, k.1.6, 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 1.1.6

Kindergarten/ First Grade Math: k.1.1, k.1.4, 1.1.2, 1.1.4

The teacher will model and sing along the following songs/finger plays with students. Students will begin to learn the words to the songs as well as learn ordinal numbers, combining sets of numbers, and counting backwards.

FIVE LITTLE CHICKENS

Five little chickens by the old barn door,
(Hold up five finger fingers)

One saw a beetle, and then there were four.
(Bend down one finger)
Four little chickens under a tree;
One saw a cricket, and then there were three.
(Bend down another finger)
Three little chickens looked for something new:
One saw a grasshopper; then there were two.
(Bend down another finger)
Two little chickens said, "Oh, what fun!"
One saw a ladybug; then there was one.
(Bend down another finger) One little chicken began to run,
For he saw a katydid, then there were none!
(Bend down last finger)

TEN FLUFFY CHICKENS

Five eggs and five eggs,
(Hold up two hands)
That makes ten;
Sitting on top is the Mother Hen.
(Fold one hand over the other)
Crackle, crackle, crackle;
(Clap three times)
What do I see?
Ten fluffy chickens
(Hold up 10 fingers)
As yellow as can be.

CHICKENS

Said the first little chicken,
With a strange little squirm,
"I wish I could find
A fat little worm."

Said the next little chicken,
With an odd little shrug:
"I wish I could find
A fat little bug."

Said a third little chicken,
With a small sigh of grief,
"I wish I could find
A green little leaf!"

Said the fourth little chicken,

With a faint little moan,
"I wish I could find
A wee gravel stone."

"Now, see here!" said the mother,
From the green garden patch,
"If you want any breakfast,
Just come here and scratch!"

Book Activities:

Chicken Collage- Have each student create their own Miss Hen or Mr. Rooster using a variety of materials. Materials need would be scraps of paper, material, magazines, yarn, glue and other various craft materials. Each student should be given a large sheet of construction paper on which to create their chicken.

Visual Art k.6.1, k.6.2, k.6.4, k.7.2, k.7.4, 1.6.4, 1.7.2, 1.7.5, 2.6.4, 2.7.1, 2.7.2, 2.7.4, 3.7.1, 3.7.2, 3.7.4

In the book the young girl loved to chase chickens at her grandmother's house. Have the students reflect upon special activities they are allowed to do at their grandparent's or other relatives home that they typically do not get to do at their own home. Have them write a short story about the activity and why it is special. Upon completing the story have them draw a picture to accompany the story. The completed assignment can be given to grandparents on Grandparent's Day.

English k.4.2, k.4.3, k.4.4, k.4.5, k.5.1, k.5.2, 1.4.1, 1.4.3, 1.5.1, 1.5.4, 1.5.5, 1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.6, 1.6.7, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.5.2, 2.5.5, 2.6.1, 2.6.3, 2.6.4, 2.6.5, 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 3.6.3, 3.6.6, 3.6.7, 3.4.1, 3.4.9, 3.5.2, 3.5.4

Bibliography:

Harrington, Janice N. The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County

www.perma-bound.com

<http://us.macmillan.com/author/janicenharrington>

<http://dc.doe.in.gov/Standards/AcademicStandards/StandardSearch.aspx>

<http://www.alphabet-soup.net/farm/farmpoem.html>