



STONE SOUP

AUTHOR: JON J. MUTH

ILLUSTRATOR: JON J. MUTH

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Stone Soup](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

Three strangers, hungry and tired, pass through a war-torn village. Embittered and suspicious from the war, the people hide their food and close their windows tight. That is, until the clever strangers suggest making a soup from stones. Intrigued by the idea, everyone brings what they have until-- together, they have made a feast fit for a king! In this inspiring story about the strength people possess when they work together, Muth takes a simple, beloved tale and adds his own fresh twist. Amazon.com Read the authors notes at the back of the book for additional background on the story.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Jon J. Muth was born and grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. He drew and drew and drew and drew, and painted. His mother was an art teacher and she took him to museums all over the US. He had his first one-man exhibit of paintings and drawings at the invitation of Wilmington College when he was eighteen. Muth studied stone sculpture in Japan; paintings, prints and drawings in Austria, Germany, and England and he was an English major at SUNY, New Paltz. But most of his education as an artist came from an informal apprenticeship with two fine artists. His also writes comic books. Muth created a short graphic story for BBC educational television in 1991. He also produced the music and narrated. He has won the Eisner Award for excellence in painting in comics. In 1994 he was commissioned by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra to paint a portrait of music director Jesus Lopez-Cobos.

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- The title of this book is *Stone Soup*. The book says it's "retold by Jon J. Muth." What do you think that means?
- I was wondering what these people on the cover are looking at or into. Any guesses?
- What do you think stone soup is?
- Look at the inside cover. From this picture can you guess where this book takes place?

STONE SOUP

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Community
- Sharing
- Happiness

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content:

- (p. 1) What's a monk? Where do you think they are walking?
- (p. 7) I wonder why the people in the village are so suspicious and unfriendly? What do you think?
- (p. 15) The villagers began to peer from their windows. What do you think made them curious?
- (p. 19) I'm thinking that the 3 monks are tricksters! What trick do you think they're pulling on the villagers?
- The monks said "and to think to be happy is as simple as making stone soup." I'm wondering what they mean by that.

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read:

- In ancient China, yellow was a color worn by royalty. This little girl is wearing a yellow coat, but she isn't royalty. Why do you think Mr. Muth drew her in a yellow coat?
- What do you think the message of this story is?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- (p. 18) Have you ever made soup? Let's make some now: We'll start by peeling the potatoes, (pantomime peeling), now chop onions (pantomime chopping). Sometimes the onions make you cry (pretend to cry). Now let's put the vegetables into the pot (pretend to place them in) and stir it all. Now let's take a taste! (act out tasting it). Thumbs up if you like it! Thumbs down if it needs more seasoning!

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- (p. 11) Turn to your neighbor and talk about why you think the little girl is curious. Do you think she's brave? Why or why not? Share back with the group.

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- Conduct a picture walk, having students retell the story, noticing the illustrations.
- Compare the illustrations on p. 8-9 with the banquet illustration on p. 22-23. What differences /similarities do you notice? What do you think these symbolize in the story?
- What kind of things did the villagers contribute to the soup? How did the monks encourage them to contribute? Do you think the villagers knew they were being tricked?
- Did the stone soup make the villagers happy? Why/why not? Do you think sharing can make you happy? Why/why not?

Suggested Optional Activity:

- As a group create some rules for sharing. When should you share? When should you not share? Is there anything that shouldn't be shared?

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

- Write a paragraph using the following prompt: If my friends and family were hungry, I would help by _____.

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Draw a picture and label of all the ingredients you would put into your soup