



Flood Warning

Jacqueline Pearce

illustrated by Leanne Franson

ISBN: 978-1-45980-068-7

About the Book

Tom loves running through cow fields with his best friend, Peggy, and his dog, Amos—especially when he's pretending to be his favorite radio hero, the Lone Ranger. But when Tom learns the nearby Fraser River is about to flood, he may have to become a real-life hero and help save his family's herd of dairy cows. This story is based on real events that happened in the farming community of Agassiz during the Fraser River flood of 1948.

About the Author

Growing up in Duncan on Vancouver Island, **Jacqueline Pearce** loved exploring nature, playing road hockey and other sports, reading books, writing stories and drawing. In university, she studied a variety of subjects, including art, history, literature and environmental education. She has degrees in English Literature from the University of Victoria and Environmental Studies from York University in Toronto. Jacqueline's most fun job involved getting paid to watch children's cartoons. She has also worked as an environmental specialist, a humane educator, and a freelance writer. Jacqueline currently lives near Vancouver with her husband, daughter and two cats. She still loves to read, write, draw and explore.

About the Writing

When Jacqueline Pearce was researching *Flood Warning* she looked at a lot of old photographs taken during the Fraser River flood of 1948, read through reports about the flood, listened to tape-recorded memories of people who lived through the flood, and visited the town of Agassiz, its museum, school and the old graveyard. She also had fun listening to old radio episodes of the Lone Ranger.

Teaching Ideas—Curriculum Connections

Prereading Ideas

- Identify the Fraser River on a map. (Option: compare the size of the Fraser River to other rivers; if students are not in BC, compare it to a river closer to the students' location.)
- Ask students to think about and discuss the following questions:
 - ◆ What is a natural disaster? Can you think of any recent or past examples of natural disasters, which you may have experienced or seen on the news?
 - ◆ How would you feel if a flood, fire or other emergency threatened your home or school? What would you do? (Teachers may wish to discuss school and community earthquake, fire and other emergency plans, and reassure students that these kind of emergencies are not common, but that being prepared and having a plan helps people remain safe and makes the emergency easier to deal with if one does happen.)
 - ◆ What is a hero? Name some heroes on tv in comics, manga, movies or real life (teachers may also wish to have the students discuss differences between fictional and real life heroes). What qualities make a person heroic? Record ideas on a flip chart or other means and save to look at again after reading the book to see if students' ideas about heroes have changed.
 - ◆ The story takes place on an old-fashioned family farm. What foods come from farms? What is the difference between a farm animal and a pet? (Students could think of these questions before and after they read the book.)

Classroom Discussion Questions

1. What would Tom's experience have been like if he'd left on the evacuation train instead of staying and helping save his family's cows? Would he have had fun on the train with Peggy? What would have happened to the cows?
2. On the graveyard island, Tom's dad says some of the adults are getting together to make plans for getting the milk to market and supplies delivered. What kind of supplies would the people and animals need? What other things would people need to consider to make camping on the graveyard island run smoothly for almost three weeks? (food/cooking, shelter, washing, sanitation/outhouses, medication, communication with the outside world, etc.)
3. At the beginning of the story Tom wishes he could help with the important adult activities, such as building the sandbag dykes. He thinks a real hero like the Lone Ranger would not have to go to school or leave the flood. Does his thinking change by the end of the story? Why? What do you think Tom wishes for at the end of the story?
4. What are some differences between Tom's time period (1948) and today?
5. Discuss what makes a hero again (see Prereading suggestions). Compare student ideas about heroes before and after reading the book. Have their ideas changed? Can the students name someone in their family or community whom they think of as hero?

6. How does Tom's family's farm compare with modern farms? (For example, Tom's family owns ten dairy cows and milks them by hand. How does this compare to the numbers of cows and method of milking on a modern dairy farm? This could be discussed in a general way, or in more detail if there is an interest in having the students learn more about farming.) What is the difference between a farm animal and a pet? (See Prereading suggestion.)

Suggested Activities

- Listen to an episode of the Lone Ranger radio program (see link in Resources section). Have students pay attention to the ways sound-effects, music and tone of voice are used to convey suspense, emotion, etc. Discuss how listening to a radio show compares to watching something on TV
- Have students write chapter 7 ("Rescue") from the calf's point of view (Option: form students into small groups and have them collaborate to write the chapter and perform it as a radio play, paying special attention to sound-effects and narrator's voice).
- Have students draw a comic strip showing the action in chapters 11 ("Amos Helps") and 12 ("Cattle Drive"), showing Amos or Tom in the role of hero.
- Have students look up and discuss the meaning of the following words and phrases (in some cases the words are explained in the story):

bustling (ch. 13)

cattle rustlers (ch. 12)

dyke (ch. 1)

evacuation (ch. 8)

faithful (ch. 1)

Guernsey cow (ch. 2)

kerchief (ch. 13)

milling (ch. 10)

murky (ch. 7)

pasture (ch. 4)

Red Cross (ch. 13)

reluctantly (ch. 1)

sidekick (ch. 1)

state of emergency (ch. 5)

- For further study and activities related to the topic of farming see the website for the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) (which includes downloadable information on farm animals and other animal issues): www.sPCA.bc.ca/youth/about-animals/animal-issues/farms-and-food.html

Other Titles and Websites of Interest

Clarabelle: Making Milk and So Much More by Cris Peterson (Boyd's Mills Press, 2007)

Down on the Farm: Cows by Hannah Ray (Crabtree Publishing, 2008)

Flood and Monsoon Alert! By Rachel Eagen (Crabtree Publishing, 2005)

Little Joe by Sandra Neil Wallace (Yearling, 2011: poetically written novel about a boy who raises his first beef calf for a competition, for ages 8 and up)

Saving Emily by Nicholas Read (Prometheus, 2001: novel about two children who try to save a cow being raised as beef, for ages 9 and up)

Surviving a Flood by Heather Adamson (Amicus, 2012)

Wikipedia page with info on several Canadian river floods.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_flooding_in_Canada

BC SPCA's youth magazine about animals, *Bark!*

www.sPCA.bc.ca/news-and-events/publications/bark

Article about dairy farming.

www.sPCA.bc.ca/assets/documents/youth/animal-issues/kids-dairy-cow-information.pdf

Information on the Lone Ranger radio show, including downloadable episodes and activities:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lone_Ranger

www.lonerangerfanclub.com/loneranger.html

www.best-otr.com/Best-OTRWesterns.html

Other Books by the Author from Orca Book Publishers

Discovering Emily (Orca Young Readers)

Dog House Blues

Emily's Dream (Orca Young Readers)

Manga Touch (Orca Currents)

Mystery of the Missing Luck (Orca Echoes)

The Reunion (Orca Young Readers)

The Truth About Rats (and Dogs)

Awards and Reviews

The Truth about Rats (and Dogs)

Hackmatack Award nominee

Dog House Blues

Langley Book of the Year nominee

The Reunion

Chocolate Lily Award nominee

Mystery of the Missing Luck

“This beginning chapter book ably portrays the two main characters and the bond between them...The mystery’s resolution is far more realistic than one usually finds in books for young children. Readers new to chapter books will find this paperback, with its many full-page drawings, a good place to start.” —*Booklist*

“Short chapters and nicely detailed pencil illustrations by Leanne Franson will definitely keep even reluctant readers turning pages. Recommended.” —*Resource Links*

“[Has a] tightly focused plot, well supported by a manageable cast of characters...Will fit nicely into reading programs as well as offering newly independent readers [an] engaging option for first chapterbook reads.” —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*

“A wonderfully warm and clever book...The chapters are short and fast-paced. There is suspense or mystery with a hint of magic...The story is a great introduction to many facets of Japanese culture, and the pictures reinforce the sense of immersion. Well done!” —*Canadian Teacher*