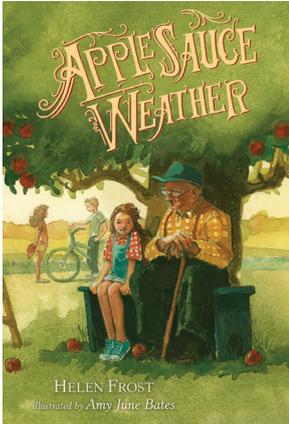




Walker Books Classroom Ideas



Applesauce Weather

By Helen Frost
Illustrated by Amy June Bates
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

When the first apple falls from the tree, Faith and Peter know that it's applesauce weather, even though Peter is getting a little old for such things. It also means Uncle Arthur should be here to tell his stories, with a twinkle in his eye as he spins tales about how he came to have a missing finger. But this is the first year without Aunt Lucy, and when Uncle Arthur arrives, there's no twinkle to be found and no stories waiting to be told. Faith is certain, though, that with a little love and patience, she and Peter might finally learn the truth about that missing finger. Paired with warm, expressive illustrations by Amy June Bates, this heartfelt tale by award-winning poet Helen Frost highlights the strength of family and the power of a good story.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Helen Frost is the author of *Step Gently Out*, *Sweep Up the Sun*, and *Among a Thousand Fireflies*, all illustrated by Rick Lieder, and *Monarch and Milkweed*, illustrated by Leonid Gore, as well as six novels-in-poems for children and young adults. She was awarded a Printz Honor in 2004 for *Keesha's House*. Helen Frost lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Amy June Bates has illustrated more than forty books for children, including *Ketzel*, *the Cat Who Composed* by Lesléa Newman, *Waiting for the Magic* by Patricia MacLachlan, and *The Dog Who Belonged to No One* by Amy Hest. Her work has been honored by the Society of Illustrators. She lives in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select

These notes are for:

- Primary years 3-6
- Ages 8+

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Poetry

Example of:

- Verse Novel

Themes/Ideas:

- Family
- Seasons
- Grief



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Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. How does each character's voice come through in their poems? How are Faith's poems different from Peter's? From Uncle Arthur's?
2. Even though Aunt Lucy is gone, Faith and Peter and Uncle Arthur still very much feel her presence through their memories and the stories they share. What other ways can you find her in the story?
3. Although Peter tries to act older and more cynical than Faith, how can you tell that he cares just as much as she does about Uncle Arthur and his stories?
4. Can you see any similarities between Uncle Arthur and Aunt Lucy's love story from years ago and Peter and Rose's right now?
5. How do you think Aunt Lucy and Uncle Arthur always knew the exact day that the first apple fell?
6. Do you have any yearly traditions similar to making applesauce? How do you know when it's time for them?
7. Uncle Arthur passes his pocketknife down to Peter. Have you ever inherited anything from an older friend or family member? Why is passing down an old possession sometimes more meaningful than giving a brand-new gift?
8. When he gives Peter the pocketknife, Uncle Arthur says to sleep with it open under the pillow once a year, on the night before Peter's birthday, and it will stay sharp. Do you believe Uncle Arthur?
9. Many families all over the world pass down stories and songs the way Faith's family does. Why do you think we do this? Why are stories important to us and to our identity?
10. Why do you think the author chose to tell this story through poems?
11. Grieving the death of a loved one can make a person feel very lonely. Do you think being around Faith and Peter helped Uncle Arthur?
12. Do you think Peter and Faith will ever find out what happened to Uncle Arthur's finger? Does the true story really matter?