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Review: Hand in Hand: An American History through Poetry

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Hand in Hand: An American History through Poetry

By Lee Bennett Hopkins (compiler)

Illustrated by Peter M. Fiore

Simon & Schuster, 1994

DESCRIPTION:

Seventy-five entries in this volume tell the story of America's history in the language of poetry. From the coming of the Pilgrims in 1620 through to the early space flights of the twentieth century, each selection provides a unique view of events that make up the nation's history. Well-known titles such as "Paul Revere's Ride," "O Captain, My Captain," and "Casey Jones," sit alongside lesser known contributions like "We Real Cool," or "Bugs." The experience of the pioneers in "Western Wagons" contrasts with that of Native Americans in "Battle Won is Lost." Country and western life in "Illinois Farmer" and "Nat Love: Black Cowboy" differs from the city scenes in "Skyscraper" and "Subways are People." Wars find a place as in "The Last Good War," as well as everyday activities like going to the movies in "Double Features." Whether penned by famous poets like Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg, and Langston Hughes or lesser known creators of verse, each title offers a piece of American life from the viewpoint of those who lived it.

CRITIQUE:

From double-page spreads to smaller drawings, the remarkable watercolors of Peter M. Fiore add visual impact to the stories presented in these poems. Arranged in chronological order, these poems can be enjoyed on their own or can be used to enrich the reader's understanding of the impact of Various historical events. This volume is a worthwhile addition to any collection. Lee Bennett Hopkins had a passion for introducing young readers to poetry by incorporating it into their studies and he created anthologies highlighting many different areas of knowledge. A list of his numerous titles can be found on this website. <https://biography.jrank.org/pages/2132/Hopkins-Lee-Bennett-1938.html>. Another valuable website offering ideas for incorporating *Hand In Hand* into lesson plans can be found at: <https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/book/hand-hand-american-history-through-poetry>

RELATED SUBJECTS:

Abraham Lincoln, Adventure, African Americans, America, Barbara Frietchie, City life, Civil Rights, Diversity, Erie Canal, Farm life, Frederick Douglass, George Washington, Great Depression, Harriet Tubman, John Brown, John Hancock, Martin Luther King, Molly Pitcher, Nat Love, Native Americans, Paul Revere, Poetry, Survival, The West, Trains, Transportation, United States – History, United States History – Civil War, United States History – Revolutionary War, War

CHARACTER THEMES:

Ambition, Boldness, Citizenship, Coping, Courage, Dedication, Determination, Diversity, Endurance, Faith, Fearlessness, Hope, Independence, Initiative, Knowledge, Leadership, Patriotism, Persistence, Pride, Resolve, Sacrifice, Strength, Survival, Wonder, Work ethic

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