

**CYRM RESOURCE GUIDE
PICTURE BOOKS FOR OLDER
READERS
(GRADES 4 AND UP)
2013-2014**

14 Cows for America

By Carmen Agra Deedy, Wilson Kameli
Naiyomah (collaborator) & Thomas Gonzalez,
illustrator
Peachtree Publishers, 2009

***Worst of Friends: Thomas Jefferson, John
Adams and the True Story of an American
Feud***

By Suzanne Jermain, Larry Day, illustrator
Dutton Juvenile, 2011

Queen of the Falls

by Chris VanAllsburg
Houghton Mifflin, 2011

Picture Books for Older Readers

<p>CALIFORNIA YOUNG READER MEDAL CALIFORNIA YOUNG READER MEDAL PICTURE BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS BALLOT</p> <p><i>2013-2014</i></p> <p>_____ <i>14 Cows for America</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Worst of Friends: Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and the True Story of an American Feud</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Queen of the Falls</i></p>	<p>CALIFORNIA YOUNG READER MEDAL CALIFORNIA YOUNG READER MEDAL PICTURE BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS BALLOT</p> <p><i>2013-2014</i></p> <p>_____ <i>14 Cows for America</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Worst of Friends: Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and the True Story of an American Feud</i></p> <p>_____ <i>Queen of the Falls</i></p>
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14 COWS FOR AMERICA

by Carmen Agra Deedy



PLOT SYNOPSIS

Kimeli Naiyomah returned home to his Maasai village from New York City with news of 9/11 terrorist attacks. He tells his people and elders about the attack. He asks for permission to give his cow to the people of America to help heal the pain of the people. This is a very important gesture to Maasai, because cattle are life to the Maasai. This book presents an illustrated tale of the gift of fourteen cows given by the Maasai people of Kenya to the U.S. as a gesture of comfort and friendship in the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001.

HOOKS

- What do you know about September 11?
- Was anyone you know affected by 9/11?
- What would you do if you or someone was affected by a tragedy?
- What would you be willing to give up in order to help someone?
- How do you learn about other cultures? How does this help or hinder you in understanding other cultures or about people?

MEET THE AUTHORS

Carmen Agra Deedy has been writing and traveling around the world telling stories for more than twenty years. She has received numerous book awards for her writing, including nominations for the Yellow Star and Martina the Beautiful Cockroach. She was born in Havana, Cuba and came to America as a refugee. Learn more about her, her writing, and available resources at www.carmenagradeedy.com.

Wilson Kimeli Naiyomah received his Master of Science degree in molecular biology from Stanford University in 2008. He was awarded a Rotary International World Peace Fellowship and began studies in peace and conflict resolution at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia, in spring 2010. He plans to take over scholarships for promising Maasai children to attend high school through the American African Nuru Foundation that were funded by the American embassy for four years.

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Visit the 14 Cows for America website at <http://14cowsforamerica.com/> to learn more about the cows, Kimeli and the Maasai people.

Illustrator Thomas Gonzalez was born in Havana, Cuba and moved to the Atlanta, Georgia area with his family as a child. He is an award winning illustrator, who developed his style while working in the advertising industry. He currently lives with his wife and daughter near Atlanta.

CONNECTIONS

Kimeli will help readers understand that sorrow can affect even those that do not lose loved ones in a tragedy.

The Maasai's generosity will help readers understand there is something everyone can do to help suffering, even in the face of a large tragedy.

For more connections visit Peachtree Online: <http://peachtree-online.com/index.php/book/14-cows-for-america.html>

Read about other people of courage and generosity:

First Come the Zebra by Lynne Barasch. Lee & Low Books, 2009.

Mama Panya's Pancakes: a Village Tale from Kenya by Mary, and Rich Chamberlin, Barefoot Books, 2006.

A Day in the Life of an African Village by Avelyn Davidson, Children's Press, 2008.

Boxes for Katje by Candace Fleming, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003.

The Man Who Walked Between the Towers by Mordicai Gerstein, Roaring Brook Press, 2003.

From Afar to Zulu: A Dictionary of African Cultures by James Haskins and Joann Biondi, Walker, 1995.

Fireboat: The Heroic Adventures of the John J. Harvey by Maira Kalman, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2002.

A Nation Challenged: A Visual History of 9/11 and Its Aftermath by Nancy Lee, Lonnie Schlein, and Mitchel Levitas, Scholastic Nonfiction, 2002.

Facing the Lion: Growing Up Maasai on the African Savanna by Joseph Lekuton and Herman J. Viola, National Geographic, 2003.

Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions by Margaret Musgrove, Dial Books for Young Readers, 1976.

Only the Mountains Do Not Move: A Maasai Story of Culture and Conservation by Jan Reynolds, Lee & Low Books, 2011.

WRITING PROMPTS

- Read about the Maasai tradition concerning the importance of cattle to the Maasai. Write this story from the perspective of the 14 cows.
- Research a problem, describe the problem, and then write about how you would help.
- What does the tragedy of 9/11 mean to you?
- Write about when you or someone you know has given a gift of compassion, like the gift the Maasai gave to the United States.

OTHER RESOURCES

- Resources for the book and more about the author Carmen Agra Deedy - <http://carmenagradeedy.com/>: Includes puzzles, writing prompts, teacher's guide, and more.
- Resources for the book: www.14cowsforamerica.com – pronunciation guide, culture guide, etc.
- Teacher explores lessons for 9/11 anniversary: <http://goo.gl/aqFSX0> - Links to tie-in for the anniversary of 9/11. Lesson plans and book ideas.

WORST OF FRIENDS: THOMAS JEFFERSON, JOHN ADAMS, AND THE TRUE STORY OF AN AMERICAN FEUD

by Suzanne Tripp Jurmain, illustrations by Larry Day, Dutton Children's Books, 2011

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were two of the giant intellects responsible for forming the United States. Even though their personalities were vastly different, as young men, they worked together to gain independence from Britain. However, in the late 1770's, they developed differing ideas about the best way to govern the U.S, eventually becoming the key players in two different political parties. Their friendship deteriorated even further when Adams was elected the second president and Jefferson had to settle for being Vice President. When Jefferson won the presidency four years later, Adams snuck out of the White House in the dead of night, beginning a period of complete estrangement between the two former friends. Over a decade would pass before they communicated again, but eventually, the two men were able to put politics and hurt feelings aside and resume their satisfying friendship. In one of the fascinating twists of fate, both men died on July 4th, 1826-- exactly 50 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Suzanne Tripp Jurmain's narrative is entertaining and effortlessly summarizes the turbulent early days of the U.S., while Larry Day's lively watercolor-and-pencil illustrations not only accurately depict the dress and style of the colonial era, but also capture the vastly different personalities of the two men.

HOOKS

- Is it better to be friends with someone who always agrees with you or with someone who has ideas of his or her own?
- Have you ever had a friend whom you admired but with whom you were also competitive?

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- Have you ever lost an election to a good friend?
- If you've had a fight with a good friend, what is the best way to move beyond the misunderstanding?

MEET THE AUTHOR

Even though she loved to read as a kid, preferring stories with mythic heroes and immersive worlds, Suzanne Tripp Jurmain's first ambition was to be an actress. Both her parents were actors, and as a young child and teen she performed on a variety of TV shows, later attending New York City's famous High School of Performing Arts. However, her passion for acting started to wane shortly after her enrollment at UCLA. Ms. Jurmain found herself taking English and history classes rather than acting classes. She graduated from UCLA with a BA in English, and then took a variety of jobs, including working for UCLA's Fowler Museum where she helped scholars write books about the arts of Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the Americas. Eventually, she knew her passion was to write books for children, and she never lost hope during the many years she waited for her first children's book to be published. Today, Suzanne Tripp Jurmain writes mostly nonfiction books, highlighting the amazing and wonderful crazy characters and events that make history as exciting to read as fiction. Her children are grown, and she lives with her husband and a very large golden retriever in Los Angeles, pursuing her favorite activities—reading and writing books. Learn more about Suzanne Jurmain by visiting her website, suzannejurmain.com.

MEET THE ILLUSTRATOR

Larry Day was born and raised in a small rural town in central Illinois, and as a boy he loved to draw pictures of people riding in Ferris wheels and roller coasters. In high school he took a correspondence course to further his interest in art and went on to receive a degree from Southern Illinois University's School of Technical Careers. It was there that Mr. Day learned the importance of re-drawing until a final work was just what he wanted. After college, he worked as a technical illustrator, a layout artist, and catalog designer. He made his way to Chicago, eventually landing a job illustrating pinball and video arcade games. On the side, he took art lessons from Gerald Merfeld, developing and refining his oil-painting technique. Later, Larry Day moved into advertising, working for companies such as Hallmark and Walt Disney. During this time, he illustrated his first picture book and eventually he began to work more and more on illustrating children's stories with a historical theme. Today, Mr.

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Day has two grown sons, and in addition to illustrating children's books, he writes the long running comic strip Mr. Oswald. Learn more about Larry Day's books by visiting his website, www.dayhere.com/books.html.

ACTIVITIES

Tom vs. John:

Research:

Have students research the lives and accomplishments of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams.

Signature Comparison:

Have students compare the signatures of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams on the Declaration of Independence.

Descriptive Language:

Following their research, and using the illustrations of Larry Day, have students brainstorm a list of adjectives to describe each man.

Drawing Activity:

Have students draw both men in either a realistic or a cartoon style. If student use a cartoon style, ask them to justify why they enlarged or distorted certain features of the men.

Compare Political Parties:

Research John Adams's Federalist Party and Thomas Jefferson's Republican Party. Create a chart to show the major beliefs of each party, particularly with regard to the power of the American president. Then have students research the modern Republican and Democratic parties with regard to their beliefs on the power of the president. Compare the historical positions with those of the parties today.

Accomplishments:

Have students create a classroom bulletin board divided into two columns. At the top of each column, place one or more of the drawings of each man. In each column, list the accomplishments of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams.

Personal Life:

Create a classroom bulletin board with details and events in the personal lives of the men.

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Most Successful?

Ask students to look at the two charts they created—accomplishments and personal life. Who was the most “successful” man? Have students write a paper or make a presentation defending their opinion, using the facts of their lives.

Letter Writing:

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams eventually reconciled in old age through a series of letters. If possible, find copies of their old letters or other primary source letters from the time. Have students think about the language used in the late 1700s and the content of the letters. Using calligraphy pens, have students write a letter in formal 17th century language to someone whose feelings they have hurt. Then have them compose the language they would use in a text message. Compare the two “letters”—what are the advantages/disadvantages of the different ways of communication, then and now?

CONNECTIONS

The Colonial Era and the American Revolution

Nonfiction:

Picture Books:

The American Revolution From A to Z by Laura Crawford, Pelican Publishing Company, 2009.

Ben Franklin: His Wit and Wisdom From A to Z by Alan Schroeder, Holiday House, 2011.

Can't You Make Them Behave, King George? by Jean Fritz, Putnam & Grosset Group 1996.

Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak by Kay Winters, illustrated by Larry Day, Dutton Children's Books, 2008.

Electric Ben: The Amazing Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin by Robert Byrd, Dial Books for Young Readers/Penguin Group, 2012.

George Did It! by Suzanne Tripp Jurmain, illustrated by Larry Day, Puffin, 2007.

Henry Knox: Bookseller, Soldier, Patriot by Anita Silvey, Clarion Books, 2010.

A Picture Book of Thomas Jefferson by David A. Adler, Holiday House, 1990.

Thomas Jefferson: A Picture Book Biography by James Cross Giblin, Scholastic Inc., 1994.

Those Rebels, John and Tom by Barbara Kerley, Scholastic Press, 2012.

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Longer Nonfiction:

American Revolution: 1700-1800 by Joy Masoff, Scholastic Reference, 2000.

The Crossing: How George Washington Saved the American Revolution by Jim Murphy, Scholastic Press, 2010.

George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen From Both Sides by Rosalyn Schanzer, National Geographic, 2004.

Give Me Liberty!: The Story of the Declaration of Independence by Russell Freedman, Holiday House, 2000.

John and Abigail Adams: An American Love Story by Judith St. George, Holiday House, 2001.

King George: What Was His Problem?! Everything Your Schoolbooks Didn't Tell You About the American Revolution by Steve Sheinkin, Roaring Book Press, 2008.

Lafayette and the American Revolution by Russell Freedman, Holiday House, 2010.

The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism, and Treachery by Steve Sheinkin, Roaring Brook Press, 2010.

Our White House: Looking In, Looking Out created by 108 renowned authors and illustrators and the National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance, Candlewick Press, 2008.

The Signers: The 56 Stories Behind the Declaration of Independence by Dennis Brindell Fradin, Walker & Company, 2002.

Who Was Thomas Jefferson? by Dennis Brindell Fradin, Grosset & Dunlop, 2003.

Fiction:

Picture Books:

John, Paul, George & Ben by Lane Smith, Hyperion Books for Children, 2006.

Chapter Books:

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2008.

Forge by Laurie Halse Anderson, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2010.

Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes, Houghton Mifflin, 1971.

My Brother Sam is Dead by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier, Scholastic Book Services, 1974.

The Riddle of Penncroft Farm by Dorothea Jensen, 1989.

Sophia's War: A Tale of the Revolution by Avi, Beach Lane Books, 2012.

Surviving Jamestown: The Adventures of Young Sam Collier by Gail Langer Karwoski, Peachtree 2001

The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare, Houghton Mifflin, 1958.

READERS' THEATER
BASED ON
THE WORST OF FRIENDS: THOMAS JEFFERSON,
JOHN ADAMS, AND THE TRUE STORY OF AN
AMERICAN FEUD

Written by Suzanne Tripp Jurmain
Illustrated by Larry Day

(Arranged by CYRM Committee members for classroom use only).

Characters:

Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Narrator 3

Narrator 4
John Adams (John)
Thomas Jefferson (Tom)

Narrator 1: On October 30, 1735, in a farmhouse in Quincy, Massachusetts, a baby boy was born. His parents named him John Adams, and he was related to the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. This boy was special—he was destined to help create America.

Narrator 2: Almost eight years later, on April 13, 1743 on a wealthy plantation outside of Charlottesville, Virginia, another baby boy was born. This boy was not the son of a farmer and shoemaker. He came from money and power. He was called Tom. His mother was even related to the royal families in England and Scotland! This boy was special—he also was destined to help create America.

Narrator 3: John was a boisterous and fun-loving boy. He loved to tell jokes, skip school, play marbles, and even box with his friends.

Narrator 4: Tom was quiet and soft-spoken. He skipped recess to study Latin and Greek. He loved to read books in his father's library and to play his violin.

Narrator 1: John grew up short and a bit fat. But he was smart and outspoken. He studied at the oldest and most prestigious school in the colonies—Harvard University. He was part of the debate team because he liked to argue and talk. In fact, people said excitable John could talk for five hours without stopping! Because he was such a great talker, he became a very successful lawyer.

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Narrator 2: Tom grew up to be tall, lean and rather shy. He was gracious to everyone, and he was always impeccably dressed. Further, he was one of the most well-read men in the colonies. He studied at the second oldest school in the colonies—the College of William and Mary. He also became a successful and well-known lawyer, but he was known for his brilliant arguments not his fiery tongue. In fact, quiet Tom sometimes didn't say three sentences together when he was in public!

Narrator 3: In short, they were as different as pickles and ice cream, but they became great friends.

Narrator 4: Both John and Tom loved living in the colonies, but they thought King George of England was a tyrant.

John and Tom: (Both nodding heads).

John: Of course I think he is a tyrant! We cannot meet in public to discuss our concerns, and he forces us to pay taxes on everything—coffee, tea, glass, paint, cloth, newspapers, contracts, and even decks of cards! Can you believe it! King George just wants money, money, money from the colonies!!

Tom: I would agree John, and I would go so far as to call King George a “blot on the face of history.”

John: (Smiles and nods head at Tom).

Narrator 1: So John and Tom became “fellow laborers” in the American struggle for independence.

Narrator 2: They both were members of the Continental Congress that started in the fall of 1774 in Philadelphia. This group of 50 men wanted to decide what to do about big, bossy England and King George.

John: As one of America's best talkers, I told my fellow delegates to kick out King George and make America an independent country!

Tom: As one of America's best writers, I wrote the Declaration of Independence to tell King George that the colonies were free.

All narrators jointly: Together they helped make America a brand-new nation.

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Narrator 3: But their work didn't stop there. After America beat England in the Revolutionary War, Tom and John were asked to help the new nation. America needed money to pay its bills as well as friends to fight its enemies.

Narrator 4: So John and Tom went to Europe as ambassadors for the United States. They talked to kings, merchants, prime ministers. They asked everyone to help America.

Narrator 1: It was tough work (especially when that rude King George turned his back on them during a court ceremony), but they did it together.

Tom: In fact, I believe I kept John from punching out King George because he was so mad!

John: (Nodding head and holding up hands like a boxer).

Narrator 2: You might think that John and Tom would agree on everything related to America—wrong!

John and Tom: (Looking at surprised and looking at each other).

Narrator 3: Around 1790, when John and Tom returned from Europe, they realized that they disagreed for the first time in their long friendship.

All narrators jointly: They disagreed about how strong the President should be.

John: The president should always be the country's biggest and strongest boss. The president will protect the freedom of all Americans.

Tom: I strongly disagree John. An extra-superstrong and bossy president might try to make himself a king. Then where would we be?!

Narrator 4: Their ideas were so different that they belonged to different political parties. John was a Federalist and Tom was a Republican.

Narrator 1: They fought hard against each other's "crazy" ideas.

John: Tom just doesn't know what he is talking about. He is "weak, confused, uniformed, and ignorant."

Tom: You, my friend, are "vain, suspicious, irritable, stubborn, and wrong."

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Narrator 2: Things got even worse when George Washington decided not to run for a third presidential term. John and Tom ran against each other. John was the presidential candidate for the Federalist Party, and Tom was the presidential candidate for the Republican Party.

Narrator 3: John won the most electoral votes so he became president, and Tom became vice president because he got the second most electoral votes. What a mess.

John: (Smiling and waving his hands above his head with his fingers shaped like a “V” for victory).

Tom: (Frowning).

Narrator 4: John tried to be a good president, but he had a lot of problems. He needed money to buy ships for the Navy. He was working to prevent a war with France. Plus, he was the first president to live in the cold, damp White House—how could one think properly in such a place?

Narrator 1: Plus, John had to put up with all the nasty comments that the Republicans said about him.

John: The taunts were terrible, I can tell you. I was called a “repulsive, gross fool.” Some Republicans were so crude as to call me “His Rotundity,” which was just a fancy way of saying “His Royal High Fattiness.” I got so mad I stomped on my wig.

Narrator 2: Then came the presidential election of 1800. John and Tom were once again fighting to be the president of the U.S., but this time, Tom won.

Tom: (Smiling and waving his hands above his head with his fingers shaped like a “V” for victory).

John: (Frowning, jumping up and down, and stamping his feet).

Narrator 3: John was not a good loser. He snuck out of the White House at 4 a.m. in the morning so he wouldn't have to congratulate Tom on his victory.

John: Embarrassing but true. I snuck onto an early morning stagecoach eight hours before Tom was sworn in as president.

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All narrators jointly: After that, John and Tom didn't speak for 11 years.

Narrator 4: John returned to his farmhouse in Massachusetts where he built walls, plowed his fields, and split rails. He sometimes complained about how Tom was running the country, but mostly his Federalist party raised the ruckus on his behalf.

Narrator 1: The Federalist party called Tom a "scoundrel" and said he never should have bought the Louisiana Territory.

Tom: Even worse, they made fun of my love for science. I had collected three hundred old mammoth bones and was studying them in the White House. When I suggested that America was so vast and wonderful that there might actually be some mammoths still living in the American West, the Federalists called me doodle-brained and laughed like crazy.

John: (Laughing behind a hand over his mouth).

Narrator 2: Finally, Tom retired from being President and returned to his beautiful home Monticello in Virginia. His hair got white and he was much slower moving around, but he still loved to read and ride his horse, Old Eagle.

Tom: I read about 6,707 books, but I also loved spending time with my 12 grandchildren, organizing snowball fights and running races for them.

Narrator 3: And Tom started to think about the good old days when he and John worked for American independence.

Tom: John was always very honest and great.

Narrator 4: John was an old man now too. He didn't see as well as he used to, but he still read 3,200 books, and he still loved to have a good time. He played with his wife's new puppy and served pudding to his 14 grandchildren.

John: In fact, even though I was old, I still knew a lot, sometimes more than the authors of the books I was reading. I had to write "Nonsense!" in the margins when I really thought the writer was being a fool.

Narrator 1: And John started to think about the good old days; he must have missed talking to his friend Tom.

John: I have always loved Jefferson.

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Narrator 2: Finally, John listened to some of his friends who told him it was high time he and Tom made up.

Narrator 3: On January 1, 1812, John wrote a letter to Tom wishing him a Happy New Year. Then, he waited anxiously to receive a letter back from Tom.

Narrator 4: Mail was not very fast in those days; a stagecoach pulled by horses delivered the mail!

Narrator 1: One month later, John got a letter from Tom. He was delighted. After 11 long years, he had lots to tell his friend.

John: (Running in circles, waving a letter in his hand. Big smile on his face).

Narrator 2: The letters went back and forth, back and forth between the two friends, carrying family news, congratulations, and even jokes.

John: I even signed one letter "J.A. In the 89(th) year of his age still too fat to last much longer." Rather funny, don't you think?! I was finally able to poke fun at my rather portly size!

Tom: In one letter, I suggested to John that we forget all about our big 11 year fight.

John: That was the best letter ever written (big smile).

Tom: We finally realized that people could have different ideas and still be friends.

Tom and John: (Smiling quietly at each other).

Narrator 3: Tom and John remained best friends for the rest of their lives, and amazingly, the two friends died on exactly the same day--July 4th, 1826—the 50th birthday of America!

Narrator 4: The whole country was sad, and people all over the U.S. stopped to remember the two great men.

Narrator 1: One short, fat, and lively. The other tall, lean, and quiet.

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Narrator 2: Both presidents, vice presidents, ambassadors and, sometimes, . . . bitter enemies.

Narrator 3: But most importantly, both dedicated American patriots who helped America grow up . . . together.

QUEEN OF THE FALLS

Written and illustrated by: Chris Van Allsburg



SYNOPSIS

Her employment was ending, she had little saved and few prospects for anything but a sparse and unsure future as retirement drew closer. This was the scenario facing teacher Annie Edson Taylor when her charm school was about to close its doors for the last time. Her pluck, self-reliance, and ingenuity combine to result in one of the most dangerous firsts imaginable; the first person to go over Niagara Falls and survive. Annie takes us through the fear, resolve, planning and bargaining leading up to this historic event. Many people played significant roles in this terrifying adventure, but it doesn't end when she survives the plunge over the falls in a barrel. This astounding feat is overshadowed by the ensuing experiences and disappointments that Annie had to confront when her carefully laid plans disintegrated.

HOOKS

Would you like to try something even when you know that everyone that tried it before has died? What is important enough to do, even if it means to risk your life? Would you like to hear the story of a woman who did just that?

Do you know what the Niagara Falls are? How large are they? How far down does the water fall? How fast does it move? Would you like to go over the falls in a barrel? Would a man or a woman do that? Let's find out!

Do you know what it means to retire? Do any of you have a grandpa or grandma that has retired? Let's pretend that you are pretty old. You are about to retire and have just lost your job. What do you do to earn enough money to live on when you retire?

MEET THE AUTHOR

Every story emerges from a mix of ideas, experiences, and influences that converge to create a whole. Chris's life begins in Grand Rapids Michigan, where he explores, and grows through the experiences that will color his literature and art. It wasn't until a college admissions officer interviewed Chris that he discovered that he could "go to college and make art." As the interview progressed and the interviewer discovered that he had not had a single art class in high school, his imagination and creativity took off and was the foreshadowing of a career to be shared with the world. (See this entire story and more on his [web page](#).) As you will see him weave together a web of doubtful facts, his creativity and desire blend to secure the opportunity that evolves into his gift to his readers. He wrote and illustrated his first book, *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi* in 1979 and later was awarded the Caldecott Honor Medal in 1980. Some of his stories are known and loved by many. Among his 15 other works are *The Polar Express* and *Jumanji*. Both of these earned Caldecott medals. Even more awards have come from the Boston Globe Horn Book Award for *The Garden of Abdul Gasazi*. "Additionally, he received the Boston Globe Honor for *The Polar Express* as well as *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick*. Yet of greater importance is his family, wife Lisa and daughters Sophia and Anna. He now resides in Providence, RI.



CONNECTIONS

Women that were first:

Thinking in Pictures, Expanded Edition: My Life with Autism by Temple Grandin (2010). This could be read with older classes (especially with those in upper grades through high school) or as a great resource for teachers. It is not a picture book.

Sally Ride: The First American Woman in Space by: Tom Riddalls (2010).

Sally Ride: Shooting for the Stars (Great Lives Series) by: Sue Hurwitz. This is only 24 pages.

Elizabeth Blackwell: America's First Woman Doctor by: Trina Robbins (2007). This is a graphic novel format.

Brave Harriet: The First Woman to Fly the English Channel by: Marissa Moss (2001).

Problem Solving:

Math-terpieces: The Art of Problem-Solving by: Greg Tang (2003).

Ms. B. and Her Wondrous Bees by: Rahman Newdles and Joshua Wright (2013). This one is too new, but it looks very promising.

The Pepins and Their Problems by: Polly Horvath (2008). This is a chapter book.

You Can't Buy a Dinosaur With a Dime: Problem-solving in Dollars and Cents by: Harriet Ziefert (2003).

Fear:

Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears by: Emily Gravett (2008).

Mister D: A Children's Picture Book about Overcoming Doubts and Fears by: Elizabeth Stevens (2012).

Wilma Jean the Worry Machine by: Julia Cook (2012).

Science:

***Water, Water Everywhere* by: Cynthia Overbeck Bix (1993).**

Available from Amazon.com.

Follow the Water from Brook to Ocean (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science 2) by: Arthur Dorros (2000). Available from Amazon.com.

ACTIVITIES

Video/Virtual Tours of Niagara Falls:

Share Niagara Falls with your students with these links. They will be great discussion starters and can segue into various projects and activities. <http://www.cliftonhill.com/explore/media-gallery/virtual-tour> (This is a panorama view.)

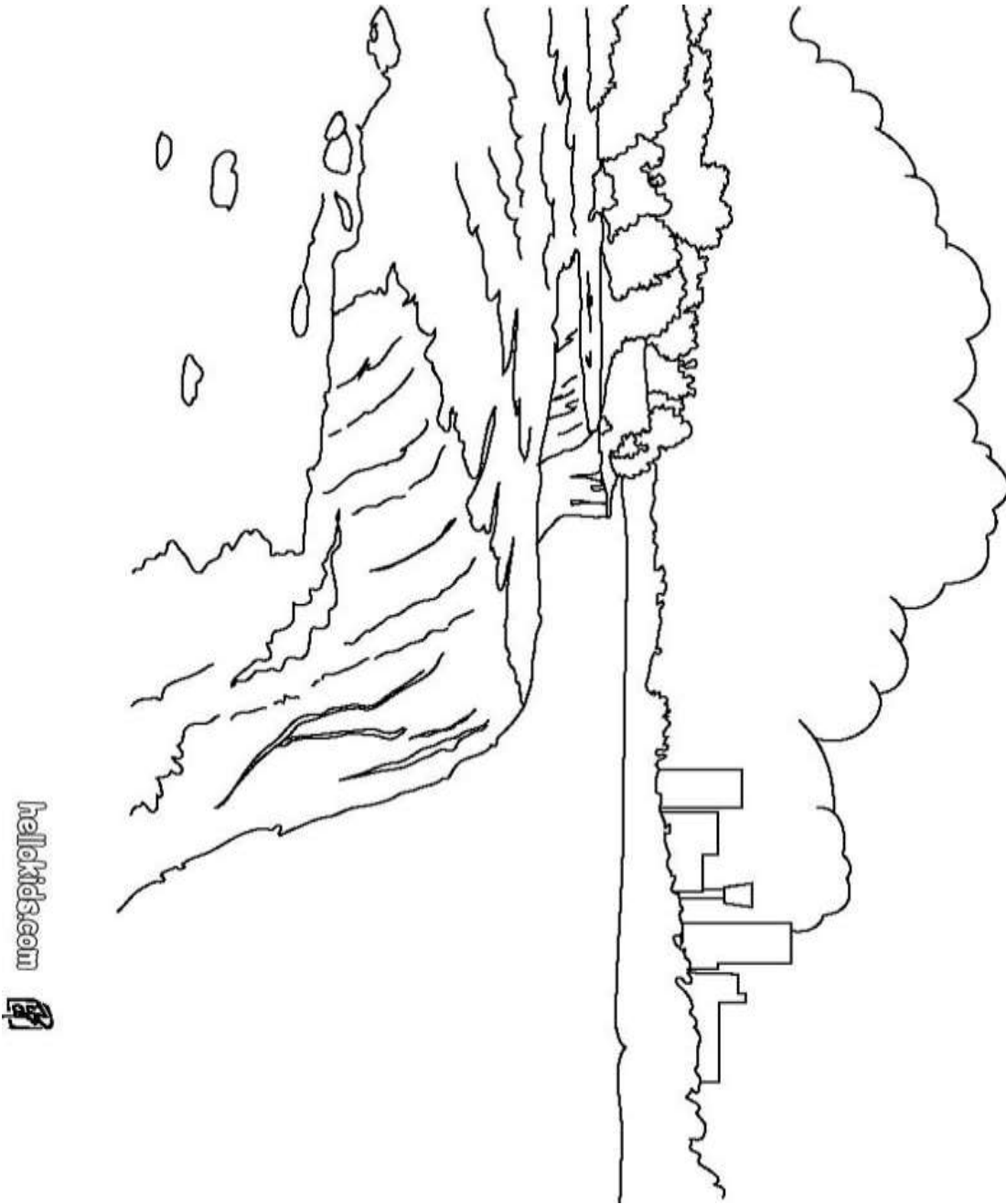
<http://familyinternet.about.com/od/websites/a/niagara-falls-virtual-tour.htm> (This is a virtual fieldtrip.)

<http://niagarafallsvlogger.com/> (These are videos with the sound of the falls.)

<http://www.niagaraparks.com/about/virtual-tour.html#movie>
<http://www.infoniagara.com/attractions/niagara-falls-webcam/>
(another webcam, but with links to other aspects of Niagara Falls on the left side of the page.)

Art Activity:

Color the picture of Niagara Falls



Science Activities:

It may be interesting to start with a problem and then have the students ask questions or offer ideas that result in the need to do the following project. Simply drop an egg and have the students see it break. (You can film this so you do not need to break an egg for each class.) Compare it to the barrel going over the falls. The kids need to come up with ideas regarding why the egg broke, questions that get them thinking about the stresses or causes. Then have them state the problem on the way to resolving the problem. After they do the activity, they can reflect verbally or in written form and discuss the outcomes of the activity. Why the egg survived the fall or why it broke or cracked. You may take this to any degree of complexity or simplicity you desire.

Can you protect a falling egg?

What you'll need:

- Eggs
- Paper towels
- Build your egg protectors from resources such as:
 - Plastic straws
 - Popsicle sticks
 - Tape
 - Recycled paper
 - Glue
 - Plastic bags
 - Boxes
 - Used material
 - Plastic containers
 - ???

The aim:

Your goal is simple: design and build a system that will protect an egg from a 1-meter (3.3 feet) drop. Eggs that smash or crack fail the test while eggs that survive without a scratch pass! If they survive, you can also increase the distance to see from how high you can drop the egg without breakage.

Getting started:

You need to create something that can absorb the energy the egg gathers as it accelerates towards the ground. A hard surface will crack the egg so you have to think carefully about how you can protect it. Something that will cushion the egg at the end of its fall is a good place to start. You want the egg to decelerate slowly so it doesn't crack or smash all over the ground. You'll need to run a few trials so have some eggs ready as guinea pigs, those that don't survive will at least be comforted knowing they were smashed for a good cause, and if not, you can at least have scrambled eggs for dinner right?

This activity came from:

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/projects/eggdrop.html>

Slope and Water Speed (Force?)

This activity can be used for predicting, graphing, and understanding in simple terms the effect the slope or steepness of a river has on the speed of the water flow or the effect on the force of the water as it moves. Before beginning the project see what the students predict will be the outcomes of the activity. It can be used in conjunction with a KWL chart to focus the students' thinking.

What you'll need:

- A length of open gutter pipe
- A pitcher or container for water
- Water
- A light object to float or move down the drain pipe
- A stop watch or watch with a second hand
- A ladder or some other object to elevate one end of the drain pipe
- Something on which to set the bottom end of the drain pipe

Getting Started:

You will need to find a place where you have access to water and for the water to drain or go somewhere without causing damage. There also needs to be enough room for the students to see the experiments. You place the bottom end drainpipe on the lower object. Next, place the other end of the drainpipe on a rung of the ladder that is just a little higher than the bottom end of the pipe. Place the light object about 6 inches to a foot away from the higher end of the drainpipe. Pour water into the pipe so it runs down the pipe moving the object. Time how long it takes the object to float to the end and fall out of the drainpipe. Repeat this after raising the upper end of the drainpipe. (Be sure to place the object in exactly the same position each time you repeat the activity.) You can do this at a variety of heights to demonstrate the difference in velocity, power, or other principles. You can change other variables such as: the weight of the object, the amount of water and so forth.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

Dear Diary:

You are going to write your diary. You are going to plan to do something that will be the first time it has been done successfully. Or you are going to set a new world record in anything you want to attempt. For your daily entries you need to write about the following:

- What it is you will do.
- Why you want to do it.
- The plans you make so that you can do it.
- Who you talk to if you need help.
- Where it will take place and when you will do it.
- Tell how your plan went. Did you succeed?

The Carney Hawker:

At carnivals they used to have hawkers, men calling to people trying to get them to visit different attractions or to try their luck to win a prize. At carnivals they used to have hawkers, men calling to people trying to get them to visit different attractions or to try their luck to win a prize. You will need to write what you would say to people passing by to get them to go to see Annie Edson Taylor and the barrel she used to go over Niagara Falls. Some things to think about might be:

- What will get their attention?
- What is exciting about Annie and what she did?
- Is there something that is strange, heroic, or frightening about what they will see?

Once you have written what you would say, practice saying it out loud with a lot of emphasis, enthusiasm, and excitement. You may need to raise your voice so you can be heard over others that are trying to get the attention of the same people passing by for their exhibits and attractions. This will give you an idea of what it was like going to the old carnivals.

Math Activities:

Here are a couple of worksheets to reinforce multiplication and division skills.

As barrels float toward the Niagara Falls, students will determine how far they have gone.

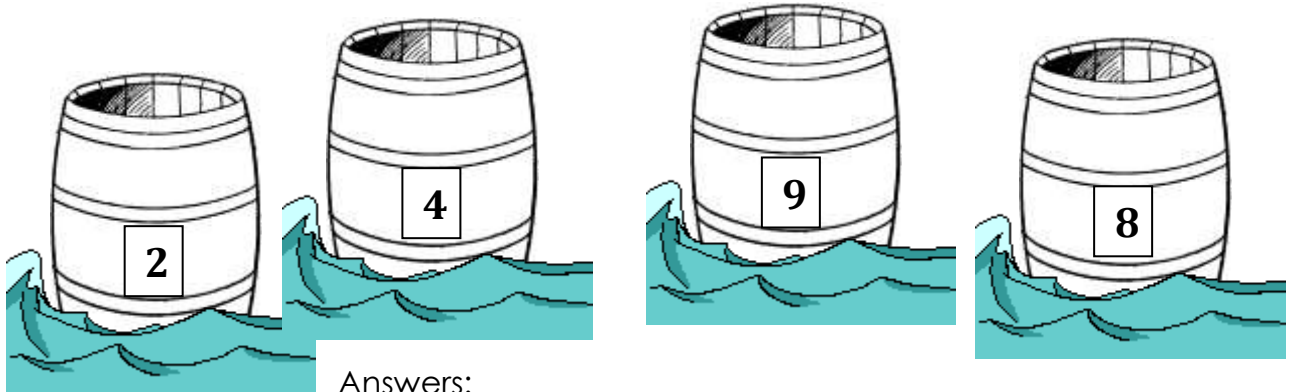
In the other they will determine how many hours they were floating in the river.

If you like, you can also use the information you recorded from the slope and water speed activity to create some additional practice by determining the number of feet the object travels and dividing by the time. A calculator may be needed unless you round to whole numbers.

$$\text{Distance (miles)} \div \text{number of miles per hour} = \text{Time (hours)}$$
$$\text{Number of miles} \times \text{Number of hours} = \text{Distance (miles)}$$

Picture Books for Older Readers

Multiplication facts: These barrels are floating down the river towards Niagara Falls. How far does each barrel go? Each barrel travels 2 miles in one hour. Each barrel has the number of hours it floats down river written on the side. To find out, you will have to multiply the number of miles it floats in one hour by the number of hours it floats. Then, draw a line from the barrel to the correct answer.

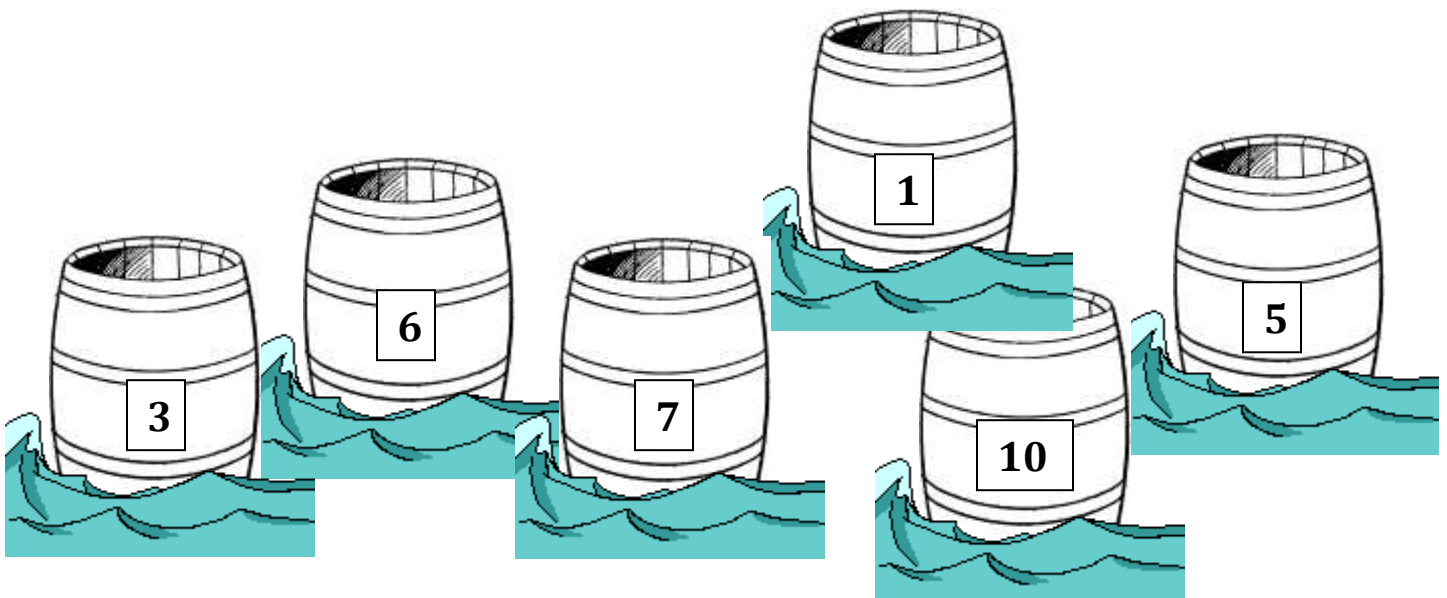


Answers:

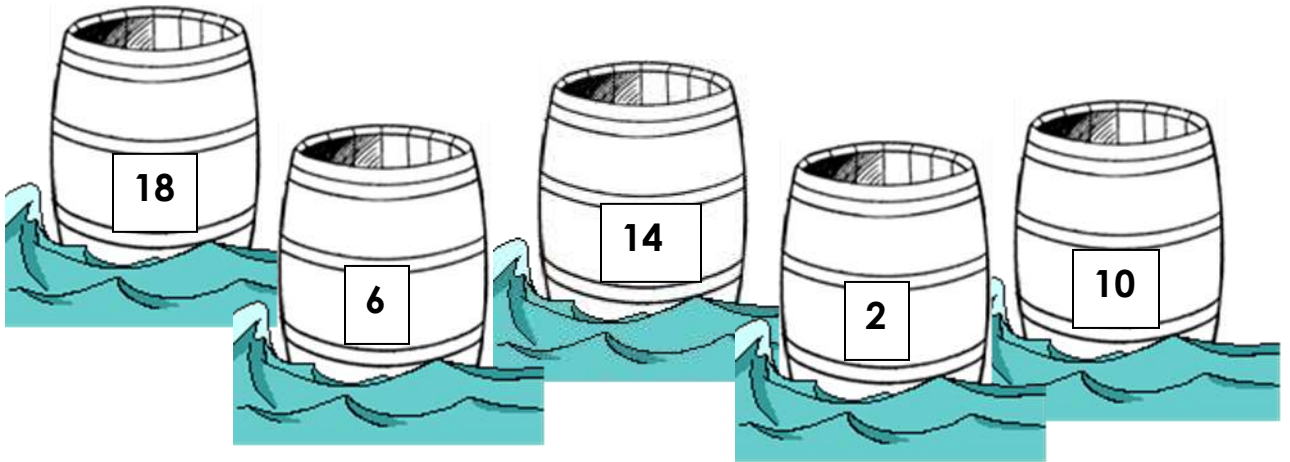
16 miles, 4 miles, 8 miles, 18 miles,



2 miles, 20 miles, 6 miles, 14 miles, 10 miles, 12 miles



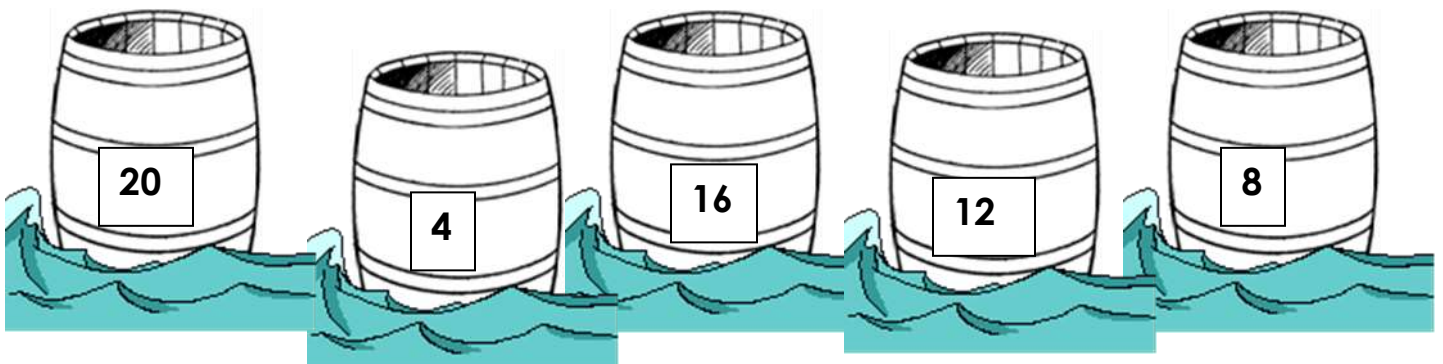
Division Practice: These barrels float down the river and reach Niagara Falls. How many hours does each barrel float? Each barrel travels 2 miles in one hour. Each barrel has the number of hours it floats down river written on the side. To find out, you will have to divide the number of miles it floats in one hour by the number of hours it floats. Then, draw a line from the barrel to the correct answer.



8 hours, 1 hour, 4 hours, 9 hours, 6 hours,



2 miles, 10 hours, 3 hours, 7 hours, 5 hours



Picture Books for Older Readers

Great Links!!!

Fun facts about Niagara Falls:

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/earth/niagarafalls.html>

More about Annie Edson Taylor:

<http://www.legacy.com/ns/news-story.aspx?t=annie-edson-taylor-heroine-of-niagara-falls&id=138>

This is the segment about Annie on This Day in History. Read the article and watch the video.

<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-barrel-ride-down-niagara-falls>

A listing and brief story of many of the daredevils that have braved the falls:

http://www.niagarafallslive.com/daredevils_of_niagara_falls.htm

More in depth information about how it works when going over the falls:

<http://adventure.howstuffworks.com/survival/wilderness/niagara.htm>

One site for an American carnival company that includes history, posters and more:

<http://www.strates.com/index.htm>

Readers' Theater

Based on

Queen of the Falls

Written and Illustrated by Chris Van Allsburg

(Arranged by CYRM committee members ~~Randy de Jong and Sally James~~, for classroom use only) Characters:

Narrator 1	Annie Edson Taylor
Narrator 2	Workshop Foreman
Narrator 3	Frank Russell
Narrator 4	Fred Truesdale

Narrator 1: Close your eyes and imagine what it would be like to see a flea next to a fire hydrant. That's just how the thousands of visitors to Niagara Falls feel as they watch the water roar and thunder as it plunges over the edge, dropping as if falling from the height of a 17-story building.

Narrator 2: The ground shakes, the mist is everywhere, and the roar causes the earth to tremble as if a locomotive were rushing by.

Narrator 3: The crowds to see the falls were always gigantic. The people came from all of the hotels and businesses in the towns on both sides of the falls. But on October 24, 1901 the crowd was different—silent and expectant.

Narrator 1: Suddenly, a cry of "There it is!" rang out, and a barrel was seen at the edge of the falls. In the blink of an eye, it plunged over the falls, into the river below.

Narrator 2: Excitement raced through the throng, or perhaps it was fear and terror, as they held their breaths. The crowd knew that the barrel was not empty; someone was inside.

Picture Books for Older Readers

Narrator 3: Many assumed that a young man was crammed inside the barrel. Who else would have the strength and courage to consider—and then carry out—such an action? However, the story of the individual inside was unexpected. It began 200 miles west of Niagara Falls in Bay City Michigan, in a small charm school run by Annie Edson Taylor. Her school was struggling.

Annie: I've taught the children of the finest families from Chattanooga to Charleston. I've taught them everything they would need to succeed in society. Among many lessons, they learned to waltz, to eat properly, and to be courteous.

Narrator 4: In spite of the well-rounded curriculum, each year Annie's classes seemed to be smaller and smaller until one day she realized...

Annie: I am going to have to close my school. There just aren't enough children, and without the children I cannot make a living. Oh, woe is me!!! What am I to do? How will I live?

Narrator 1: These questions puzzled and frightened Annie. She wasn't young anymore; she was sixty-two and a widow. She had no family to rely on, only herself.

Narrator 2: She hadn't saved much while she taught and knew she could not live on the small amount of savings she had. She continued to think of ways to avoid the intolerable, perhaps inevitable, fate that she believed awaited her.

Annie: Will I go to the poorhouse?

Narrators 1, 2, 3, and 4: NO!!!

Narrator 3: The poorhouse was full of unhappy, lonely old people with no family who often were just waiting to die because they had no place else to go.

Annie: I can't clean houses or simply find a job selling things in a store.

Narrators 1, 2, 3, and 4: (Quietly, a bit embarrassed) She was too proud.

Narrator 4: She needed a plan, a way to make enough money to live comfortably for the rest of her life.

Annie: I don't know what I can do. Every day I have less and less money. Soon it will ALL be gone.

Picture Books for Older Readers

Narrator 1: Then one day as she was reading the paper, she saw a story on the front page about all of the summer visitors at Niagara Falls. She remembered visiting the falls with her father. There were lots and lots of people at the falls.

Narrator 2: And “suddenly, like a cork popping from a champagne bottle, an idea came to her. She would find fame and fortune by doing something no one in the world had ever done before.”

Annie: I will go over Niagara Falls in a barrel.

Narrator 3: Excited, the very next day she began to formulate her plans. Her barrel had to be special, not just any barrel, but one that could withstand rocks, waves, and the long drop into the river. It had to be strong enough to go over the falls and not be crushed upon the impact at the bottom; and it had to be “the right size for its passenger.”

Narrator 4: She took her plan to the foreman of the shop she hoped would construct her barrel. She explained what she needed and why it was so important.

Annie: Sir, you must help me. I need this barrel and it has to be strong enough to withstand the fall and power of the river. It is my only hope to avoid the poorhouse.

Foreman: Lady, you're daft. Its madness! And I won't do it!!!

Annie: You must! What else can I do? I can't build the barrel myself, and I won't go to the poorhouse.

Foreman: If you want to kill yourself, go ahead. Don't put this on my head. I don't want anything to do with it. You're crazy and if you go over the falls in a barrel, it won't be my barrel you use to kill yourself.

Narrator 1: Annie scooped up her plans and left. She couldn't stop thinking about her future. She knew the barrel would be strong enough and it could work. Three days later she returned to the cooper's shop and explained just how it could work. She explained that she was confident that she would survive the fall and not be injured.

Annie: You see, if we make the barrel exactly like I have drawn it here, it should work. I don't have a death wish, and I'm not crazy!

Foreman: Lady, it might just work. You're still as mad as the Mad Hatter, but we'll get this done for you. No guarantees, but it's your life you'll be throwing off the falls, not mine.

Picture Books for Older Readers

Narrator 3: Annie and the workmen got to work. She was there from the beginning to the end of the construction process. She helped to select the best wood and materials, and her drawings dictated the structure of the barrel. Soon, the barrel began to take shape.

Narrator 4: Annie and her workmen did everything they could to make the barrel as safe and strong as possible, but they knew that putting Annie in the barrel and sending her over Niagara Falls would be like putting an egg in a can and dropping it from a huge building. The can might be undamaged but the egg could easily get broken. To ensure Annie's safety, they added pillows and straps for her to hold on to.

Narrator: "When their work was done, they had a barrel that was four and a half feet high with iron bands wrapped around it, and weighed more than one hundred and sixty pounds." It was as safe as they could make it.

Narrator 1: However, there was still one more thing Annie needed to make her plan work--a manager; someone to get people interested in the daredevil who was going to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. She needed publicity and marketing in advance so that her plan could have a chance to succeed. She paid Frank Russell a visit and shared her dream.

Annie: So you see Mr. Russell it can work, but not without you. You know the people; what gets their attention, how to build excitement, and how to get them to watch the event. Everything I have done so far will be wasted if you can't get the people there. Will you do it?

Frank: I know what you mean, but aren't you a bit old to do this? Will people want to see an old lady go over the falls? The fall might easily kill a much younger person. How do we sell them on YOU going over in a barrel?

Annie: It will be more frightening and amazing if a little old lady is brave enough to attempt this. No one would believe an old lady would be such a crazy daredevil. Everyone expects younger men or women to be courageous, but an old lady? That is the selling point! Just imagine... Will you do it?

Frank: OK! OK! I'll do it! But, I'm handling things my way. I can see it now: Headlines in the paper, photographs of you, and the barrel, followed by pictures of the deadly and terrifying falls. Before and after shots. I know I can sell this and get the public clamoring to see you. They will eat it up. I can see it now! "Little lady does what no one has done before and lives to tell about it." What a spectacle! What a show!

Picture Books for Older Readers

Narrator 2: Frank had a lot to do to pull off this stunt. He had to get stories in the newspapers AND find someone to place Annie's barrel in exactly the perfect spot if she was to have any chance for survival. Fred Truesdale was the perfect man to take Annie to the drop point. He was strong and knew the river. He could row the boat against the strong currents and make it back to shore safely.

Narrator: However, Frank Russell had one other major problem to solve. He had ignored Annie's advice—to tell the public her real age — and had instead told people that Annie was much younger, an adventuress: a woman who climbed mountains and swam across frigid lakes; a woman who laughed at danger.

Narrator 3: Everyone awaiting Annie at the station was stunned when they saw her step onto the platform. Was this a hoax? A con job? What met their eyes was...

Narrator 4: Nothing close to what they had anticipated. How could this frail woman, who looked more like a kindly grandmother than an adventuress, hope to live after falling more than 17 stories in a barrel?

Narrator 1: Frank had Annie wait ten days before undertaking her death-defying feat. During this time he displayed the barrel in the hotel lobby, ran more stories in the newspapers, and built interest and excitement for the coming day.

Narrator 2: The day finally came. Reporters, and a few curious onlookers were there when they loaded the barrel into Fred Truesdale's boat. They cheered Annie on and wished her luck as she entered the boat. Then she spoke to the crowd...

Annie: "I will not say goodbye, for I know I will see you all shortly."

Narrator 3: Soon, Fred and his assistant pulled onto a small island in the middle of the river. Laying the barrel on its side and removing the top they prepared for Annie to climb inside. As proper as she ever was, Annie made a final request...

Annie: Gentlemen, this is a bit unladylike, so could you please turn around while I crawl inside?

Fred: Sure enough, ma'am.

Narrator 4: Once she was settled in the barrel she called out...

Annie: "So long boys."

Picture Books for Older Readers

Narrator 1: They tied a rope around the barrel and pulled it mid-river where they came to the point of no return.

Fred: (Tapping as if hitting the top of the barrel) I'm going to cut the rope. Get ready ma'am.

Annie: "All righty."

Narrator 2: Then it began for real. The two men fought hard to break free of the current that caught the barrel and rammed it tumbling and spinning downriver.

Narrator 3: Soon, the crowd caught sight of the barrel getting slammed by the waves and crashing into the rocks along the river. A roar rose from the crowd ...

All Narrators Together: There it is!

Narrator 2: Annie was on her way. How proud she would have been if she had been able to see the crowd cheering her on, watching and sharing in her moment. It was just what she had hoped for.

Narrator 3: Soon, she became discombobulated as she was thrown about, rolled on her side, and flipped on her back. The barrel careened onward, crashing into rocks and shooting through the rapids toward the inevitable falls.

Narrator 4: Fred had warned her that the water would seem still just before she shot over the falls. Inside her barrel, Annie waited for the still, calm, almost peaceful, waters just before the falls. Before she knew it, she could feel the stillness of the water even as the thunder of the walls increased. As she floated forward, she knew she had to be strong and hold on.

Annie: (whispering) "Oh, Lord."

Narrator 1: Then she flew over the falls. Gone. Down, down, down.

Narrator 2: There were screams.

Narrator 3: Gasps and whispers.

Narrator 4: Then, silence, silence, and more silen...(narrator does not finish saying silence)

Picture Books for Older Readers

Narrator 1: But finally the barrel popped and bobbed to the surface. But the crowd was silent. Had its occupant survived? Was she dead? Gravely injured?

Narrator 2: Finally the barrel came closer to shore and men from the crowd leaped into the water to pull it ashore. They tore off the lid with a hammer.

Narrator 3: "Mrs. Taylor.....Mrs. Taylor?"

Annie: (feebly) "Where am I?"

Narrator 3: "Ma'am.....over the falls."

Narrator 4: Battered, bruised, and beaten, and taking quite some time, Annie was slowly and gingerly helped out of the barrel by the men on shore.

Narrator 1: Annie went back to her hotel and was seen by a doctor. Although she was in need of rest, she felt a huge sense of elation. She had done it! She was the first person—man or woman—to survive the drop over the falls! And for a short time it seemed as if she had achieved her goal. Newspapers were alive with her story. Her fame spread from coast to coast. "Americans couldn't (have been) more amazed if a horse had hit a home run or a baby had been elected president."

Narrator 2: "How could anyone, let alone a woman, survive a trip over Niagara Falls?"

Narrator 3: Frank began to look for ways to make money from Annie's hair-raising ride. At a nearby county fair, people lined up to see the "Queen of the Falls." When they saw Annie standing next to her barrel, they couldn't believe such an elderly and frail woman, a grandma, could have braved and survived the falls. However, interest in Annie and her story failed to catch fire.

Narrator 4: Smaller and smaller crowds greeted her at local fairs. Soon, there were few that took an interest in her or her feat. Before long, almost no one came. As the final insult, her manager, Frank Russell, ran off, stealing her barrel.

Narrator 1: Annie battled back. She got the barrel back, hired a new manager, Billy Banks, and once again, tried to ignite the imagination and wonder of her audiences with her tale. Again, she met with the same response-- disbelief and a lack of interest.

Picture Books for Older Readers

Narrator 2: And once again her manager ran off with her now famous barrel. Annie made a new barrel, but before she could try one final time to excite the American people with her story, she realized that she had finally run out of energy.

Narrator 3: She returned to Niagara Falls and tried to sell a pamphlet, telling her story in order to get people interested in what she had done. But she couldn't convince anyone that she was the "Queen of the Falls."

Annie: So I didn't become rich, or even save myself from the poorhouse. My death-defying adventure ended with betrayal and disappointment.

Narrator: Her story might have been lost to history if one reporter hadn't taken an interest and written one final story about a woman who had the courage to confront her uncertain financial future with a death-defying feat.

Narrator: Today, we can look back and say she was a remarkable woman.

Annie: Yes, in a way I am content. I was the one who was brave enough to go over the beautiful but dreadful falls. Everyone agreed, "it was the greatest feat ever performed." (pause) "I am content when I can say, 'I'm the one who did it.'"