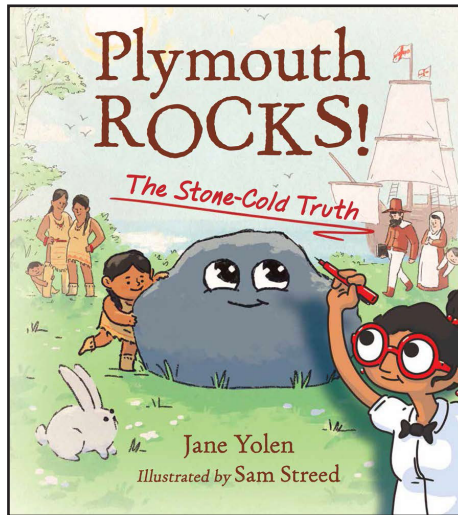


Plymouth ROCKS!

The Stone-Cold Truth Activity Guide

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Jane Yolen
Illustrated by Sam Streed
978-1-58089-685-6 HC
e-book edition available

About the Book

Master storyteller Jane Yolen marks the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower landing at Plymouth Rock by channeling the voice of this national monument in comical poems. But the rock might not be telling the whole truth—so the Fact Checker is here with her red pen to help out!

Funny and serious in turns, this poetry collection gently but firmly calls out parts of US history that people often neglect or misrepresent and encourages young people to think critically about what they hear, wherever they hear it.



About the Author

Jane Yolen is the award-winning author of over three hundred children's books, including *Last Laughs: Prehistoric Epitaphs*; *Last Laughs: Animal Epitaphs*; *Bad Girls* (with Heidi E. Y. Stemple); *Owl Moon*, a Caldecott Medal Winner; the *How Do Dinosaurs . . . ?* series; and *Sea Queens*. She has been called the Hans Christian Andersen of the Americas.



About the Illustrator

Sam Streed is a children's book author/illustrator, game artist, and animator. He is the author and illustrator of *Alfred's Book of Monsters* and holds a degree from Rhode Island School of Design.

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Reading Aloud

Before You Read

Show your class the front and back cover of *Plymouth Rocks!* Ask them what they see. Read the title together and ask what they think the book will be about. Record their answers on chart paper.

Then read the flap copy together. Does anyone want to change their guess, or do they think their first guess was probably right?

As a class, reflect on these questions:

- What do you know about Plymouth Rock?
- Where did you learn that information?
- What does it mean to “fact check” something?

After You Read

As a class, discuss the following:

- Who is the Fact Checker?
- What did you notice about these poems?
- What did you learn about Plymouth Rock?
- What do you know about Thanksgiving? Where did you learn that information? Use the knowledge web on page 7 to organize your thoughts.
- Do you have a favorite page? Why?
- Why do you think there’s a pull-out spread for the poem “Stepping Stone”?
- What do you think of the last poem, “Rock Star 400th Anniversary 2020,” and the Fact Checker’s comments on it?

Related Reading

Bruchac, Margaret M. (Abenaki), and Catherine Grace O’Neill, *1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2001.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne, adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese (Nambe Pueblo), *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States for Young People*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2019.

History. “This Day in History.” A&E Television Networks. Updated July 27, 2019. www.history.com/this-day-in-history/mayflower-departs-england

Peters, Russell M. (Wampanoag), *Clambake: A Wampanoag Tradition*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1992.

Seale, Doris (Santee/Cree), Beverly Slapin, and Carolyn Silverman (Cherokee), eds., *Thanksgiving: A Native Perspective*. Berkeley: Oyate, 1998.

Sorell, Traci (Cherokee), *We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2018.

Swamp, Jake (Mohawk), *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message*. New York: Lee & Low, 1995.



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Activities

Language Arts

- What's a rhyme scheme? Ask students to select a poem and identify its rhyme scheme as a class using close reading. Use the worksheet on page 4 to practice rhyming skills.
- Record students reading one of the poems in this collection, then the Fact Checker's notes on the poem. Play back the recording. Discuss: What words in the poem are emphasized? How do student voices change when reading poetry versus prose?
- Like the Fact Checker says after the very first poem in this book, "memory does not always speak true." Ask students to interview two or three relatives or other adults in their life about an event that happened to them and document the interviews in the T-chart on page 5. Discuss with the class: How did your subjects remember this event differently? How did they remember it the same? Ask students to put these memories together and write a brief account of the event.
- Invite your school librarian to talk to your class about whether poetry is fiction or nonfiction. After their visit, discuss what you learned. Ask students to use words and pictures to explain whether they think the poems in this book are fiction or nonfiction.

Science

- The very first poem in *Plymouth Rocks!* talks about the geological origin of the rock. Ask students to select a type of rock (sedimentary, igneous, metamorphic) and write a poem about it.

- These poems are all told from a non-human perspective. Assign students a plant or animal that is part of your local ecosystem to research and write a poem from its perspective. Students should also provide an illustration of the speaker of their poem.

Special Guests

The Fact Checker character emphasizes the importance of listening to many voices when developing an understanding of a historical figure or event.

- Invite a representative from a Native nation in your area to speak to your class. Prepare for this visit by brainstorming student questions.
- Invite a geologist or other earth sciences specialist to speak to your class. Prepare for this visit by brainstorming student questions.
- Invite an archaeologist, historian, museum educator, or other specialist in early US history to speak to your class. Prepare for this visit by brainstorming student questions.

After each visit, use the knowledge sheet on page 6 to organize what you learned.



Using context clues, fill in the blanks from the word bank!

Here's a party for all to _____,

With boom and blast and rocket's red _____!

Loud huzzahs for four hundred _____;

clapping and stomping amid loud _____.

years glare share cheers

List three rhyming words for each of these:

rock _____

nation _____

story _____

past _____

represent _____

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Memory T-Chart

These are memories of _____

_____ remembers:	_____ remembers:	_____ remembers:

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Knowledge Chart: Class Visit

Who visited? _____

What do they do? _____

Three things I learned:

Two questions I have now:

One thing that surprised me:

One thing I want to learn more about:

Knowledge Web: Thanksgiving

