

MOSDOS PRESS *Literature*

PEARL



Mosdos Press
CLEVELAND, OHIO

*L*MOSDOS PRESS *Literature*

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Judith Factor

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Libby Spero

CREATIVE/ART DIRECTOR

Carla Martin

SENIOR EDITOR

Jill Brotman

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Riva Pomerantz, Abigail Rozen

COPY EDITOR

Laya Dewick

TEXT EDITORS

Rona Arato, Carol June, Audrey Kessler, Pat Mote

INSTRUCTIONAL TEXT WRITERS

Donna M. Caputo, Bernadette Clemens, Sharon Doddroe, Deborah Herman,
Suzanne Holt, Linda Latta, Lydia Martin, Mona Newbacher

TEXT AND CURRICULUM ADVISOR

Rabbi Ahron Dovid Goldberg

ILLUSTRATORS

Sharon Bunting: *Alejandro's Gift*

Sorin Bulucianu: *The Gold Coin; The Island of the Endangered; The Cat and the Golden Egg*

Carla Martin: *Phoebe and the General; Dear Miss Veloshin; The Kid Who Invented the Popsicle; Moon; Growing Up; The Great Quillow; Keplik, the Match Man; The Pudding Like a Night on the Sea; Ibrahima; A Shipment of Mute Fate*

George Kocar: *The Great Detective; Adventures of Isabel; The Rum Tum Tugger; Call Me Proteus; The Beggar in the Blanket; Sing Me a Song of Teapots and Trumpets; A Nash Menagerie; The Day They Parachuted Cats on Borneo; Betty Botter; Habits of the Hippopotamus; Ooka and the Stolen Smell; Eleven; Virtuoso; The Lady and the Spider*

Ann Koffsky: *Duke Pishposh of Pash*

Sue McDonald: *Apology; Grandma Ling; The King of Mazy May; Crazy Boys/First Flight; Wilbur Wright and Orville Wright; Seeds; Abuelito Who; I'll Give You Law; Bringing the Prairie Home; Beach Stones; Change; Baby Running Barefoot; Halfway Down; who are you, little i; In My New Clothing/Glory, Glory . . . ; Icicles; Tumbling-hair; The King and the Shirt; Hug; A Poem for Jim Nagataak'w; The Stub-Book*

Leah Neustadter: *The Race; Polar Night; The Rap on the Door; Saguario; Alfred the Sweet-Shop Cat*

Kim Oswald: *The Quarrel; The Microscope; The Richer, the Poorer*

Copyright © 2003 by Mosdos Ohr Hatorah.

All rights reserved. Printed in China. Fifth Printing.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from Mosdos Press.

ISBN # 0-9671009-9-2

ISBN # 978-0-9671009-9-9 Student Edition



table of contents

UNIT ONE

COLLECTION ONE: *Courage*

Phoebe and the General	Judith Berry Griffin	.19
The Wounded Wolf	Jean Craighead George	.33
A Wolf	Osage Tradition	.37
<i>from Across Five Aprils</i>	Irene Hunt	.43
The Quarrel	Eleanor Farjeon	.59
Apology	Judith Viorst	.60
The Race	Victoria Furman	.64
The Story of Iqbal Masih	David L. Parker	.75
Words Like Freedom	Langston Hughes	.80



WORKSHOP ONE: *Recognizing Plot*

Dear Miss Veloshin	Marjorie Weinman Sharmat	.85
The Great Detective	Stephen Leacock	.93
Adventures of Isabel	Ogden Nash	.96
The Gold Coin	Alma Flor Ada	.101
The Empty Box	Johanna Hurwitz	.110
My Furthest-Back Person	Alex Haley	.122
Grandma Ling	Amy Ling	.133
Polar Night	Norah Burke	.138
Moon Tiger	Denise Levertov	.149

CURTAINS UP! *One*

The Rum Tum Tugger	T. S. Eliot	.152
The Dying Detective	Michael and Mollie Hardwick	.158



UNIT TWO

COLLECTION TWO: *New Frontiers*

Western Wagons	Stephen Vincent Benét	.....181
The King of Mazy May	Jack London	.....184
No Medals for Mary	Eve Pownall	.....197
The Microscope	Maxine Kumin	.....202
Garrett A. Morgan	Glennette Tilley Turner	.....205
The Kid Who Invented the Popsicle	Don L. Wulffson	.....213
<i>from One Writer's Beginnings</i>	Eudora Welty	.....224
Crazy Boys	Beverly McLoughland	.....229
First Flight	Frank Richards	.....229
Wilbur Wright and Orville Wright	Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benét	..231
Moon	Myra Cohn Livingston	.....234
<i>from To Space and Back</i>	Sally Ride with Susan Okie	.....238
Call Me Proteus	Edward Wellen	.....246





table of contents

WORKSHOP TWO: *Defining Character*

The Rap on the Door	Robert Fulghum	.270
The Biggest Problem		
(Is In Other People's Minds)	Don Haynie	.276
The Rescue of the Perishing	William Saroyan	.282
The Old Grandfather and		
His Little Grandson	Leo Tolstoy	.292
Those Winter Sundays	Robert Hayden	.295
Seeds	Javaka Steptoe	.296
Abuelito Who	Sandra Cisneros	.297
The Richer, the Poorer	Dorothy West	.302
The Beggar in the Blanket	Gail B. Graham	.309
<i>from Growing Up</i>	Russell Baker	.317
Miss Awful	Arthur Cavanaugh	.328
I'll Give You Law	Molly Picon	.345



CURTAINS UP! *Two*

Sing Me a Song of Teapots		
and Trumpets	N. M. Bodecker	.354
The Great Quillow	James Thurber	.358



UNIT THREE

COLLECTION THREE: *Our Natural World*

Bringing the Prairie Home	Patricia MacLachlan	.375
Beach Stones	Lilian Moore	.377
Little Swallow	Diana Cohen Conway	.380
A Minor Bird	Robert Frost	.384
The Island of the Endangered	Dale Ferguson	.388
A Nash Menagerie	Ogden Nash	.395
Turkeys	Bailey White	.397
Change	Charlotte Zolotow	.401
Autumntime	A. Lentini	.404
Saguaro	Frank Asch	.408
The Day They Parachuted Cats on Borneo: A Drama of Ecology	Charlotte Pomerantz	.413



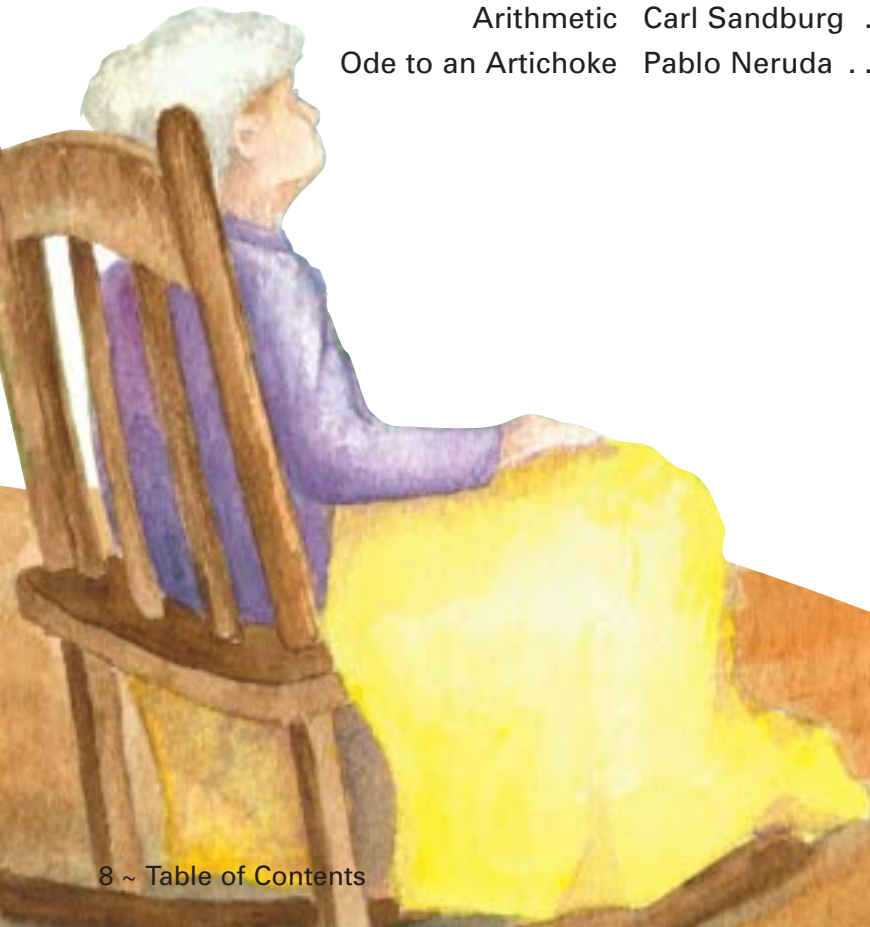
WORKSHOP THREE: *Exploring Setting*

Keplik, the Match Man	Myron Levoy	.436
Baby Running Barefoot	D. H. Lawrence	.446
Halfway Down	A. A. Milne	.447
who are you, little i	E. E. Cummings	.448
Alejandro's Gift	Richard E. Albert	.452
The Cat and the Moon	William Butler Yeats	.461
What America Means to Me	Jesse Stuart	.465
The New Colossus	Emma Lazarus	.472
The Flood	Ralph Helfer	.477

UNIT FOUR

COLLECTION AND WORKSHOP FOUR: *Enjoying Poetry*

Betty Botter	Traditional	.501
Living Tenderly	May Swenson	.502
Counting-out Rhyme	Edna St. Vincent Millay	.505
There Was an Old Person of Mold	Edward Lear	.507
There Was an Old Person of Dutton	Edward Lear	.507
Glory, Glory . . .	Raymond R. Patterson	.508
In My New Clothing	Basho	.508
Habits of the Hippopotamus	Arthur Guiterman	.511
Player Piano	John Updike	.514
Icicles	Barbara Juster Esbensen	.516
Tumbling-hair	E. E. Cummings	.517
The Passenger Pigeon	Paul Fleischman	.520
Arithmetic	Carl Sandburg	.524
Ode to an Artichoke	Pablo Neruda	.528





UNIT FIVE

COLLECTION FIVE: *Fables • Legends • Folklore*

The King and the Shirt	Leo Tolstoy	.537
The Tiger Who Would Be King	James Thurber	.539
Ooka and the Stolen Smell	I. G. Edmonds	.543
The Ant and the Grasshopper		
Fable	Aesop and James Reeves	.548
Poem	Aesop and Ennis Rees	.549
The Fox and the Grapes		
Fable	Aesop	.550
Poem	Jean de La Fontaine	.551
Duke Pishposh of Pash	Jay Williams	.555

WORKSHOP FIVE: *Understanding Theme*

The Pudding Like a Night on the Sea	Ann Cameron	.565
Eleven	Sandra Cisneros	.574
A short long story	Julia Cunningham	.578
Virtuoso	Herbert Goldstone	.582
Ibrahima	Walter Dean Myers	.593
Hug	Gabriel Olvera	.607
A Poem for Jim Nagataak'w	Nora Marks Dauenhauer	.608
The Cat and the Golden Egg	Lloyd Alexander	.611
Southbound on the Freeway	May Swenson	.622



CURTAINS UP! *Three*

The Jumblies	Edward Lear	.626
A Shipment of Mute Fate	Les Crutchfield	.632

UNIT SIX

THE GRAND FINALÉ: *Pulling It All Together*

The Stub-Book	Pedro Antonio de Alarcón	.653
The Boy with Yellow Eyes	Gloria Gonzalez	.663
The Lady and the Spider	Robert Fulghum	.673
Earthquake: The Story of an Eyewitness	Jack London	.680
Alfred the Sweet-Shop Cat	James Herriot	.691
The Visitor	Gibbons Ruark	.706
	Roman Numerals	.709
	Handbook of Literary Terms	.710
	Glossary	.723
	Index of Authors and Titles	.734
	Acknowledgments	.735



Most pages are omitted from this preview.

This content is included with purchase of the book.

MOSDOS PRESS

Blueprint for Reading

BACKGROUND BYTES

For thousands of years, healers have used herbs and other plants to heal the sick and injured. This is the role of the old woman in *The Gold Coin*. In the Amazon rainforest today, there is a native healer with a garden of more than one hundred rainforest plants that have medical value.

Not very long ago, fourteen percent of the earth's land mass was rainforest. As wealthy corporations have hacked away at these regions, the rainforest has been reduced to six percent of the earth's surface. Hundreds of rainforest animals and plants are on the brink of extinction.

The rainforest is still home to half the plant species on earth. Doctors regularly prescribe thousands of medications that were originally extracted from rainforest plants. Some two thousand rainforest plant species have been identified that could help in the fight against cancer. Research and laboratory scientists have only just begun to tap these natural resources.

Rainforest plants may hold the cures for countless other diseases, but only a tiny percentage of them have been examined. The rainforest is being destroyed in the Amazon and in Malaysia at an alarming rate. Plants that have medicinal value may be lost forever.

INTO . . . *The Gold Coin*

Throughout the story, Juan focuses on getting the gold coin. To him, material riches are the door to happiness and freedom. In fact, he has never known either.

Does having money make us happy? Does it change our lives for the good? Stories are told of lottery winners who are thrilled at their sudden good fortune. They later realize that they are no happier than they

were before they won the money. What does it mean to be happy? Why is Juan an unhappy person?

As you read *The Gold Coin*, look for the author's clues that point towards the conclusion that money is not what makes a person rich. What kind of richness is Doña Josefa talking about, when she says, "I must be the richest person in the world"?

The Gold Coin



FOCUS

- **Fable**

The Gold Coin is a fable. A **fable** is a short story that teaches a lesson. *The Gold Coin* is longer than the ordinary fable, and the writer describes all of the characters very sympathetically. This means that we care about all of the characters, including Juan. Most fables do not encourage the reader to think sympathetically about hungry foxes or freezing grasshoppers.

The lesson that fables teach is called “the moral of the story.” The lesson of a fable usually becomes clear when the main character is outwitted, or forced to see his own foolishness. Does Juan learn this way, by being outwitted or humiliated, or does he learn from the positive actions he takes and the kindness of the good people he meets?

- **Language Arts Skill: Sequence of Events**

Juan learns his lessons gradually. As you are reading, look for the events that lead to Juan’s final decision about the coin. Look for them in the order in which they occur. This is called the **sequence of events**. When you summarize a story, you give only the main points. Understanding the sequence of events will help you do this.

- **About Plot: Conflict**

The plot of a story is often driven by a conflict between the main character and someone or something else. This story has several different conflicts. For example, Juan wants the coin desperately, but he keeps missing his chance to get it. Juan also is in conflict with society, because he is a criminal who acts outside of the law to get what he wants.

The background of the page is a painting of a log cabin with a thatched roof. The cabin is illuminated from within, with warm yellow light glowing from the windows and the open doorway. The scene is set at night, with dark silhouettes of trees and foliage in the background. The overall mood is mysterious and atmospheric.

The Gold Coin

Alma Flor Ada

Juan¹ had been a thief for many years. Because he did his stealing by night, his skin had become pale and sickly. Because he spent his time either hiding or sneaking about, his body had become shriveled and bent. And because he had neither friend nor relative to make him smile, his face was always twisted into an angry frown.

One night, drawn by a light shining through the trees, Juan came upon a hut. He crept up to the door and through a crack saw an old woman sitting at a plain, wooden table.

What was that shining in her hand? Juan wondered. He could not believe his eyes: it was a gold coin. Then he heard the woman say to herself, " I must be the richest person in the world."

1. *Juan* (WHAN)

Juan decided instantly that all the woman's gold must be his. He thought that the easiest thing to do was to watch until the woman left. Juan hid in the bushes and huddled under his poncho, waiting for the right moment to enter the hut.

Juan was half asleep when he heard knocking at the door and the sound of insistent voices. A few minutes later, he saw the woman, wrapped in a black cloak, leave the hut with two men at her side.

Here's my chance! Juan thought. And forcing open a window, he climbed into the empty hut.

He looked about eagerly for the gold. He looked under the bed. It wasn't there. He looked in the cupboard. It wasn't there, either. Where could it be? Close to despair, Juan tore away some beams supporting the thatch roof.

Finally, he gave up. There was simply no gold in the hut.

All I can do, he thought, is to find the old woman and make her tell me where she's hidden it.

So he set out along the path that she and her two companions had taken.

It was daylight by the time Juan reached the river. The countryside had been deserted, but here along the riverbank were two huts. Nearby, a man and his son were hard at work, hoeing potatoes.

It had been a long, long time since Juan had spoken to another human being. Yet his desire to find the woman was so strong that he went up to the farmers and asked, in a hoarse, raspy voice, "Have you seen a short, gray-haired woman, wearing a black cloak?"

"Oh, you must be looking for Doña Josefa,"² the young boy said. "Yes, we've seen her. We went to fetch her this morning, because my grandfather had another attack of—"

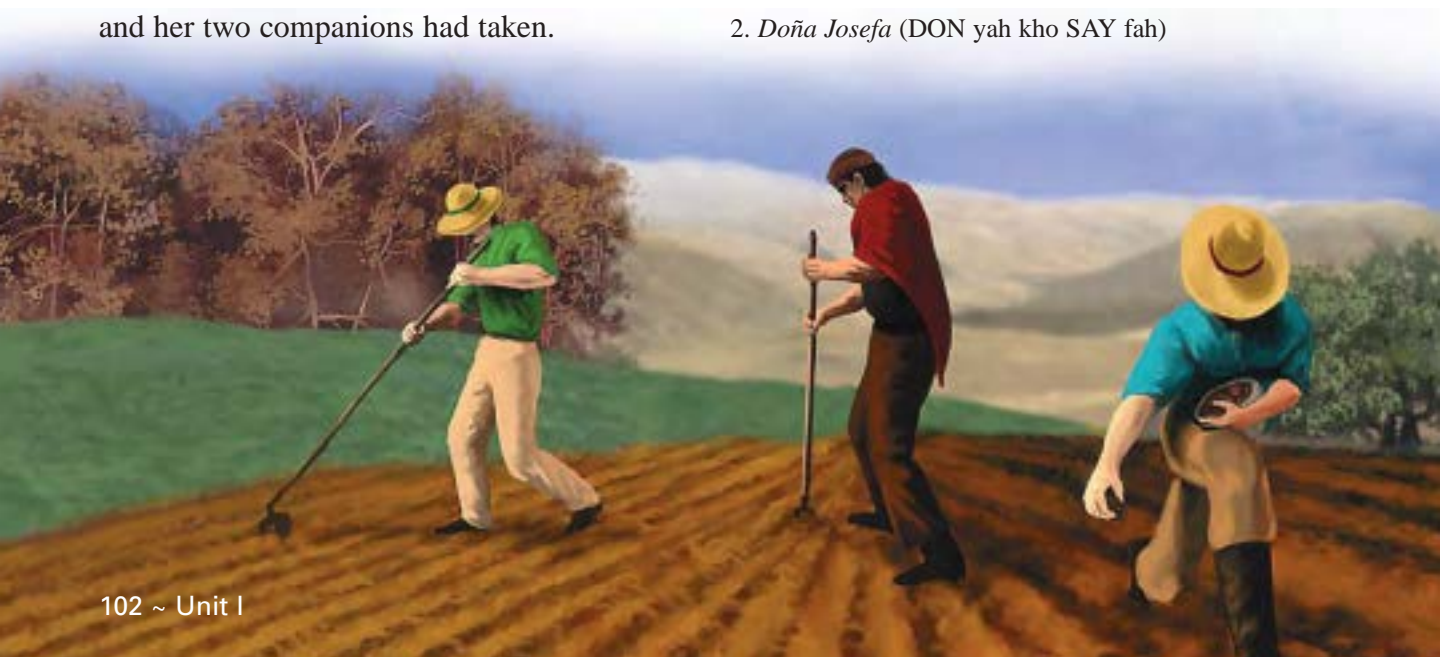
"Where is she now?" Juan broke in.

"She is long gone," said the father with a smile. "Some people from across the river came looking for her, because someone in their family is sick."

"How can I get across the river?" Juan asked anxiously.

"Only by boat," the boy answered.

2. *Doña Josefa* (DON yah kho SAY fah)



“We’ll row you across later, if you’d like.” Then turning back to his work, he added, “But first we must finish digging up the potatoes.”

The thief muttered, “Thanks.” But he quickly grew impatient. He grabbed a hoe and began to help the pair of farmers. The sooner we finish, the sooner we’ll get across the river, he thought. And the sooner I’ll get to my gold!

It was dusk when they finally laid down their hoes. The soil had been turned, and the wicker baskets were brimming with potatoes.

“Now can you row me across?” Juan asked the father anxiously.

“Certainly,” the man said. “But let’s eat supper first.”

Juan had forgotten the taste of a home-cooked meal and the pleasure that comes from sharing it with others. As he sopped up the last of the stew with a chunk of dark bread, memories of other meals came back to him from far away and long ago.

By the light of the moon, father and son guided their boat across the river.

“What a wonderful healer Doña Josefa is!” the boy told Juan. “All she had to do to make Abuelo³ better was give him a cup of her special tea.”

“Yes, and not only that,” his father added, “she brought him a gold coin.”

Juan was stunned. It was one thing for Doña Josefa to go around helping people. But how could she go around handing out gold coins—*his gold coins*?

When the threesome finally reached the other side of the river, they saw a young man sitting outside his hut.

“This fellow is looking for Doña Josefa,” the father said, pointing to Juan.

“Oh, she left some time ago,” the young man said.

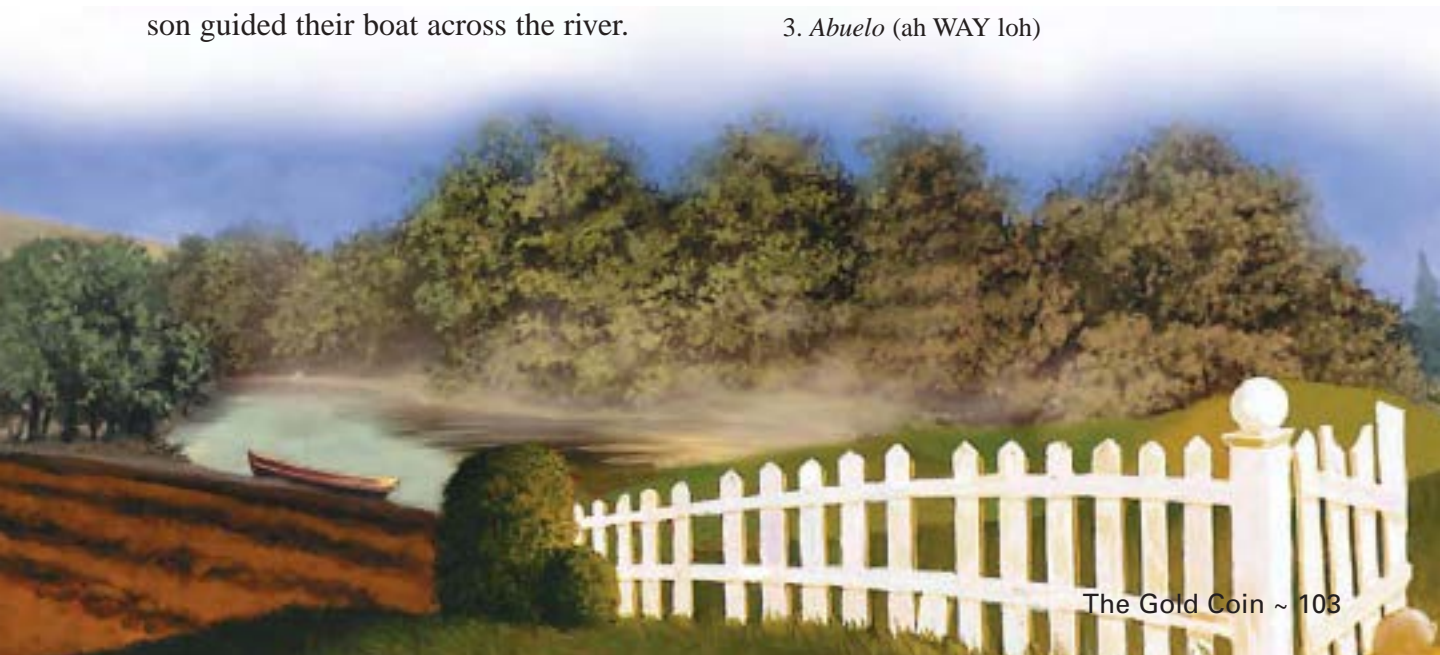
“Where to?” Juan asked tensely.

“Over to the other side of the mountain,” the young man replied, pointing to the vague outline of mountains in the night sky.

“How did she get there?” Juan asked, trying to hide his impatience.

“By horse,” the young man answered.

3. *Abuelo* (ah WAY loh)



“They came on horseback to get her because someone had broken his leg.”

“Well, then, I need a horse, too,” Juan said urgently.

“Tomorrow,” the young man replied softly. “Perhaps I can take you tomorrow, maybe the next day. First I must finish harvesting the corn.”

So Juan spent the next day in the fields, bathed in sweat from sunup to sundown.

Yet each ear of corn that he picked seemed to bring him closer to his treasure. And later that evening, when he helped the young man husk several ears so they could boil them for supper, the yellow kernels glittered like gold coins.

While they were eating, Juan thought about Doña Josefa. Why, he wondered, would someone who said she was the world’s richest woman spend her time taking care of every sick person for miles around?

The following day, the two set off at dawn. Juan could not recall when he last had noticed the beauty of the sunrise. He

felt strangely moved by the sight of the mountains, barely lit by the faint rays of the morning sun.

As they neared the foothills, the young man said, “I’m not surprised you’re looking for Doña Josefa. The whole countryside needs her. I went for her because my wife had been running a high fever. In no time at all, Doña Josefa had her on the road to recovery. And what’s more, my friend, she brought her a gold coin!”

Juan grinned inwardly. To think that someone could hand out gold so freely! What a strange woman Doña Josefa is, Juan thought. Not only is she willing to help one person after another, but she doesn’t mind traveling all over the countryside to do it!

“Well, my friend,” said the young man finally, “this is where I must leave you. But you don’t have far to walk. See that house over there? It belongs to the man who broke his leg.”

The young man stretched out his hand to say good-bye. Juan stared at it for a



moment. It had been a long, long time since the thief had shaken hands with anyone. Slowly, he pulled out a hand from under his poncho. When his companion grasped it firmly in his own, Juan felt suddenly warmed, as if by the rays of the sun.

But after he thanked the young man, Juan ran down the road. He was still eager to catch up with Doña Josefa. When he reached the house, a woman and a child were stepping down from a wagon.

“Have you seen Doña Josefa?” Juan asked.

“We’ve just taken her to Don Teodosio’s,” the woman said. “His wife is sick, you know—”

“How do I get there?” Juan broke in. “I’ve got to see her.”

“It’s too far to walk,” the woman said amiably. “If you’d like, I’ll take you there tomorrow. But first I must gather my squash and beans.”

So Juan spent yet another long day in the fields. Working beneath the summer

sun, Juan noticed that his skin had begun to tan. And although he had to stoop down to pick the squash, he found that he could now stretch his body. His back had begun to straighten too.

Later, when the little girl took him by the hand to show him a family of rabbits burrowed under a fallen tree, Juan’s face broke into a smile. It had been a long, long time since Juan had smiled.

Yet his thoughts kept coming back to the gold.

The following day, the wagon carrying Juan and the woman lumbered along a road lined with coffee fields.

The woman said, “I don’t know what we would have done without Doña Josefa. I sent my daughter to our neighbor’s house, who then brought Doña Josefa on horseback. She set my husband’s leg and then showed me how to brew a special tea to lessen the pain.”

Getting no reply, she went on. “And, as if that weren’t enough, she brought him a gold coin. Can you imagine such a thing?”



Juan could only sigh. No doubt about it, he thought, Doña Josefa is someone special. But Juan didn't know whether to be happy that Doña Josefa had so much gold she could freely hand it out, or angry for her having already given so much of it away.

When they finally reached Don Teodosio's house, Doña Josefa was already gone. But here, too, there was work that needed to be done . . .

Juan stayed to help with the coffee harvest. As he picked the red berries, he gazed up from time to time at the trees that grew, row upon row, along the hillsides. What a calm, peaceful place this is! he thought.

The next morning, Juan was up at daybreak. Bathed in the soft dawn light, the mountains seemed to smile at him. When Don Teodosio offered him a lift on horseback, Juan found it difficult to have to say good-bye.

"What a good woman Doña Josefa is!" Don Teodosio said, as they rode down the hill toward the sugarcane fields. "The minute she heard about my wife being sick, she came with her special herbs. And as if that weren't enough, she brought my wife a gold coin!"

In the stifling heat, the kind that often signals the approach of a storm, Juan simply sighed and mopped his brow. The pair continued riding for several hours in silence.

Juan then realized he was back in familiar territory, for they were now on the

stretch of road he had traveled only a week ago—though how much longer it now seemed to him. He jumped off Don Teodosio's horse and broke into a run.

This time the gold would not escape him! But he had to move quickly, so he could find shelter before the storm broke.

Out of breath, Juan finally reached Doña Josefa's hut. She was standing by the door, shaking her head slowly as she surveyed the ransacked house.

"So I've caught up with you at last!" Juan shouted, startling the old woman. "Where's the gold?"

"The gold coin?" Doña Josefa said, surprised and looking at Juan intently. "Have you come for the gold coin? I've been trying hard to give it to someone who might need it," Doña Josefa said. "First to an old man who had just gotten over a bad attack. Then to a young woman who had been running a fever. Then to a man with a broken leg. And finally to Don Teodosio's wife. But none of them would take it. They all said, 'Keep it. There must be someone who needs it more.'"

Juan did not say a word.

"You must be the one who needs it," Doña Josefa said.

She took the coin out of her pocket and handed it to him. Juan stared at the coin, speechless.

At that moment a young girl appeared, her long braid bouncing as she ran. "Hurry, Doña Josefa, please!" she said breathlessly. "My mother is all alone, and the baby is due any minute."

“Of course, dear,” Doña Josefa replied. But as she glanced up at the sky, she saw nothing but black clouds. The storm was nearly upon them. Doña Josefa sighed deeply.

“But how can I leave now? Look at my house! I don’t know what has happened to the roof. The storm will wash the whole place away!”

And there was a deep sadness in her voice.

Juan took in the child’s frightened

eyes, Doña Josefa’s sad, distressed face, and the ransacked hut.

“Go ahead, Doña Josefa,” he said. “Don’t worry about your house. I’ll see that the roof is back in shape, good as new.”

The woman nodded gratefully, drew her cloak about her shoulders, and took the child by the hand. As she turned to leave, Juan held out his hand.

“Here, take this,” he said, giving her the gold coin. “I’m sure the newborn will need it more than I.”



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ALMA FLOR ADA, born in 1938, draws from her Cuban heritage and her childhood experiences to write stories for children. As a child she listened to the tales told by her grandmother and uncles, and she spent lots of time outdoors reading books. Ms. Ada writes in both Spanish and English, and feels that learning more than one language is an important creative tool. She teaches at the University of San Francisco.

Studying the Selection

QUICK REVIEW

1. How has Juan's life as a thief affected him physically?
2. Why does Juan follow Doña Josefa as she moves from place to place?
3. What does Juan learn about Doña Josefa, from the people who offer to take him to her?
4. What does Doña Josefa offer to give Juan, and how does he respond?

FOCUS

1. What lesson do you think the author is teaching us in *The Gold Coin*?
2. When you summarize, you include only the most important ideas of a piece of writing, and you leave out the minor details. Summarize *The Gold Coin* in three to five sentences.
3. A conflict occurs when two different forces work against each other. At first, Juan is in conflict with society because he steals, and this breaks society's rules. Think of a time when you experienced a conflict. What were the two opposing forces? How was the conflict resolved?

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

You have read stories with surprise endings. Does the ending of *The Gold Coin* surprise you?

CREATING AND WRITING

1. One of the themes of *The Gold Coin* is that you can be a rich person without money or belongings. Write a list of the ways in which you are rich. Do not include money or things that you own.
2. Think of a lesson that you have learned. For example, maybe you learned that it's better to share than to be stingy. Now, write a short fable. In your fable, the main character will learn the lesson that you have learned.
3. The illustrations for *The Gold Coin* help bring the story to life. Now you have the opportunity to illustrate your own fable. Help your readers imagine the scenes and characters you wrote about in #2. Bring your fable to life with the illustrations you create.

Most pages are omitted from this preview.

This content is included with purchase of the book.

MOSDOS PRESS

The Passenger

Pigeon

Blueprint for Reading

BACKGROUND BYTES

How does an animal species go from a population of billions to none?

In 1857, a committee of the Ohio State Legislature declared, “The passenger pigeon needs no protection.”

Passenger pigeons were slaughtered by the millions. They were killed for their feathers, for sport, for food. In the 19th century, forests in the U.S. began to disappear. The forests held the nuts and berries the passenger pigeon needed.

Once the number of passenger pigeons had fallen below a certain level, the species could not recover. The balance tipped toward extinction—the disappearance of an entire species.

When there are many life forms, it is called biodiversity. With biodiversity, *everything is in balance*, as it was meant to be. When a species becomes extinct, there are massive die-offs of other species, because each depends on the others.

INTO . . . *The Passenger Pigeon*

30,000 species are becoming extinct each year. Nearly half of all living animal and plant species could be lost in the next 50 years. Sadly, those who follow us will not even know what they have missed.

FOCUS

• Memorial Poem

Written in free verse, this form poem cries for the passing of an entire species.

The similes compare the passenger pigeon with stars in the heavens, grains of sand in the sea, and the American buffalo. The metaphors tell us that when these birds took flight, “the sun was darkened and day became dusk.”

• Using Repetition in Poetry

In *The Passenger Pigeon*, the poet repeats words to create an echo. This echo gives emphasis and importance to the words. Because of the way the repeated words are laid out on the page, they look like pigeons in flight.

• New Words to Describe Repetition

Sometimes, we need new words, if we want to describe something perfectly. Try these:

epistrophe (eh PIH stroh fee): The repetition of a word or words at the end of two or more successive verses.

anaphora (an ah FOR ah): The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of two or more successive verses.

palillogy (pal ILL oh jee): The repetition of a word or phrase for emphasis.

The Passenger Pigeon

Paul Fleischman

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

PAUL FLEISCHMAN grew up in the 1950s in Monterey, California. His father, Sid Fleischman, is also a well-known children's author. Paul Fleischman's writing is often characterized by a fondness for historical material. Sometimes, he uses a lesser-known snippet from history to inspire a story. He also enjoys writing about contemporary issues. Mr. Fleischman has won the Newbery Award for his work.

We were counted not in

nor

but in

billions.

stars

As grains of

sand

at the sea

buffalo

When we burst into flight

that the

sun

was darkened

day

Humblers of the sun

we were!

The world

inconceivable

Yet it's 1914,

and here I am

alone

the last

thousands

millions

billions.

We were numerous as the

stars

in the heavens

sand

As the

buffalo

on the plains.

we so filled the sky

sun

and

day

became dusk.

Humblers of the sun

we were!

inconceivable

without us.

alone

caged in the Cincinnati Zoo,

of the passenger pigeons.

Studying the Selection

A HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Thank You, World Wildlife Fund!

Does your town or city have grizzly bears in the woods? Condors flying in the sky? Manatees in the rivers? No? Well, it's still full of life. This activity will show the biodiversity (variety of life) in your region. Here is your chance to do a rapid assessment, or quick survey, of your locale.

• Each Student Group Needs

- ✓ A simple map of the survey area
- ✓ pads of paper, pens, and pencils
- ✓ magnifying glasses
- ✓ field guides

• The Task

1. Select an area to study. Form small survey teams.
2. Each team member is assigned a role. Each is responsible for different parts of the survey area, or for tracking specific organisms: insects, plants, mammals, reptiles, or birds.
3. Note all signs of living things and their location. If you can't name an organism, make a sketch and write a description, such as *tiny white flowers with red middles* or *dark caterpillar eating an oak leaf*.
4. Walk softly, slowly, and quietly. Don't frighten the animal life. Don't destroy the evidence! Respect any signs of life, including spider webs and insect hills. Do not injure any organisms.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Is the ending of the poem a good one?

• Look for Animal and Insect Signs

- tracks
- burrows
- nests
- digging and scratching marks
- bones
- feathers
- insect eggs
- cocoons
- spider webs
- nibbled leaves and branches
- animal droppings
- feeding holes in dead trees and logs

• Questions for Discussion

1. Which organisms—plant, insect, reptile, bird, mammal—did your group find? Have you noticed these organisms before?
2. Are organisms present throughout all of your survey area?
3. Would your results be the same during another season of the year?
4. Wildlife habitats are disappearing quickly because of destruction by man. Why do scientists find rapid assessments so useful?
5. All of the small groups from your class can now pool their knowledge. With your teacher's guidance, the class will create a mini field guide, following the model of the field guides used for your survey. The class field guide will show the biodiversity of your survey area. Existing field guides will help members of the class identify the organisms and animal signs they observed.