

"Chickerella"

Written and illustrated by: Mary Jane and Herm Auch

Holiday House - New York - 2005

About the Author and Illustrator: Mary Jane and Herm Auch are a husband/wife writing team. Together they author and illustrate many children's books. Mary Jane began her writing career with middle grade novels. After having nine published she moved on to picture books. Herm was a graphic artist for forty years as well as an editorial cartoonist and digital artist for a newspaper. He retired after forty years and began working on children's books with his wife. Together they use painting, sculptures, and digital art to create the pictures in their books. In addition, Mary Jane and Herm travel to schools to provide instruction in story writing. They use a chicken character named Henrietta to show students how to find a main character, develop a plot, and build suspense in a story using the writer's five senses. The couple also introduces students to the world of digital art combined with painting to create unique illustrations for books. Some awards earned by the Auch team include the IRA Children's Choice Award for "The Princess and the Pea", the Storytelling World Award, a nomination for the Young Hoosier Picture Book Award, and the Show Me Readers Award.

Author's Homepage:

"Mary Jane and Herm Auch" <http://www.auchbooks.com/books>

Publisher's webpage:

Holiday House <http://www.holidayhouse.com>

Other children's books by Mary Jane and Herm Auch include:

A Dog on His Own, Cry Uncle!, A Sudden Change of Family, Beauty and the Beaks, The Easter Egg Farm, Eggs Mark the Spot, The Nutquacker, One Handed Catch, Out of Step, Journey to Nowhere, Peeping Beauty, The Latchkey Dog, The Princess and the Pizza, Troll Teacher, The Road to Home

Annotation: Mary Jane and Herm Auch give an old story some new life in "Chickerella". The traditional story of "Cinderella" is revised and revamped to include chickens as the main characters. Even though the basic story line is the same, the Auch writing team gives energy to the story with the chicken references throughout the story including the name of one of the chicken stepsisters, Cholestra, the name of the ball, The Fowl Ball, and the use of egg instead of ex in words like eggsciting and eggsquisite.

Much to the reader's surprise, the authors had their chicken prince go looking for the chick from the ball that laid the glass eggs. Once he found Chickerella though, you can't imagine what happened next. This is no usual prince and definitely not the usual ending to a version of "Cinderella".

The artwork is so cleverly done as the Auch team created chicken mannequins that could be posed. They made outfits and backgrounds for the scenes and then used digital photography to get their final product. This is a must read and see for young and old. The "chicken"

humor throughout the story will keep you smiling as you settle in to read a familiar, comfortable story.

Genre: fairy tale

Point of view: third person

Theme: treat others with kindness, perseverance

Conflict: Chickerella wants to go to the Fowl Ball but is locked in the coop. She does not want to continue to live under the direction of her evil stepmother.

Resolution: Chickerella's fairy goosemother came to her rescue and wished a new dress upon her and freed her from the coop so she could attend the ball. The prince then came looking for the chick at the ball who laid the glass egg and found Chickerella.

Characters: (all were chickens)

Chickerella - main character, sweet, hardworking, kindhearted

Stepmother - evil, disrespectful, deceitful

Stepsisters - unkind, not trustworthy, overbearing

Fairy Goosemother - magical, loving, helpful, intelligent

Prince - generous, fashionable, eager, creative

Setting: This story takes place in the chicken coop where Chickerella and her father lived. Chickerella worked over the course of many days and nights. Another part of the story is set at the Fowl Ball

during the evening. The book concludes with Chickerella and the prince in New York at a fashion show in the evening.

Interest and Reading Levels: ages 4-8, 3.9 reading level

Booktalk: How many have heard the story of "Cinderella"? (If not many have, read the original version first). Who are some of the characters? Let's list them on a chart. What is the setting? We will list it as well. What is the problem? How does the story end? We have all of that information on our chart. Now I am going to show you another version of the "Cinderella" story. As I am showing you the front cover, what do you notice? (Chickens on it) Who do you think the characters might be? The problem? The setting? Let's read and see!

(after reading, chart the information about "Chickerella", save for later lesson?)

Discussion Questions: Pre-reading: How do you think an author might use chickens as characters to retell the story of "Cinderella"?

Post-reading: How does the ending of "Chickerella" compare with other versions of "Cinderella" you have heard?

Page 3 Why did the author say "hen" bumps instead of goosebumps?

Page 7 What do you notice about the glass egg in the picture? How do you think she was able to lay glass eggs?

Page 12 What lesson do you think the fairy goosemother wants Chickerella to learn here?

Page 16 What would you be interested in seeing if you were at a ball?

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Page 21 Why did the illustrator show the shadows of the egg like it was going through the air? What happened to the egg?

Page 27 What is unusual about this prince, other than he is a chicken?

Language/Vocabulary:

Page 1 chickhood - childhood, time when you are growing up

Page 2 convinced - talked in to, make a person realize or believe

Page 4 proceeded - to go ahead and do something

Page 7 transparent - see through

Page 13 transportation - a way to travel (car, bus, train, etc.)

Page 17 exquisite (eggsquisite) - lovely, beautiful

Page 20 commotion - chaos, lots going on

Page 25 declared - said, stated

Academic Standards:

Language Arts

K.3.2, K.3.3, K.4.8

1.2.2, 1.2.5, 1.2.7, 1.3.1, 1.5.5

2.1.11, 2.2.5, 2.2.7, 2.3.3, 2.5.6, 2.5.7

3.2.9, 3.2.4, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.7, 3.5.5

Math

K.1.9, K.5.2, K.6.1, 1.1.9, 1.5.6, 1.6.1, 2.1.8, 2.5.10, 2.5.11, 2.6.1, 3.3.1, 3.4.4, 3.3.6, 3.5.9

Science

K.1.4, K.5.1, 1.4.4, 1.6.1, 2.3.4, 2.4.1, 2.4.7, 3.4.3, 3.4.1

Anticipation Guide:

Students will fold paper in half and number it one to 5. Read the following statements and have students mark A for agree or D for disagree. The same questions will be answered on the other side of the paper at the conclusion of the story.

- "Cinderella" is a story that only girls can enjoy.
- I have seen a real chicken before.
- Every "Cinderella" story has the same beginning, middle, and ending.
- A female chicken is called a hen.
- Chickens lay eggs

Art Medium Used: Mary Jane and Herm Auch used a combination of sculpted characters and 3D scenery in the book "Chickerella". The characters were stuffed mannequins that could be dressed and posed and were covered with chicken feathers. Herm then photographed each part of the scene and characters. The computer was then used to size the pictures and add special effects.

If You Like "Chickerella" by Mary Jane and Herm Auch, try these other Cinderella version stories:

- "James Marshall's Cinderella" by James Marshall
- "The Gospel Cinderella" by Joyce Carol Thomas
- "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters" by John Steptoe
- "Adelita" by Tomie dePaola
- "Cendrillon: A Caribbean Cinderella" by Robert D. San Souci
- "The Rough-Faced Girl" by Rafe Martin
- "The Golden Slipper" by Lum
- "The Way Meat Loves Salt" by Nina Jaffe
- "Smoky Mountain Rose" by Alan Schroeder
- "The Irish Cinderlad" by Shirley Climo
- "Sootface" by Robert D. San Souci

Across the Curriculum Connections:

Math - K.6.1, 1.6.1, 2.6.1, 3.6.3 Students will create a variety of story problems using information from the story. The story problems could be computation, time, or number sense problems (whatever is most appropriate for the grade level and unit of study at the time). The teacher will model first so students are clear on the procedures. Students will write and illustrate the problem. The answer should be included. Partners will get together to check work. A final copy will be produced and displayed in the room or a class book for all to solve.

Science - 2.4.3, 3.4.1, 1.4.2, K.4.2 The class will acquire chicken eggs and care for them until they hatch. Students will keep a daily journal to note the changes each day (written and/or drawn). Students should not only write the observable changes, but also include predictions and their feelings about what is happening each day. (Our Kindergarten students actually did this and it was a huge success!) The chickens will then be given to a caregiver when ready.

Book Activities:

Activity #1: individual assignment

Standard 2.5.2, 3.5.7, 1.5.5, K.4.3

Students will read a variety of Cinderella stories we get from the library. Each student will select their favorite version to review. They will then complete a "booktalk" to get others interested in reading that particular version.

Book Talk

Name _____ Date _____

Please choose a book from the front table to complete this assignment.

Steps to follow:

- 1. Find a quiet spot and enjoy reading the book you selected.**
- 2. On a sheet of paper write the title and author at the top.**

3. Think about why you enjoyed the book. Answer these questions.

What was your favorite part? _____

Where there any interesting characters? _____

Can you make a connection with this book, either to something in your life or with another book you have read? _____

Why should someone else read this book? _____

4. After thinking about these questions, write at least 5 or 6 sentences to “sell” this book to your classmates so they just can’t wait to read it for themselves.

** Remember: This is not a summary of the book. Your book talk should convince your classmates that they should read this book. It is like an advertisement or commercial for your book.*

Activity #2: individual and paired assignment (K,1 would do whole class)

Standard 2.3.3, 3.3.7, 1.3.1, K.3.2

Students will select a different version of a Cinderella story to read on their own. They will create and complete a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast the two versions. Students will then get with their

partner to share the Venn Diagram. These will be posted in the room for all to see and compare.

Rubric:

- _____ Venn Diagram is titled correctly
- _____ at least 3 statements in each section
- _____ statements reflect accurate information
- _____ work is neatly done

Bibliography:

Indiana Academic Standards, <http://www.doe.state.in.us>

Mary Jane and Herm Auch, <http://www.auchbooks.com>

National Writing Center for Children,
<http://www.writingforchildrencenter.com/2008/11/13/chickerella-by-mary-jane-and-herm-auch%22/>

Ethemes, <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000849.shtml>

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