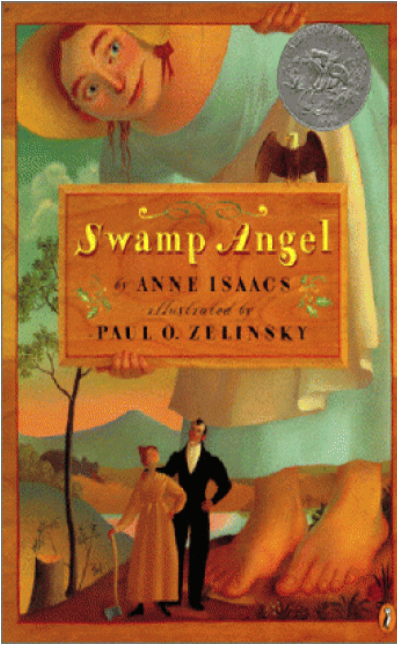


Swamp Angel - Teacher Activities



1. Write your own tall tale. Brainstorming as a class, develop an basic tall tale idea, then assign students to write it down, working in pairs or singly. Older students can develop the idea themselves, making sure to include elements from the following checklist: amazing abilities seen at birth and early childhood; real-life landforms such as canyons or lakes explained by fictional actions of hero/heroine; basic theme of underdog beating out forces of nature that are normally impossible to stop (thunderstorms, hurricanes, tidal waves, earthquakes, etc.)

2. Compare Swamp Angel to another tall tale book about a traditional hero such as Paul Bunyan or Pecos Bill. Draw up lists of similarities and differences. Discuss the differences and talk about how they reflect the times in which the tales were written or developed. What is a tall tale? What is folklore?

3. Read a true account of the hardships of breaking the land for farms in the American wilderness. All tall tales have in common certain elements, such as one person battling a force of nature much bigger than himself, yet beating it. . How are tall tales a response to these hardships? How were tall tales designed to bring comfort and courage to settlers?