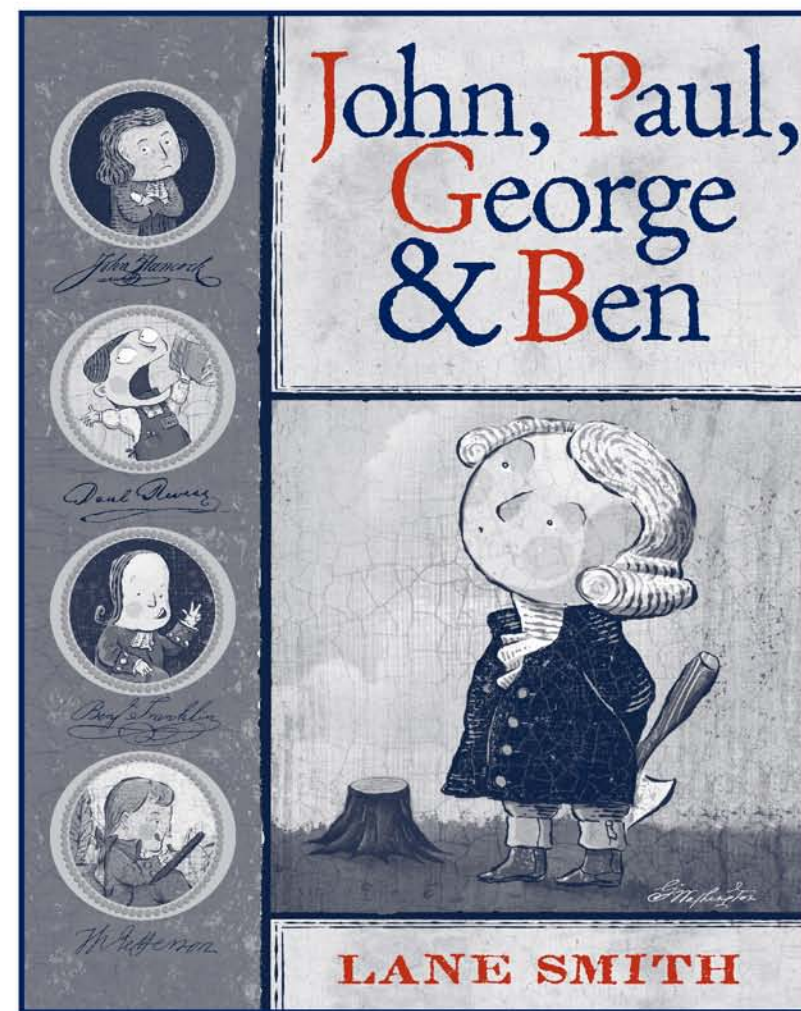


John, Paul, George & Ben  
By Lane Smith  
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## TEACHER'S GUIDE

HYPERION BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

## John, Paul, George & Ben by Lane Smith

What were our Founding Fathers like as boys? In a romp through American history, author/illustrator Lane Smith follows the colonial childhood of five of our most celebrated patriots—John Hancock, Paul Revere, George Washington, Ben Franklin, and that independent fellow, Tom Jefferson—as they could have been. According to Smith, each lad exhibited character traits that might have been downright annoying when they were young but proved invaluable to the patriots' cause in 1776.

In this teacher's guide are ideas for sharing the picture book, along with extension activities and background on areas with which students may not be familiar. Younger children, grades 2 to 3, will love the broad humor of the text and illustrations. Just seeing Paul Revere shouting the word “underwear” will be enough to get them laughing. Older students, grades 4 to 6, will get far more of the political jokes and parody.





## READING ALOUD

You'll need to decide how you want to introduce the book before you read it aloud. Here are three possible scenarios:

1. You could just dive in, with no advance information, except to mention that it is a history book that may or may not be true. As you read, encourage your listeners to comment on their reactions to the story. You're likely to hear them say, "Oh! Paul is Paul Revere! I get it!" Note how many of the five lads your children recognize, which will depend on the amount of background they have on the American Revolution.
2. You could start off with a bit of fact-storming. Have students put their heads together and compile a list or chart of everything they know (or think they know) about each of the five men—Hancock, Revere, Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson—the Declaration of Independence, and the events leading up to the American Revolution. This list will give you a heads-up on areas to review, reinforce, and/or introduce in terms of teaching the colonial time period in class. It will also prep your students for paying special attention to how Lane Smith pokes gentle fun at history.
3. Perhaps you'll decide to prep your group more thoroughly beforehand, introducing each of the five historical figures and explaining that this is a fictionalized look at their childhood. Display a replica of the Declaration of Independence, and discuss its importance. With older children, you may want to start by reading aloud a general history of the time period.

However you decide to share the story with your listeners, you'll want to read it aloud at least twice. It will take more than one reading for children to mine the humor and history in words and pictures.

## TAKING LIBERTIES

### *Fact Versus Fiction*

While author/illustrator Lane Smith took many comical liberties with his renderings of the childhood years of the five lads, he also incorporated many actual facts into his narrative. Make up a chart with two column headings: Facts and Fiction. After reading the book aloud, have your students break up either into pairs or small groups and create their own lists of factual statements or details, along with the ones Smith made up.

Next, read aloud each entry on the "Taking Liberties" page at the back of the book, "Wherein we set the record straight with ye olde True and False section." Ask listeners to decide whether each statement is true or false and discuss their reasons.





## FOUR LADS PLUS ONE

Now let's take a look at ideas to use in conjunction with each of the five lads. Lane Smith's descriptions of their childhood exploits are sheer fiction, which you may need to point out to your students.



### JOHN HANCOCK

"John Hancock was a bold lad." In *John, Paul, George & Ben*, when the young Hancock scrawled his name in huge letters on the blackboard, his teacher retorted, "But, John, c'mon . . . we don't need to read it from space!" When he grew up, though, his big handwriting made him famous.

Go to the American Revolution Home Page, at [www.americanrevwar.com/files/HANCOCK.HTM](http://www.americanrevwar.com/files/HANCOCK.HTM), for a general biography of John Hancock.

## PRACTICE YOUR PENMANSHIP

As John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress and the first of 56 signers affixed his bold signature to the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, he is reported to have said something to the effect of, "The King can read that name without his glasses." To "put your John Hancock" on paper now means to sign your name.

Note the signatures of all five lads on the cover of the book. Examine the signatures of all the signers on a reproduction of the Declaration of Independence. Discuss the way handwriting in the United States has changed in the past couple of centuries. Ask each of your students to develop a signature as splashy, distinctive, and over the top as John

Hancock's. If you want to get fancy, then have them use pens with nibs and india ink to see how tricky it was to write in the days before ballpoints.

You can even make your own pens out of feathers and ink from broken walnut shells. See the instructions on the Franklin Institute Online site at:  
<http://sln.fi.edu/tfi/activity/comm/comm-1.html>.

## PAUL REVERE



"Paul Revere was a noisy lad." According to Lane Smith, Paul Revere was a member of a bell-ringing club at the Old North Church (this is historically true). The loudness of the bells' bings and bongs caused Paul to speak very loudly so he could hear himself talk (not so true). All that screaming came in handy the night of his big ride in April 1775.

Still standing at 19 North Square in Boston's North End is downtown Boston's oldest building, Paul Revere's house, from which he set out on his famous ride the night of April 18. Tourists can visit the house, a national historic landmark. Visit the Web site, [www.paulreverehouse.org](http://www.paulreverehouse.org), where you'll find a lengthy biography of Paul Revere and the full text of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1860 narrative poem, "Paul Revere's Ride." In the Just for Kids section are recipes, games, and even a crossword puzzle.

## GEORGE WASHINGTON

"George was an honest lad," we read in the story. When the young Washington chopped down his father's cherry tree, he said, "I cannot tell a lie." Lane Smith took that old chestnut and embellished it still





more, adding his own spin and humor. Hearing his son's free admission of guilt, George's father cries, "Then run to my arms, dearest boy, for you have paid me for it a thousandfold with your honesty." The ax-wielding young George responds: "Really? In that case . . . when I tell you I've taken out the apple orchard, leveled the barn, and made kindling of your carriage, you'll be a wealthy, wealthy man."

According to the "Taking Liberties" page, as a grown man, Washington's honesty led him to turn down the title of King. "The last thing we need is another King George," he said. Ask your listeners to consider why Washington didn't want to be king. What would have been wrong with that? What is the difference between a king and a president?

## THE CHERRY TREE STORY

Americans learn early and take to heart that uplifting tale of George and the ill-fated cherry tree, exemplifying the upright moral character of the country's first leader. Unfortunately, it never actually happened.

In creating a hero, there can be a blending of fact and fiction that makes a person seem larger than life. Sometimes these stories morph into tall tales, as with two historical American figures, Davy Crockett and John Chapman (or, as he's known to all, Johnny Appleseed), about whom legends grew.

What's so interesting about George Washington and the cherry tree story is the number of people who believe it is true. It is one of our enduring American myths. Shortly after Washington's death in 1799,

a preacher named Mason Locke Weems published a biography of Washington—*A History of the Life and Death, Virtues and Exploits, of General George Washington*—that was filled with morally uplifting tales, some taken not from the great man's life, but from Parson Weems's own imagination. (You can see the text of much of the book at: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~CAP/gw/weems.html>)

### Here is the story as written by Weems:

When George . . . was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a hatchet! of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond, and was constantly going about chopping everything that came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry-tree, which he barked so terribly, that I don't believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning the old gentleman, finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the by, was a great favourite, came into the house; and with much warmth asked for the mischievous author,





declaring at the same time, that he would not have taken five guineas for his tree. Nobody could tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. “George,” said his father, “do you know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?” This was a tough question; and George staggered under it for a moment; but quickly recovered himself: and looking at his father, with the sweet face of youth brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely cried out, “I can’t tell a lie, Pa; you know I can’t tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet.”—“Run to my arms, you dearest boy,” cried his father in transports, “run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree; for you have paid me for it a thousandfold. Such an act of heroism in my son is more worth than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver, and their fruits of purest gold.

Your students can conduct a survey to determine how many people they know believe Parson Weems’s cherry-tree tale is true. First, ask students if they have heard the story, and to retell it. Ask them if the story is true or not. Chart and then graph their responses.

Next, discuss how tall tales are created, and read them Weems’s actual text. Discuss the reasons he might have created this story and what impact it has had on America. (Lane Smith’s observation, on his “Taking Liberties” page: “This fable was invented by Mason ‘Parson’ Weems (1759–1825). Pretty funny, considering he made up ye olde tale to teach kids a lesson in honesty.”) Why do you think people still believe the story to be true?

Next, students can survey the adults they know. First, ask students to make a prediction. If they ask ten adults about the Washington cherry-tree story, how many adults will say they think the story is true? They can compare their results afterward.

**Have each student write down the following questions, so everyone asks the exact same thing:**

1. What is the connection between George Washington and cherry trees?

2. Can you tell me this story?

3. Is this story true?

Students can interview their parents and up to ten grown-ups they know, keeping careful notes of each person’s response. They can approach each adult and say, “I’m doing a survey for my Social Studies class. May I ask you a few simple questions?”

**In conducting the survey, children will be trying to ascertain the following:**

1. Are the adults aware of the connection between Washington and the cherry-tree story?

2. If so, when respondents retell the story, is it similar in tone or content to Parson Weems’s original anecdote?

3. Do adults believe the story to be true or do they identify it as a myth or made-up tale?

And finally, students can tally and graph their individual results and those of the class as a whole to see if their assumptions and predictions were correct.

## YE OLDE EPILOGUE

“George didn’t live in the White House like all the other presidents. He was asked to live in New York City . . . where there aren’t so many trees.”

Discussion points: What is an epilogue? How does the author take liberties with this one? Why did President Washington live in New York City instead of in the White House in Washington, D.C.? (According to the “Taking Liberties” page, “We cannot tell a lie; the





real reason was because the White House wasn't completed until the second president's term.") Compare the illustration of Washington on the final page with the one of him after he chopped down the cherry tree. What do the two pictures have in common?

Research the other cities that served as our nation's capital cities—

New York and Philadelphia—and the building of the White House in what came to be called Washington, D.C. When and where was it built?

## MOUNT VERNON

At the Web site for George Washington's estate, [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org), you'll find a biography, a time line, a virtual tour of the house and grounds, and lesson-plan ideas.

Click on "Meet George Washington" and then go to "Resources for Teachers." There you'll also find a link to Washington's "Rules of Civility," written in his own handwriting sometime before he was sixteen, probably as an exercise in penmanship.

Children can examine George's cursive writing, read his rules, and then compose and write out their own twenty-first century list using their best penmanship.



## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

"Ben was a clever lad. Not only did he have a saying for every situation, he generously shared them with anyone. Anywhere. At any time." In Lane Smith's view, as he states facetiously, "The townsfolk were so taken by his generosity they came up with a saying especially for Ben . . . 'PLEASE SHUT YOUR BIG YAP!'"

Ask your listeners why Ben's words of wisdom were so underappreciated by his peers in the story.

## POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACK

Franklin published the annual using *Poor Richard's Almanack* in 1732, at first under the pseudonym of Richard Saunders. He continued writing the popular guide to weather forecasts, tides, facts, and wise sayings through 1758.

Each of Ben's sayings reproduced in *John, Paul, George & Ben* comes from *Poor Richard's Almanack*. Look at each illustration and discuss what Ben's advice means:

**"Fish and visitors stink after three days."**

**"The sleeping fox catches no poultry."**

**"Those who in quarrels interpose, must often wipe a bloody nose."**

**"If your head is wax don't walk in the sun."**

**"Three can keep a secret if two of them are dead."**



What was the reaction by each recipient to Ben's advice and why?  
How does this saying apply to your life or to someone you know?

Investigate other examples of Ben's pithy sayings, both familiar and less known. Make a dictionary of them, along with a definition, an example of how it still applies today, and an illustration.

You'll find an alphabet of Franklin's words of wisdom at The Franklin Institute Online at <http://sln.fi.edu/franklin/prINTER/abc.html> under "What do you think Ben meant?"

Students can also harvest familiar sayings from parents and other talkative adults, or make up their own catchy, one-sentence aphorisms, each containing a truth about human nature, that fit their lives and experiences.

## PERSUASIVE WRITING: EAGLE VERSUS TURKEY

From the "Taking Liberties" page, consider the following statement: "Instead of an eagle, Ben [Franklin] thought America's national symbol should be a turkey." Have students research facts about each bird, taking notes about their habits, behavior, and image. Next, they can write persuasive letters, taking on the persona of Ben Franklin and facts, logic, and zeal to persuade their readers of the turkey as a better national symbol.

## BEN'S INVENTIONS

Research Prompt: On the "Taking Liberties" page, we learn that Franklin invented bifocals, the Franklin stove, and the lightning rod. What were these inventions, how did they work, and how did they help people? What else did Franklin invent?

## MORE BEN FRANKLIN WEB SITES



On the [www.ushistory.org](http://www.ushistory.org) Web site, created and hosted by the Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia, there is an extensive section called "The Electric Ben Franklin." There you'll find a time line of Franklin's life; his autobiography; quotes; and a section of games, puzzles, and experiments. Further, you can play checkers with Ben Franklin, make a thermometer, and do a

word search. You can also peruse a detailed explanation of his kite experiment or read "Temple's Diary: A Tale of Benjamin Franklin's Family in the Days Leading up to the American Revolution," a fictionalized recounting written by Claude-Anne Lopez, from the point of view of Ben's fifteen-year-old grandson, William Temple Franklin.

The Franklin Institute also has a superb Web site that introduces Franklin as "a scientist, an inventor, a printer, and a statesman," and includes K-12 Educational Resources:

<http://sln.fi.edu/franklin/birthday/k12.html>. The site features "Ben Franklin: Glimpses of the Man," which contains a family tree, a time-line, pictures of his inventions, and an array of online and offline activities. Another highlight, "The Glass Armonica," is a fascinating exploration for teachers and students of the history, music, and science of Franklin's invention.

At the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Web site, you'll find a lengthy teacher's guide, plus activities and events for the yearlong celebration of Ben's 300th birthday, which started on January 17, 2006: [www.benfranklin300.org/education.htm](http://www.benfranklin300.org/education.htm).



To accompany a documentary on Franklin, PBS has devoted an extraordinarily detailed and comprehensive section of its Web site to Ben at: [www.pbs.org/benfranklin](http://www.pbs.org/benfranklin). Delve into the teacher's guide, examples of Ben's wit and wisdom, a virtue quiz, and instructions for making your own kite. In the "How Shocking!" section, participate in an "interactive electrical experience" where you fly a kite and build a lightning rod.

Benjamin Franklin: An Enlightened American is a comprehensive educational and research site that was put together by three talented high school students. The site <http://library.advanced.org/22254/home.htm> contains Franklin's biography, complete works, descriptions, and photographs of each of his inventions, quotations, wit and humor, interesting facts, genealogy, and references.

## THOMAS JEFFERSON

"Tom was an independent lad." In the book, the iconoclastic Tom disdained all the activities assigned by his teacher, Mr. Douglas, in favor of his own pursuits of life, liberty, and happiness.

How did Tom's school experiences—his list "My Declaration of Independence from Idiotic Classwork" and his conversation with his teacher—foreshadow his writing of the real Declaration of Independence? Why did Tom consider his classwork "idiotic"?



## WRITE A LETTER

Want to meet Thomas Jefferson up close and personal? He'll even answer your letter on the excellent Web site maintained by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, which owns and operates Monticello, his Virginia home. Go to [www.monticello.org/education/](http://www.monticello.org/education/) and click on "Ask Thomas Jefferson," under "Study Resources" to read some of the recent letters that have been sent to him by children, grades 3 to 12. Each question is followed up with a thoughtful and factually accurate reply by a scribe who signs each letter, "I am with great esteem, Your most obedt. humble servt," and then duplicates Jefferson's actual signature.

Take a virtual house tour of Monticello, examine some of Jefferson's inventions and personal artifacts, and download a variety of online lesson plans.





## CALL IT MACARONI

When Tom's classmates were making birdhouses by gluing macaroni to "ye olde balsa wood," Tom, ever the nonconformist, built his own structure, which looks just like a large model of Monticello. Speaking of macaroni, this would be a good time to sing a rousing rendition of "Yankee Doodle Dandy," the famous war song of the American Revolution War song. A "doodle" referred to a fool or country bumpkin, while "macaroni" was not pasta at all, but referred to those dandies who dressed in an affected way.

**Yankee Doodle went to town  
A-riding on a pony  
Stuck a feather in his hat  
And called it macaroni.**

**CHORUS:  
Yankee Doodle, keep it up  
Yankee Doodle dandy  
Mind the music and the step  
And with the girls be handy.**

**Father and I went down to camp  
Along with Captain Gooding  
And there we saw the men and boys  
As thick as hasty pudding.**

**There was Captain Washington  
Upon a slapping stallion  
A-giving orders to his men  
I guess there was a million.**



## OTHER IDEAS, ACTIVITIES, AND LESSON PROMPTS

### EXAMINE AND ADMIRE THE ILLUSTRATIONS



Children will have a grand time poring over Lane Smith's lively, beautiful illustrations, flipping pages back and forth to compare the portraits of each of the five lads as boys and as grown men.

The framed portraits of each of the five youths are based on actual portraits painted of them as adults, reproduced at the end of the story, by artists including John Singleton Copley, Gilbert Stuart, and Joseph Wright. Compare each famous man's portrait with Lane Smith's renderings of them as boys to see how he incorporated each physical detail and also captured the spirit and personality of each one.

Lane Smith notes, "The illustrations in this book were hand drawn with pen-and-ink. The textures were created by a variety of techniques, among them oil paint on canvas and sampled surfaces from handmade parchment papers and weathered pulp boards. The collage elements are facsimiles of eighteenth-century ephemera. All were then combined on a twenty-first-century Macintosh computer."

Talk about combining the old and the new! Look at the backgrounds on each page. Some look crackled, like old paintings. Others look like old, painted or whitewashed woodwork, and some have the texture of bark.



If it weren't for their large mouths and googly eyes, you'd swear the characters stepped from eighteenth century chapbooks or old prints.





What will you look like as an adult? Draw your own portrait (or one of a friend) as you look now, and another one of how you think you might look in twenty or thirty years.

## MAKE PUPPETS

Create stick puppets for each of the five lads. Make a cardboard template of a head and body. Children can trace it on cardboard, cut it out, draw and color the face, and create a colonial costume from assorted scraps of fabrics, leather, felt, and other found materials. Use yarn, raffia, or cotton for hair and wigs. Glue a paint stick onto the back to hold the puppet. Now children can act out dialogues from the story or have the lads engage in new conversations. You can have your students act out scenes of the book, such as Paul Revere's encounter with the woman customer needing extralarge underwear.

## READER'S THEATER

Want your students reading with expression, fluency, comprehension, and joy? Try Reader's Theater, where they act out the whole story while reading from a script. To act out the entire text of *John, Paul, George & Ben* in a Reader's Theater production, download the script from the Web site, [www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com](http://www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com). Type "Lane Smith" in the search bar, and then highlight the book's title. On the book's Web page, you'll see a link for the Reader's Theater script, which you can download as a PDF file or word document.

You don't need costumes, props, or scenery to stage a Reader's Theater play unless you want them. (Though if you want a fast template for making a tri-cornered hat for Paul Revere, you'll find a simple pattern on The Franklin Institute's Web site: <http://sln.fi.edu/franklin/birthday/k12.html>.)

In school, teachers always say, "Keep your voice down. No yelling. Use your 'inside' voice, not your 'playground' voice." But sometimes, as when you're working on a play, when you actually request that children use their loudest, most assertive voices, they get shy and speak softly. Use the scenes with Paul Revere, the underwear lady, and the bald man to demonstrate how to project and use your pipes. Fool around with your voices, speaking softly and then cranking up the vocal volume bit by bit until you are all bellowing.

After acting out the story, either live or with puppets, have a cast party. Serve cherries or cherry juice, in honor of the cherry tree George Washington never cut down, and rectangular crackers to represent the shape of the U.S. flag.

## BIOGRAPHIES

Students can read biographies of the five lads to find out about their childhood and later lives. Depending on research requirements for your students, you'll find general biographies of all the Founding Fathers in your library's biography section, in a good encyclopedia, and on the Internet, through sites such as The American Revolution Home Page at: [www.americanrevwar.com/files/Index2.htm](http://www.americanrevwar.com/files/Index2.htm).

Write biography reports that include the following:

- Birth date and place
- Early life
- Family
- Education
- Hobbies / Interests / Talents
- Interesting anecdotes
- Reasons for fame
- Later life
- Death



## MAP IT OUT

On the wall of John Hancock's classroom, look at the eighteenth century map of the Americas. Find a larger version in a historical atlas and compare it with a current U.S. map. Research and mark the setting of each of the incidents in the story.

Note that many towns and places in the country, or even in your state, have been named after the five Founding Fathers. Look for examples in atlases, encyclopedias, and on Internet sites such as [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com), [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com), [maps.yahoo.com](http://maps.yahoo.com), and [www.randmcnally.com](http://www.randmcnally.com).

## SCHOOL DAYS

In the story, John Hancock wrote his name on a large blackboard in class. According to the "Taking Liberties" page at the back of the book, however, blackboards had not yet been invented. What did students and their teachers write on before blackboards? Students can research school life in colonial times and write essays, comparing and contrasting educational practices then and now.



## REVOLUTIONARY FASHION

In Lane Smith's rendering of Revere's shop, Paul Revere sold underwear, wigs, and other memorable items of clothing. Look at the way he and the other characters in the book are dressed. Discuss and research the fashions of those times. How were the clothes and hairstyles of colonial children different from the way kids dress today? Students can each draw two portraits of themselves: one in colonial garb and the other in hip modern couture.



## BEFORE FUN WAS INVENTED

Introducing Paul Revere, the author states, "Before fun was invented, people joined bell-ringing clubs." Lane Smith is just making us laugh, of course. Look through the illustrations to identify some of the ways children had fun in the eighteenth century. What games and toys did they have? Compare and contrast them to what you do for fun today.

## MEET THE BEATLES

For adults of a certain age, reading the title of the book aloud will most likely lead to presuming, at first, that it will be about a whole other set of lads, those heroes of the British Invasion of the 1960s—John, Paul, George . . . and Ringo, aka the Beatles. While the Beatles were stars of the musical world, the lads in Lane Smith's book were America's first superstars. There are two other obvious Beatles allusions: in the dedication ("I get by with a little help from my friends") and in the text itself ("You say you want a revolution . . .").



If you're a Beatles fan (and who isn't?), you might want to let your students in on the joke. Introduce them to the music of the Beatles, playing "Revolution" and moving on to songs you could even tie in to the five patriots, taking some liberties of your own. For instance:

**John Hancock:** Talk about his handwriting, and then play "I Want to Hold Your Hand."

**Paul Revere:** He rode a horse, back then in the olden days. For more modern forms of transportation, play "Yellow Submarine."

**George Washington:** Washington was a general; move to the lower military ranks with "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band."

**Ben Franklin:** Ben came up with many sayings or aphorisms that endure to this day; the Beatles' song "Let It Be" has also entered the lexicon.

**Thomas Jefferson:** Jefferson dreamed of a new future for our nation with his Declaration of Independence; John Lennon also envisioned a better world with his solo hit "Imagine." In addition, Tom lived at Monticello, a house on a hill, so you could play "The Fool on the Hill."



## THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



On signing the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin said, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." What did Franklin mean by this? How and why was signing the declaration against the law? Why would King George III have wanted to see those men arrested and even hanged?

In order to understand the importance of the Declaration of Independence, it helps to actually read it. In a book con-

taining Thomas Jefferson's text, *The Declaration of Independence: The Words That Made America*, artist Sam Fink wrote down the words in his own hand and illustrated each phrase of the document. "When in the course of human events," starts the declaration, written in June of 1776, and adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 4. Fink's accompanying crosshatched pen-and-ink drawings and watercolors in the style of political cartoons not only help to explain each phrase, but add a comic air of celebration. About his large, simple, black and yellow hand-lettered text on each facing page, Fink says, "Thomas Jefferson's words are powerful and need no further embellishment from me."

See how Jefferson's concerns about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in Mr. Douglas's classroom showed up in his most famous piece of writing later, when Thomas grew up.





**Lane Smith** has written and illustrated some of the most popular children's books in recent history. He burst on to the scene when he illustrated *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!* with Jon Scieszka. That seminal book launched a whole new style of storytelling and illustration and went on to become a staple for teachers, librarians, and parents.

Jon and Lane's next collaboration resulted in *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly*

*Stupid Tales*, which went on to win Lane a coveted Caldecott Honor Award, as well as being one of the best-selling children's book ever. His other books with Jon Scieszka include the ever-popular *Math Curse*; *Squids Will Be Squids*; *Baloney (Henry P.)*; *Seen Art?*; and *Science Verse*.

Lane has also been paired with two of the most iconic authors in children's history—Roald Dahl and Dr. Seuss. He illustrated *James and the Giant Peach*, as well as *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day!* On his own, Lane has created such classics as The Happy Hockey Family books.

Lane and his wife, designer Molly Leach, live in Washington, Connecticut: the first town in America named for General Washington, in 1779.

This teacher's guide was written by **Judy Freeman**, a children's literature advocate, consultant, and workshop presenter. She also is the "Book Talk" columnist for *Instructor Magazine* and the author of *More Books Kids Will Sit Still For: A Read-Aloud Guide* (Libraries Unlimited, 1995) and *Books Kids Will Sit Still for 3* (2005). Visit her Website at [www.judyreadsbooks.com](http://www.judyreadsbooks.com).

Note: Grateful thanks to Jonah Stillman (age 7) and Emma Stillman (age 12) for all their good ideas and connections.

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### ADDITIONAL WEBSITES:

American Treasures of the Library of Congress:

On the Library of Congress website, you'll find the "Top Treasures Gallery," where you can take an up-close look at Thomas Jefferson's "original Rough draught" of the Declaration of Independence, in his own handwriting, including cross-outs and changes. Go to: [www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/tr00.html#decl](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/tr00.html#decl)

You can even choose a quill and print out your own name as it would look if you had signed the Declaration of Independence. Go to: [www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/declaration\\_join\\_the\\_signers.html](http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/declaration_join_the_signers.html)

At the website Archiving Early America, <http://earlyamerica.com/series.html>, you will discover a wealth of A wealth of primary source materials from 18th Century America, including portraits from original newspapers, maps and writings, quizzes, music, and short movies about Franklin, Washington, Revere, and the Declaration of Independence.

Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids at <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/> is the educational component from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). "This site provides learning tools for K-12 students, parents, and teachers. These resources will teach how our government works, the use of the primary source materials of GPO Access, and how one can use GPO Access to carry out their civic responsibilities." With a genial cartoon of Ben Franklin as the emcee for the site, you'll find facts, lesson plans, games, and activities about the local, state, and federal governments.