

John, Paul, George, and Ben

By: Lane Smith

Illustrated By: Lane Smith

Publisher: Hyperion Books for Children

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Art Medium: Hand-drawn with pen and ink with textures of oil paint, sampled surfaces of handmade parchment papers and weathered pulp boards. Also includes collage elements that are facsimiles of 18th century ephemera.

Genre: Historical fiction

SUMMARY: Once there were four lads: John (Hancock), Paul (Revere), George (Washington), and Ben (Franklin). Actually, there were five, but Tom (Jefferson) was always off doing his own thing, so people tended to forget about all about him. This is the story of how these five lads grew up to start a revolution and become the Founding Fathers of our country.

BOOKTALK: Do you know who John, Paul, George, and Ben are? Read this book to find out and discover why they are such important figures in American history.

AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR:

Lane Smith

Lane Smith is the well-known collaborator of Jon Scieszka. Their first book, *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, became an instant classic. Their next title, *The Stinky Cheese Man and other Fairly Stupid Tales* earned him a Caldecott Honor Award. He lives with his wife and two cats in Washington, Connecticut--the first town in America to be named in honor of George Washington.

Other books written and/or illustrated by the author include:

Baloney (Henry P.)
Happy Hocky Family series
Math Curse
Science Curse
Seen Art?
Squids Will Be Squids

CHALLENGING WORDS (pronunciation, spelling, defining): Neo-classical, penmanship, confidence, belfry, practically, appreciate, orchard, carriage, kindling, generously, quarrels, interpose, generosity, independent, fumed, pursued

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Who were the men mentioned in the story?
2. Why were they important to our country?
3. What does the story teach you about each of their lives?
4. Why did the author choose to write about these five men?
5. How does the actions of each as children reflect their beliefs later as adults?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Language Arts

- Create a Readers' Theater script from this book. Rehearse it with your students and then present it to another class.
- Make a list of known facts about these men and exaggerations found in this book.
- Research one or all of these Founding Fathers and write a more complete biography of your chosen subject(s).

Social Studies

- Discuss these men with your students and determine what made them good leaders.
- After reading this book, compare colonial life to life today. How is it different? How is it similar?

Science

- After reading this book, discuss the inventions of Thomas Jefferson's and Benjamin Franklin's are mentioned in it.

Life Skills: Personal best, sense of humor, effort, and courage

INTERNET SITES:

Visit the author and illustrator's web site at:

<http://www.lanesmith.com>

Download a teacher's guide and a Reader's Theater script for the book at:

<http://www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com/board/displayBook.asp?id=1598>



Matching the Men



After reading Lane Smith's John, Paul, George and Ben, try to match the famous American with why they are famous.

A. Benjamin Franklin _____

1. has the largest name on the Declaration of Independence

B. Paul Revere _____

2. Wrote many famous sayings

C. Thomas Jefferson _____

3. Chopped down his father's cherry tree

D. John Hancock _____

4. Liked to design and construct houses and buildings

E. George Washington _____

5. Belonged to a bell ringing club and warned the colonists that the Redcoats were coming



Get books you want. John, Paul, George & Ben. 2006 Â· Â·4.22Â·3,348 Ratings Â·40 Pages.Â Move over, Bill Bennett—the inimitable short story master George Saunders (Pastoralia) and acclaimed illustrator Lane Smith (The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales) have created an astonishing new book of virtues for the child in all of us. Vile Verses.