



The Pot That Juan Built

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Juan Quezada is the premier potter in Mexico. With local materials and the primitive methods of the Casas Grandes people -- including using human hair to make brushes and cow manure to feed the flames that fire his pots -- Juan creates stunning pots in the traditional style. Each is a work of art unlike any other. The text is written in the form of "The House That Jack Built" and accompanied by a comprehensive afterward with photos and information about Juan's technique as well as a history of Mata Ortiz, the northern Mexican village where Juan began and continues to work. This celebratory story tells how Juan's pioneering work has transformed Mata Ortiz from an impoverished village into a prosperous community of world-renowned artists.

The Pot That Juan Built Details

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Author : Nancy Andrews-Goebel , David Díaz (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review The Pot That Juan Built for online ebook

Casey Strauss says

This book is the creative telling of how a clay pot is made. The main text of the story is told in rhyme, with a pattern. Accompanying this text is factual information telling the life story of Juan Quezada. The extensive afterword details both Quezada's life, his connection to his culture, his artwork, and the pot making process. The illustrations are beautiful, and the story engaging.

Rachel says

Beautifully done biography with accompanying rhyming poem that adds a line whenever we learn a new step with Juan, who is making one of his pots. I loved the text style they chose to use, the illustrations were lovely (and I just realized that David Diaz was the guy who did the wonderful illustrations for Eve Bunting's "Smoky Night" which I also loved), and the afterword fascinating. I have hand-built, and wheel-thrown pottery before (though I prefer the wheel), so it was interesting to see how Juan did it in the traditional style without all the modern conveniences that most potters use today.

Q_michelene Haggard says

Great book - entertaining and informational. A biography of Juan Quezada. The story is told in dual format, one side in rhyme and repetition patterned after "The House that Jack Built", and the other in prose. It tells how Quezada discovered and uses the traditional pottery methods of the Casas Grandes people, and how he has taught these methods to the people in his village which has helped lift them from poverty. The back includes a section with photographs explaining more fully how the pottery is made. I learned a lot from this book. Shows Quezada's curiosity, creativity and compassion. He helped himself and tuned and helped his whole village. Good for all ages.

Ashley says

audience: primary

genre: poetry and nonfiction

quote promoting mental images and rationale: "The beautiful pot that Juan built" (pg 21).

While this quote seems simple, it appears at the end of the long, rhyming poem-like story that has gone into detail describing Juan figuring out how to make pottery, describing the process, and what the pot looks like-- summarizing simply with the quote above. I would have students create drawings or projects with construction paper to show the beautiful pot that they see in their mind after reading the story.

Kristine Hansen says

I haven't run across a children's picture book before that I could classify as "inspiring" until this book. Here we take something familiar ("The House Jack Built") and give it a twist - at times funny, always interesting. And then alongside of it, tell the story behind the story, of a man who changed his entire community for the better. This is very cool, and very well done. Share this with your family but be sure to read all the notes on the side, AND everything in the afterward. Loved this!

Lauren says

This book tells the true story of Juan Quezada, a famous pot maker in Mexico. The story is structure to the poem/story of the house that jack built, it has rhyme an repetition and builds on the materials and pot making process from the last page. At the back of the book there is a glossary, map and pages on the history of the town in which these famous pots were made and the people.

This book could be used cross curricular in ml lessons, art, d&t, history, geography and science. The children could study the culture and people in Mata Ortiz and consider why this traditional pot making process died out. Children could design/make their own pots and discuss the unique natural materials used to make the pots, their properties and how they work.

This book is available in Spanish and English so they can be read alongside each other.

Tara says

I read this book for a project I was doing on pottery and I just loved it. On the left page of each two-page spread was a poem or song that talked about the pot that Juan built, appropriate for all ages. But when reading to older children, there is historical background on the true story of Juan Quezada on the right page. His story is really interesting. He discovered a broken piece of pottery from an ancient people that had lived in his town over 600 years and then he just goes on a personal discovery that brings the pottery back to life and turns his community from a poor village to a prosperous community of world-famous artists. There is also an afterward which has more historical information. This book could use in a cultural spotlight about Mexico, it could be read when doing a unit on pottery, it can be read during history. There's many ways to incorporate in the classroom. It's very interesting. I definitely recommend it.

Lauma says

This is an inspirational biographical picture book about Juan Quezada whose interest in recreating the traditional pots of the Cases Grandes people transformed his impoverished village in Mexico into a prosperous community of world-renowned artists.

I love that it provides three different levels of detail for use with different age groups. The pages on the left tell Juan's story through cumulative rhyme (like "The House that Jack Built") for grades K - 2, while the page on the right will give a detailed account of the story targeted for older readers in grades 3 - 5. At the end

of the book, there is an "Afterword" that provides more historic explanations of the people of Mata Ortiz and the artist's methods for creating his pottery.

The illustrations are bold, colorful, and stylized representations of life in this small town in Mexico. Children will like the bright orange and blue backgrounds, the geometric designs of the natural elements, and the focus on Juan and the animals in his village. The Afterword contains actual photographs of the artist and his pot-making process.

Great book for all ages!

(NS) Sue says

This is the true story of Juan Quezada, a Mexican potter who creates beautiful traditional pots using local materials and primitive methods. He taught many others in his village to make pottery which has taken the region from poverty to prosperity.

There are two parts to this book. The pages on the left-hand side of the book tell Juan's story in rhyme. Each line begins "This is the pot that Juan built. . ." following the form and rhythm of the traditional "This is the house that Jack built. ." The rhymes are lively and alliterative and lend themselves very well to a read-aloud where children could act out each part. As a new line is added, all the previous lines are repeated again. The right-hand pages of the book tell Juan's story in prose. It includes more details about his life and work, including the steps he goes through in creating his pots. It would be appropriate as a read-aloud or for older readers. If your students are making pottery, this book would be a great accompaniment.

The illustrations in *The Pot that Juan Built* are beautiful: bright and colorful and very engaging. I listened to this book on CD which was wonderful. The narrator's voice was lyrical and soothing and the traditional Mexican music in the background really added to the story.

(Gr. K-5)

Crystal Bandel says

The Pot That Juan Built by Nancy Andrews-Goebel, published 2002.

Nonfiction.

Picture book.

Grades K-5.

Found via *School Library Journal*, reviewed by Kathleen T. Isaacs.

This reworking of "The House that Jack Built" tells the story of Juan Quezada, a potter who revitalized the traditional pottery techniques of the Casas Grandes Indians and started a local artists' colony. The text on the

left-hand pages uses the familiar repetitive structure to tell readers about the creation of Juan's pots, while the right-hand pages go into more specific information about Juan's story. The illustrations use traditional Mexican techniques, and an author's note at the end of the book provides further information and small photographs of Juan's pots. Reviewer Isaacs explains that, "[w]hile the cumulative rhyme works for younger children, the accompanying explanation of the process makes the book useful for older readers interested in art or culture." This book should work with all audiences, especially those interested in Hispanic art history.

Kimberly says

Excellent book, similar to the House that Jack built, but based on the life of artist-potter Juan Quezada. Uses rhyme and repetition for a great read a loud for younger kids. Has prose to describe pottery process for older elementary.

Wes says

I like that way that this book is laid out. It may seem like a simple or just a kids book but I say that we can all learn from it. Their are wonderful illustrations throughout. A story of making a pot is presented in prose on one side of the page. On the other is a tale that reads more or less like a history lesson. The tale woven is that of Juan Quezada, a premier Mexican potter.

Kara says

Part folk song, part biography, part art history, this picture book tells the story of Juan Quezada who recreated the process of making pre-Colombian pottery.

The book uses the old 'the house that Jack built' style of song of repeating and building verses to tell how he made pottery, with prose blocks of text on each page going more in depth on how he re-created a form of art once lost.

Gorgeous illustrations in bold, bright and yet dreamlike swirls and loops that reflect the desert and the pottery designs illustrate the story of an artist who deserves recognition both for creating beautiful objects and preserving a lost art form.

Crystal says

This book captures me on many levels. There is the mimicry of "The House That Jack Built" so it is a great addition to a unit on cumulative stories. There is a wonderful non-fiction component, so it can be paired with biography or "how-to" units and of course the art component means that this book would be fabulous with a pottery unit too. On top of all of those thematic possibilities, the illustrations are dazzling in themselves. David Diaz uses bold colors and design that captures readers.

My students immediately began to chime in on the rhyming portion of the text. They especially loved the line, "Before it was baked in the cow manure fire." Each two page spread has a bit of the rhyme and the facing page has a brief explanation to go along with it. This is where the details are explained like the fact that Juan does in fact gather cow manure and uses it as the fuel for the fire.

My students were fascinated to learn that this story is about a real person and there is a website <http://juanquezadapottery.com/home.html> that shows some of the pictures from the information section at the end of the book in addition to even more pictures of his actual work.

To see that one man taught himself how to create pots of such beauty using only the natural materials from the land around him is pretty amazing. That he shared this knowledge with his community so they could also create these kinds of pots is even more inspiring. My third graders were quite impressed with his abilities and also found the rhyme to be quite fun. It is a joy to be able to share such a unique non-fiction text with my students.

After using the book in lessons, I also found several videos online so in the future we will also get to hear from Juan Quezada himself.

I will be recommending this book to many people in the future.

Originally reviewed at Reading Through Life <http://readingtl.blogspot.com/2014/03...>

S10_Jessica Oster says

Age: K-5

Protagonist: Juan Quezada (picture book biography)

Detailing the process of crafting a traditional Casa Grandes pot, this is a picture book biography of Juan Quezada, a man who rediscovered a forgotten craft of the Casa Grandes people. Written in a poetic form, each new process adds to the story as a cumulative poem. Not only does it touch on the crafting process but also provides short side notes as to how it relates to the real life protagonist and how he came to rediscover a traditional way of crafting pots. Quezada's desire and passion for creating the purest of pots (in materials) has rebuilt his town as it has provided a much needed financial stability.

Overall, I really enjoyed this book and found the written cumulative poetic style quite enchanting. The pictures are bright and depict the process of crafting an individual pot and the unique-ness of the process and material. Not only does it highlight this unique man's vision and craft, it also relays a message that one person really can bring positive change to town they live in. As an adult, it made me want to travel to Mexico and purchase one of these unique hand made pots.

Andrews-Goebel, N. (2002). *The pot that Juan built*. New York, NY: Lee & Low Books Inc.

Based on the life and work of Juan Quezada, a well known Mexican potter who rebuilt and reestablished financial stability for his community through his pottery, Andrews-Goebel presents a biographical story that focuses on the craft of Quezada's pottery. It is written in the style of a cumulative poem (like that of "The House that Jack Built") and includes small sections on every spread that aid in providing further information about the process being described. This charming book would lend itself well to art or poetry classes.

Students could be challenged to write a cumulative poem based on the story of their life. (Grades 2-10)
