



# Seed by Seed: The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman

*Esmé Raji Codell , Lynne Rae Perkins (Illustrator)*

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**Seed by Seed: The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman** Esmé Raji Codell , Lynne Rae Perkins (Illustrator)

His real name was John Chapman.

He grew apples.

But wait. So what?

Why should we remember him

and read about him

and think about him

and talk about him today,

more than two hundred years after he was born?

Why should we call him a hero?

Esme Raji Codell and Lynne Rae Perkins show us, in eloquent words and exhilarating pictures, why Johnny Appleseed matters now, perhaps more than ever, in our loud and wired and fast-paced world.

## Seed by Seed: The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman Details

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Author : Esmé Raji Codell , Lynne Rae Perkins (Illustrator)

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# **From Reader Review Seed by Seed: The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman for online ebook**

## **Chelsea Gail Smith says**

Seed By Seed: The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman by Esme Raji Codell and Illustrated by Lynne Rae Perkins was the book that I thought should have won the 2013 Caldecott Award. What really caught my eye with the illustrations were the vibrant colors expressed on every page. There is a lot of land/farm pictures in the story and each picture is descriptive. If the story did not have words, I would still be able to tell what was going on based on the illustrations. The pages 22-25 are by far the most detailed and interesting illustrations in the story. On 22 and 23 on the top of the pages there are two hands with the words "Try to make PEACE" (Page 22) "Where there is WAR" (Page 23). These hands look like they are going to shake and then underneath them is text, then another picture is under each of the text relating to the hands on the top of the page. I thought this was a really interesting way to bring two pages together, and to get the point across of how John Chapman was trusted by both Native Americans and pioneer communities. On pages 24 and 25, Perkins completely switches up the texture and design of the illustrations. On every page they have been watercolors, on these two pages he used a needlepoint like texture. The illustrations looked threaded into the page. This was such a unique way to change up the drawings, while still showing a good interpretation of what is going on in the story.

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## **Kristen says**

This is what good biographies do: introduce you to the life of a real person and inspire you to make a difference in your own life. We have several biographies of Johnny Appleseed in our library, but this one pulls readers out of our electronic, plastic world and into the woods of the frontier. We see a man so dedicated to making the world a better place, seed by seed, deed by deed, that he traveled for hundreds of miles on foot, planting apple trees and extending kindness wherever he could.

After we learn about this humble, generous man, Codell asks us, "what seed will you plant?" I like her idea for a Johnny Appleseed pledge we can make on September 26th, John Chapman's birthday, one small thing we can do each day to plant good in our world.

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## **Tasha says**

Two modern children are transported back in time from the busy highways filled with cars to the quiet woods of the late 1700s. From there, the story of Johnny Appleseed, really named John Chapman, is told. The differences between the world back then and our modern world are explored. Then the way of life that Johnny Appleseed embraced that of using what you have, respecting nature, sharing, making peace, and reaching your destination in small steps is tied back to how important those things are still for us today. His planting of seeds changed the landscape of our country. The book ends asking what seed you will plant.

Codell writes with a wonderful lyricism paired with a directness. It makes for a book that is straight-forward but also written with care to create a specific mood. Chapman's story is filled with legend, especially in his relationship with nature and animals. While some of it may be tall tales, it contributes to the wonder that

surrounds this man. Codell made a choice to have some of that in her book and it works very well, distinctly noted as legend rather than fact.

Perkins' illustrations vary from page to page. Most of the art is done in watercolor and gouache, creating bright colored images that embrace the natural and feel clear and crisp. Other pages incorporate burlap bags and needlework. It's a clever use of materials of the period that really add another dimension to the illustrations.

A beautiful look at a man who stand for much of what we are seeking in modern society. This book reaches beyond the legend and finds the real Johnny Appleseed. Appropriate for ages 6-8.

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## **Sarah Zablutney says**

**Title:** *Seed by Seed The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman*

**Author:** Esmé Raji Codell

**Illustrator:** Lynne Rae Perkins

**Genre:** Legend and Legacy

**Theme(s):** Giving back

**Opening line/sentence:** "When we look out our windows, what do we see?"

**Brief Book Summary:** Two children follow John "Appleseed" Chapman through his journey of planting apple seed's around the country. They learn how important he was, the apples that we eat today might be from the seeds that were planted by Chapman in the 1700's, the children learn how one small deed a day can make a huge impact.

**Professional Recommendation/Review #1:** Codell, Esmé Raji *Seed by Seed: The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman* 32 pp. Greenwillow (HarperCollins Children's Books Group) 2012. ISBN 978-0-06-145515-5 LE ISBN 978-0-06-145516-2 (2) K-3 Illustrated by Lynne Rae Perkins. series.

Two contemporary urban children meet colonial-era orchardist John "Appleseed" Chapman and accompany him around the country as he communes with nature and shares its bounty. Codell's lyrical text paints a heroic portrait; Perkins's detailed, homespun watercolor and gouache illustrations embrace the natural world, evoking its sounds, smells, and changing seasons. An author's note includes craft ideas and an apple pie recipe. (Horn Book)

**Professional Recommendation/Review #2:** Children's Literature - Sylvia Firth

The story of John Chapman aka Johnny Appleseed endures. Many versions, including those written by Aliko, Steven Kellogg, Reeve Lindberg and Jane Yolen, are still in print. This newest version, beautifully illustrated by Newbery Medal winner Perkins, is outstanding. The artwork, which combines many varied media ranging from watercolor to woodcarving to gouache to burlap to embroidery, creates a perfect setting for the text. In a plea for heeding the tenets Chapman lived by, this account of his life unfolds by combining facts with clearly stated but not actually known information such as how it is popularly assumed that Johnny Appleseed wore his cooking pot on his head when he traveled. Other details inform readers that he was a vegetarian, loved animals and was accepted by both Native Americans and settlers throughout the Ohio Valley and beyond. A case is even made that he was also the "frontier's first librarian" because he shared books and stories with families he met. Many of the apples eaten today are most likely descended from trees planted by Johnny Appleseed during his miles and miles of travel on foot across the frontier. The book ends with a request that youngsters do a good deed each day to help make our world a better place. On the final page is a recipe for apple pie and suggestions for celebrating Chapman's birthday on September 26th. Youngsters will certainly enjoy this book in a story time setting or independently. Teachers and parents can use this book as a

tool for teaching respect for the environment and positive behavior. Purchase is recommended. Reviewer: Sylvia Firth (CLCD)

**Response to Two Professional Reviews:** The reviews of this book were both great indicators of what happened throughout the story with John “Appleseed” Chapman and the children who went on the journey with him. The second review was more detailed and gave the reader a better understanding of the story. It was importantly noted in the reviews that at the end of the story, on the final page, there is a recipe of apple pie and suggestions to celebrate Chapman’s birthday. This is a way the readers can do an activity after they read the book.

**Evaluation of Literary Elements:** This book has been designed for older readers who can understand the concept of this story, that small deed can have a large impact. This story has colorful artwork that is very detailed; it brings out the plot in the book. The reader is able to take away valuable knowledge from this reading that can help them through life.

**Consideration of Instructional Application:** This book would be good to read when discussing a science lesson or for Earth day and how important plants and trees are to us and the environment. The student can get apple seeds to plant in their yards. The students will have the responsibility of caring for the tree and making sure it gets what it needs to grow.

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## Leigh Fairey says

Seed by Seed: The legend and legacy of John “Appleseed” Chapman  
by Esmé Raji Codell illustrated by Lynne Rae Perkins.

Esmé Codell, Chicago librarian of Educating Esmé fame and Lynne Rae Perkins, illustrator and Newbery Award winner, have teamed up to inspire young people with a stunning new picture book.

Although many of the facts of John Chapman’s life are unknown, his legend and legacy, told here by Codell, present a powerful inculcation for earth stewardship. Seed by Seed begins with two children looking out an urban window in present time. In a few pages, the illustrations deftly segue back to 1774, where the children become part of the pictures that show who Chapman was, how he lived, and why he should be considered a hero. The art work, a glorious and rich mixed media delight (from wood and paint to fabric) reveals Perkins usual attention to detail and humor. In a few of the illustrations, punctuation over the characters’ heads is all the dialogue needed. Chapman’s lessons, from “respect nature” to “share what you have” are rendered in warm glimpses of pioneer life. Especially stunning is a full page embroidery describing the homily “You can reach your destination by taking small steps”. Children and adults alike will be uplifted by the story of this enigmatic but influential pioneer. Recipes and ways to celebrate Chapman’s birthday are included.

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## Jill says

I have great respect for the award-winning author and educator Esmé Raji Codell (I especially loved her book *Educating Esmé: Diary of a Teacher's First Year*) so I had high expectations for *Seed by Seed*. Fortunately I was not disappointed!

Codell went to great lengths to find out and specify which parts of the Johnny Appleseed story are legend; fact; or “stories we’re not *sure* are true.”

What we *do* know, Codell writes, is “...that by doing the same small act of planting seeds every day, Johnny Appleseed changed the landscape of our nation. Seed by seed, deed by deed.”

She organizes his story around five precepts taken from the way Chapman lived:

Use what you have  
Share what you have  
Respect nature  
Try to make peace when there is war  
You can reach your destination by taking small steps

For each precept, she includes illustrative episodes from John Chapman’s life.

At the end of the book, Codell suggests that readers make a “Johnny Appleseed pledge”:

Similar to a New Year’s resolution, this is a promise to do one small deed every day that can change our country for the better.”

She also provides a recipe for apple pie, and the lyrics to “the Johnny Appleseed song,” based on a traditional hymn by Emanuel Swedenborg, the theologian who influenced Chapman:

Oh, the Lord is good to me,  
And so I thank the Lord  
For giving me the things I need:  
The sun and the rain and the apple seed.  
The Lord is good to me! *Amen!*

[Codell adds that “you can replace ‘Lord’ with ‘World’ or ‘Earth,’ to taste.]

**Evaluation:** Not only is the story consistently interesting, but the messages for kids are great. I love the way too that Codell is teaching kids to interrogate myths and to use care when interpreting stories. The excellent illustrations by Lynne Rae Perkins reflect her efforts to make the pictures as accurate as possible without sacrificing aesthetic appeal. Highly recommended for all ages!

**Rating:** 4.5/5

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## **Barbara says**

This picture book biography describes the actions of the man who became known as Johnny Appleseed. While his tendency to plant literal seeds that would eventually grow into trees that would bear fruit mirrored the careful way that he lived his life, metaphorically sowing seeds of peacefulness and harmony among others. The author provides five lessons that each of us can learn, thanks to his example. I like how the book moves from the hustle and bustle of modern times back to when he lived and set examples for others about frugality and generosity. Even then, though, there was conflict. The text will keep readers engaged while they are also mesmerized by the beautiful watercolor and gouache illustrations, some of which contain embroidery, woodcarvings, burlap, and secondhand book pages, appropriately enough. Readers will want to savor the story and draw inspiration from this simple man who made a difference in the world around him, seed by seed, deed by deed.

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## **Lisa Vegan says**

I could have done without the religious references, not Chapman's as that's who he was, but the extra material.

But I really liked this book.

I was very familiar with the Johnny Appleseed legend when I was young, but didn't know much about the real man. I didn't know he was vegetarian, and I didn't know any of the information in this book.

The story is interesting and I like the technique of having kids imagine themselves being back a couple hundred years.

I love the messages in the book/from Chapman of using what you have, sharing what you have, respecting nature, trying to make peace where there is war, reaching your destination by taking small steps.

I definitely enjoyed learning about how our current apples are all likely descendents of ones from Chapman's seeds, and the history of apples in the U.S.

The apple pie recipe at the end could easily be made vegan. Given Johnny's veg\*nsim it should have been posted as a vegan recipe, I think.

The illustrations are marvelous; many are full page, and they're glorious, sumptuous, befitting the subject matter.

I like how readers are encouraged to do something good for the world, every day, using September 26th, Chapman's birthday as a New Year's resolution of sorts. He's a good person to emulate. I was very impressed with him in so many different ways.

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## **Margaret Chind says**

Originally posted on [www.CreativeMadnessMama.com](http://www.CreativeMadnessMama.com)

Why should we remember Johnny Appleseed today—more than two hundred years after he was born—and call him a hero? Why are the life and lessons of John Appleseed relevant to kids now? This extraordinary picture book answers these questions and more and challenges readers to follow the five footsteps John Chapman left behind: 1. Use what you have 2. Share what you have 3. Respect nature 4. Try to make peace where there is war 5. You can reach your destination by taking small steps. An insightful and friendly text, stunning mixed-media illustrations that combine wood, paper, paint, and fabric, and a winning mixture of information and inspiration make for a stellar picture book for all ages. Includes suggestions for celebrating John Chapman's birthday (September 26), apple craft ideas, and a recipe.

This is an interesting and long book. Not quite like a storybook although it does start out that way, this is more of a miniature encyclopedia to my thinking with page after page of fact and detail (be it legend, fact or myth). The illustrations are wondrous to the eye and enjoyable to look at and my favorite page is one that is embroidery with words around and in it. Johnny Appleseed is always a great learning theme for school and I'm glad to have discovered another book for our shelf. I enjoyed this Advanced Reader Copy, and I'll have to see about getting us a real copy for a keeper.

(In my notes I just discovered a second review written for this...)

I love this book. The details are full and presented in a very interesting manner. The illustrations are beautiful and they are shown in various methods including cross stitch and wood cuts. This biography on Johnny Appleseed is full of details from his birth to his death. Two kids are learning about Johnny Appleseed and their imaginations take them back in time where they can learn and walk side by side in his work. The moral given for this story is how Johnny Appleseed lived by example step by step and day by day. Pressing and prompting kids to make a difference in their own modern world.

This review was originally posted on [www.CreativeMadnessMama.com](http://www.CreativeMadnessMama.com)

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## **Valerie Jones says**

A positive message told through the legacy of Johnny Appleseed

In this book, the fast paced world we live in is put on hold to tell the tale of Johnny Appleseed. Using the life and examples that John "Appleseed" Chapman set in his travels across America planting apple trees, a wider moral story is told among the bright and uniquely illustrated pages.

Part fact, part fiction, the tale of Johnny Appleseed's travels across the United States usually focuses solely on apples. In *Seed by Seed*, a more in depth look at the man, John Chapman, provides a greater detailed account of his deeds and the influence he had on shaping the nation in his small way. Primarily by leaving five examples to follow: Use what you have, share what you have, respect nature, try to make peace where there is war, and you can reach your destination by taking small steps.

Codell uses these examples to highlight some of the lesser known details of what Chapman did during his lifetime. As she shifts the focus away from apples and towards the strong moral man he was, children learn of his love of nature and animals, his storytelling and books he shared, and his relationship between Native Americans and the pioneers.



The legend of Johnny Appleseed is known by many school children, although I believe that number is currently declining, and Codell does a great job of reviving his legend. The message is clear. Johnny Appleseed is not just a legend, but a real man who made a difference in the world seed by seed, and deed by deed.

Included are some fun apple inspired activities to celebrate the anniversary of John "Appleseed" Chapman and an apple pie recipe.

Recommended for readers age 4-8.

[baseballvalbooks.wordpress.com](http://baseballvalbooks.wordpress.com)

Check out this video clip of Johnny Appleseed, originally a sequence in Disney's Melody time in 1948, then independently released later, and also included on the DVD Disney's American Legends in 2012.

<http://youtu.be/cm4xsHXrSGs>

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### **Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says**

This was the strangest biography of John Chapman I've ever read. It began with two 20th-century children who imagine being back in the time of Johnny Appleseed, and then actually traveled back in time. It wasn't a conventional biography, in that it didn't proceed in linear fashion to tell his life story, with emphasis on all the apple trees he planted. Instead, it described what he did and focused on the 5 maxims he lived by, which he called "living by example." For each maxim, Codell provided examples of how he lived in accordance with it. I learned several things about him that I hadn't known before, such as that he was a follower of Swedenborg. I also appreciated his kindness to animals, which was almost Buddhist in its extremity (dousing his fire because it was singeing the wings of the mosquitoes!). The boy and the girl from the beginning of the book were present in illustrations throughout, and it ends back in the 20th century. My favorite illustration, toward the end, is a beautiful two-page spread done in embroidery of an apple orchard, with a maxim on the road through the middle, and the two children picking apples from one of the trees. I'd like to recommend this, but only if it's in conjunction with other, more traditional biographies of Chapman, such as Jane Yolen's *Johnny Appleseed* to provide the full picture of who he was.

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### **Steve Holden says**

We began our final part of our unit, and as a result, read our final book about John Chapman. I'm not going to be upset about that! It's hard to be required to read so many books about one person, but they do all tie in together nicely. Luckily, this is my clear favorite!

I love Esme Codell and her first year diary of teaching was a favorite of mine in college. Now out of teaching and writing books, I was pleased to see her connected to one of our curriculum books. This is certainly about John Chapman, but it's written more of an opinion and how we can still take away from how he lived his life in our much different world today.

Needless to say, it ties in perfectly with students having to write an opinion about a lesson learned and applied from John Chapman's life. Kids really enjoyed this one! It's beautifully illustrated and tells a nice story.

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## **Phoebe says**

An interesting new picture book biography of Johnny Appleseed that takes a step beyond the norm for this type of nonfiction. The author, while imparting the general details of Johnny's life, (and answering that important question of where he got those seeds to begin with!) asks the reader to step into five important "footsteps" left by Johnny. Here is where the text works well as a book for older readers and adults, and goes a bit beyond the understanding and interest of younger children (under 8). Still, Codell does an excellent job bringing this tired history into today's context and gives us a fresh appreciation for Johnny's near legendary accomplishments. And she does mention, once, that Johnny's history is laden with legend, but she isn't consistently clear about truth and lore. The art is amazing and is as strong as the text, telling its own stories and enriching Codell's. Another year's best for grades 3-6.

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## **Kay Ray says**

Seed By Seed is story that talks about a legend story Johnny Appleseed. It used a lot of examples from the story to talk about and express life. Chapman went on adventure across America and he would plant tress, apple tress everywhere he went. His plan was to show just how much a little seed could do. The seed would grow a beautiful apple tree. He wanted to use that as an example as just what could happen in life; taking something small and watch how it can make a big difference.

This book shows interactions between Americans and pioneers, and lives they lived. Chapman wanted us to 1. use our resources, 2. share what things we have, 3. respect nature, 4. try to make peace where there is war, and 5. reach our goals by taking baby steps. This is great for children because sometimes kids might take things for granted, and they need to realize at a young age how to handle situations so that it can be instilled in them for when they grow up.

The illustrations in this book have a very wide range of colors. a lot of fall type colors were expressed throughout the story which i loved. The pictures on each page are so well illustrated that even without words you could detect what is being said. Between pastels and watercolors, that is what it looked as though the illustrator used for these pictures. This is another good book for students maybe fourth and younger.

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## **Karen Peters says**

Seed by Seed, The Legend and Legacy of John "Appleseed" Chapman written by Esme Raji Codell and illustrated by Lynne Rae Perkins is a non-fiction picture book for the Primary(P) reader.

We all think we know the character Johnny Appleseed, famous for planting apple seeds where ever he roamed. Codell artfully depicts a side of this well-loved character some may not know. A moral story is being told within these brightly water color illustrated pages. The reader is taken from the hectic pace of today's society, and reminded of five simple life lessons. Use what you have, share what you have, respect nature, try to make peace where there is war, and you can reach your destination by taking small steps.

A wonderful way to introduce the concept of agriculture, but also a wonderful tool to reinforce social/emotional skills in the classroom. Included in the back of the book is an easy recipe to celebrate the anniversary of Johnny Appleseed. Johnny Appleseed was born on September 26, a perfect lead-in to a Fall lesson plan, where the children can actively participate in preparing an apple pie Johnny Appleseed style!!

