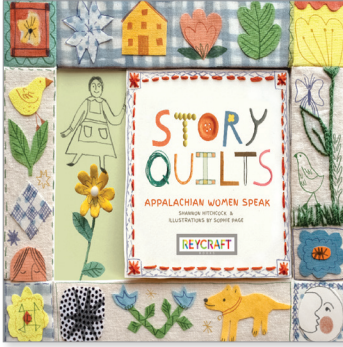


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Story Quilts: Appalachian Women Speak
by Shannon Hitchcock
illustrated by Sophie Page

SUMMARY

History books have forgotten most Appalachian women, many of whom were poor or lacked formal education. Yet these women spoke through the quilts they created from scraps of cloth collected over time. Piece by piece, these patchwork quilts revealed the beauty of mountain life.

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

- Before reading, explore the Library of Congress collection, Quilts and Quiltmaking in America, 1978 to 1996. This resource includes photographs and essays from the Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project: loc.gov/collections/quilts-and-quilt-making-in-america-from-1978-to-1996/about-this-collection/.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

- Self-Awareness (Developing Interests and a Sense of Purpose): *Story Quilts* highlights the contributions and history of Appalachian women who found purpose and community in quilting. Students will reflect on their own interests and sense of purpose.
- For more about self-awareness and other social-emotional competencies, visit: <https://casel.org/>.

For read-aloud videos of the Reycraft books, visit reycraftbooks.com/videos.html.

Teacher's Guide

BY JESSICA WALSH

Book Talk Blurb

Do you know anyone who keeps a diary or journal? Anyone who scrapbooks? *Story Quilts* highlights the Appalachian women who used quilts to tell stories and record memories of places and people. Just like a quilt warms your body, I think this story will warm your heart.

Set Purpose: Invitation to Readers

Story Quilts shares the history of Appalachian quilters who found a way to not only create something useful, but something that showed the world what they loved about their surroundings. As we read the text, be on the hunt for clues in the words and the illustrations that might show us the main message of the book. You might want to have your notebooks handy to jot down or sketch your thinking.

During Reading

Read-Aloud Conversation Starters

(Note: It may be helpful to number the pages of this book for reference, where the first two pages of the story are pages 2-3.)

- Cover: [Let's take a look at the cover. What do you notice?](#)
- Page 2: *History has forgotten most Appalachian women. Many of them couldn't read or write. Why do you think the author tells us that many Appalachian women couldn't read or write? How is that connected to being remembered or forgotten? Share your thinking with a neighbor, and we will add our thinking to our class notes.*
- Page 4: *Appalachian women worked their fingers to the bone. "Worked their fingers to the bone" is an idiom that means worked very hard. What are some other ways to say the same thing?*
- Page 7: *And turned scraps into quilts that told stories. What are some other ways to tell stories without knowing how to read and write? As we continue reading, jot or sketch some of the stories that are sewn into the quilts. (Continue to read, stopping occasionally to allow students to observe the illustrations, pointing out natural and man-made objects that are included in the quilts.)*

Respond, Reflect, React, or Research

- **Reflect on SEL Competency—Self-Awareness:** In *Story Quilts*, the women pass along the tradition of quilting to the next generation. Has someone passed down an interest to you? Do you have an interest you might pass along to the next generation? Share with a neighbor.
- **Reflect on Comprehension—Determining Theme/Main Idea:** Looking through your notebook, what are some big ideas you jotted down? How do your notes help you think about the main idea or theme of the text? Share with a neighbor what you are thinking.
- **Respond—Read Like a Writer (First Lines and Circular Endings):** Let's go back and reread the first and last pages of *Story Quilts*. What can we learn from Shannon Hitchcock that we might be able to add to our writer's toolbox? What does repeating the first words again at the end of the story do for us as readers?
- **Research—Social Studies:** Using the Library of Congress resources, or other credible sources, create a Photo Essay of the history of Story Quilts. Library of Congress Resources: loc.gov/collections/quilts-and-quilt-making-in-america-from-1978-to-1996/about-this-collection/.

Real World Action

Nature Art

In *Story Quilts*, the quilters are inspired by their surroundings to create something both functional and beautiful. Remind the class that everyone can be inspired by their surroundings during Nature Walks. Students might collect fallen leaves, flower petals that have blown off their stems, or anything that holds beauty to them. They can create a piece of art that is temporary or a more permanent piece that can be displayed for everyone to enjoy.

If your students liked this book . . .

Saving Granddaddy's Stories: Ray Hicks, the Voice of Appalachia

by Shannon Hitchcock

illustrated by Sophie Page

New York: Reycraft Books, 2020

As a young boy living in the Appalachian Mountains, Ray Hicks loved his grandfather's stories because he told them "the mountain way." After his grandfather's death, Ray continued to tell these stories to anyone who would listen. Years later, his storytelling became so famous he was known as the "Voice of Appalachia."

She Sang for the Mountains: The Story of Singer, Songwriter, Activist Jean Ritchie

by Shannon Hitchcock

Illustrated by Sophie Page

New York: Reycraft Books, 2021

This lyrical picture book biography of songwriter and activist Jean Ritchie traces the singer's life from the Cumberland Mountains of Kentucky to New York City and beyond as her protest songs inspired a nation.

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