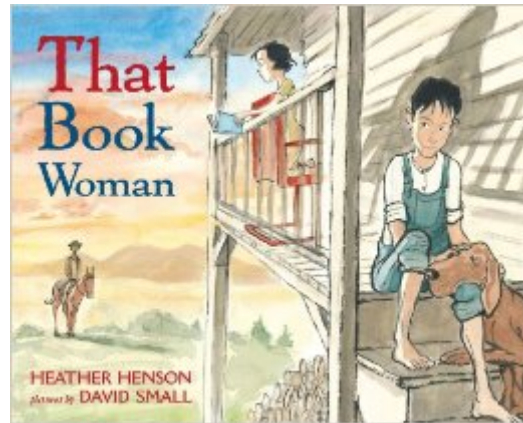


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That Book Woman



Synopsis

Cal is not the readin' type. Living way high up in the Appalachian Mountains, he'd rather help Pap plow or go out after wandering sheep than try some book learning. Nope. Cal does not want to sit stoney-still reading some chicken scratch. But that Book Woman keeps coming just the same. She comes in the rain. She comes in the snow. She comes right up the side of the mountain, and Cal knows that's not easy riding. And all just to lend his sister some books. Why, that woman must be plain foolish -- or is she braver than he ever thought? That Book Woman is a rare and moving tale that honors a special part of American history -- the Pack Horse Librarians, who helped untold numbers of children see the stories amid the chicken scratch, and thus made them into lifetime readers.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 920L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers (October 7, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1416908129

ISBN-13: 978-1416908128

Product Dimensions: 10 x 0.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (66 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #21,622 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Country Life](#) #44 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Books & Libraries](#) #44 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

One of the things I look for in a children's book, besides a good storyline itself, is good illustrations. Before buying a book, I ask myself two questions:1) "Could I read this book to my daughter over and over and over again without getting sick of it?" and2) "Could I look at these illustrations over and over and over again without getting sick of them?"Since my daughter can't read yet, only well illustrated books (combined with my attempts at multiple character voices) will hold her interest. This

book has passed that test. The storyline itself deals with the Pack Horse Librarians who used to deliver books to the people living in the Appalachian mountains and it is written from the first person point of view. Cal, our narrator, talks about "that woman" who comes every two weeks like clockwork to deliver books to them. In the beginning, Cal has no use for this woman or her books, ("...it would not bother me at all if she forgot the way back to our door.") but by the end of the story, he admits that he wishes he had a gift to give this stubborn woman whose resilience and devotion to her job turned him into a lifelong reader. Cal speaks in an Appalachian dialect which, in the beginning, was a turn off for me. Trying to read things like, "Lark would keep her nose a-twixt the pages of a book...." was a bit irritating to me, until my daughter started laughing. Hearing Mommy speak these funny words in this funny voice was a real treat for her and anything that makes my daughter laugh is a keeper as far as I'm concerned. I feel compelled to write a line or two about the illustrations. A lot of the illustrations are drawn in a sort of "3-D-ish" kind of way, meaning that the narrator, Cal, is drawn up close while his family members and surrounding areas are drawn much smaller in the background. To me, this made me feel like I was actually standing right next to Cal, peeking in on his family. One of the winter scenes made me want to crawl right inside their window and snuggle up in front of the fire with this family! You really do get a warm and cozy feeling when observing this family through the illustrations and the final lines of the story will definitely give you warm fuzzies.

This book was very interesting for both my 8 yr old granddaughter as well as myself. I read it first & upon re-reading it to her, tried to read it as the characters were supposed to be speaking (in a mountain slang). Some parts I had to read twice but she was able to follow the story easily looking at the illustrations, which are excellent & tell the story. This book is inspired by the true and courageous work of the Pack Horse Librarians, who were known as "Book Women". The women would travel on horseback to difficult to reach rural areas in the Appalachian Mountains during the Depression loaning books to families. The Pack Horse Library Project was set up by Franklin D. Roosevelt's Work Projects in the 1930's. The Book Woman is a must read

Cal wasn't very interested in reading. But he admired the courage and determination of the book woman, a traveling librarian who would ride through all kinds of weather, every two weeks to bring them books for free. One day, he asks his sister to teach him how to read, and before the winter was over, there were now two readers in the family. This book is a tribute to those brave and dedicated "book women", who would ride through the rural hills to faraway villages bringing books

so that children can read. I didn't know about their existence until I read this book. Thanks for sharing this fascinating story.

Very nice collaboration Heather Henson did with David Small. This picture book narrates about an unnamed Pack Horse Librarian and her biweekly visits in the Kentuckian mountains. How she brings literature, culture, and the outside world to a remote farm family. How a little boy's resentment for that woman and her "chicken scratch" evolves as she risks rough weather only to give them new books. But more than that, this book is a wonderful way for older generations to teach young people and those that didn't live in remote regions about the "Pack Horse Librarian" program, an initiative President Roosevelt did for those who lived in remote areas where schools and libraries were not easily accessible. And what's nice is that Heather Henson offers in her book other resources (websites, books) to know more on this topic, proving she did her researches and knows what she is talking about. As for David Small, his watercolours are pleasant to watch. Clear and well organised compositions, distinct character designs for each person, rich colours that display the region's weather and/or the focal point of an illustration (ex: pack of berries), each painting offers subtle details that describe those remote rural families' reality (ex: how the chicken roam around the house). Details that I appreciated a lot. Although I have to say that under the Kindle app, those artwork and Henson's text suffer as the application doesn't offer zooms like on Google Play as the letter fonts in this book are small. Especially in the author's Note as the letters appear on an Ipad and Android tablet as tiny fleas. Therefore, I suggest to those who'd want to buy an electronic version of the book to resort to Google Play's as its app offers zooms; the opportunity to look closer at artwork details and letters a Kindle app couldn't offer. In conclusion, this picture book is material for all ages and for all reading interests, whether they are historical, entertainment, or artistic.

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