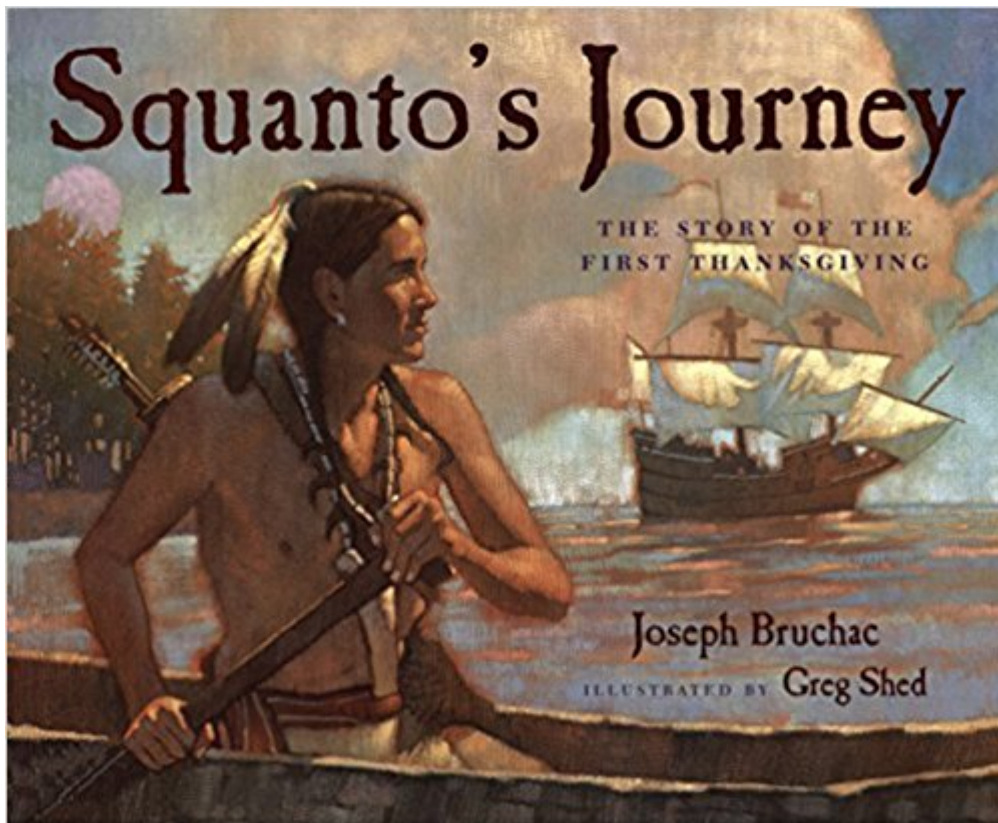




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Squanto's Journey: The Story Of The First Thanksgiving



Synopsis

In 1620 an English ship called the Mayflower landed on the shores inhabited by the Pokanoket, and it was Squanto who welcomed the newcomers and taught them how to survive. When a good harvest was gathered, the people feasted together--a tradition that continues almost 400 years later.

Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

Most American children know the story of the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving, but the Native American side of the tale is far less familiar. Joseph Bruchac, a prolific and award-winning author of Native American descent (The First Strawberries, A Boy Called Slow) describes life in 1620 for a man who was destined to save the Pilgrims even as he was losing his family and tribe. Told from Squanto's point of view, this historically accurate and detailed story brings to life one of the most important moments in America's past. Demonstrating how much his people (the Patuxet, the People of the Falls) value honor, Squanto befriends English traders, even after being kidnapped and taken to Spain. After much hard work, Squanto manages to sail back to his homeland, where, in spite of his discovery that many of his people have died from disease brought by white people, he acts as envoy between the English and his own people, and helps the pilgrims survive in their new world. Throughout this moving tale, Squanto's belief that "these men can share our land as friends"

poignantly shines through. Greg Shed's gouache illustrations capture the warmth and dignity of Squanto and his friends. Young readers will be fascinated by this lesser-known perspective on the Thanksgiving tradition that remains strong today. (Ages 6 to 10) --Emilie Coulter --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 2-5-A picture book that focuses on the young Indian who helped the Pilgrims survive the brutality of the New England winter. When he was 24, an English captain abducted Squanto along with 20 of his tribesmen and took them to Spain to be sold as slaves. Spanish friars helped him escape to England where he learned the language and dreamed of going back to his native land. When he finally returned, he served as translator and mediator between the English colonists and the other Indian tribes. He convinced Samoset, a sachem of the Pemaquid, to accept and work with the white settlers. It was this cooperation that helped the tiny Plymouth Colony to survive. Many authors have given the Native American credit for his role in the survival of the colony. What distinguishes this first-person account is the authenticity of detail. In his author's note, Bruchac describes the research that he used to flesh out the story with dates and names. However, because of the wealth of facts, the text has a stilted quality. Shed's full-page gouache illustrations are beautifully executed in golden, autumnal tones. There is a richness of detail in the pictures that echoes the passion for historical accuracy in costume and interior-and-exterior dwellings. However, the full-bleed illustrations tend to overwhelm the text and the uniformity of their size and placement can become somewhat tedious. Still, most libraries will want to own this version. Barbara Buckley, Rockville Centre Public Library, NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

We read this after reading the European-American version from the perspective of the pilgrims. It was a great way to balance two world views without showing preference to either one. Just two sides of the same story. Before reading any history, we always discuss that we are reading one person's view of what happened. I am very grateful for this beautifully written and illustrated perspective of an important historic event. Very well written book (as are all of the author's books).

High hopes for this book were ultimately disappointed by the poor level of writing and editing. However promising, this concept is delivered without grace, humor, or skill. I once hear a writer say successful writing "shows," not tells...well, this book "tells." My K-3rd grade audience was confused by this book, and no wonder: an odd first-person introduction by "future Squanto" (1621) drops the

reader into a narrative about past Squanto (confusingly written in the present tense by past Squanto), transitions again into "present tense" (1621) Squanto to talk almost-not-at-all about the pilgrims' Thanksgiving, and then ends with a "I'll always be here" message (is this pre-Thanksgiving Squanto again? An older Squanto?). I'm sure the author probably thought having Squanto tell the story might make it more compelling, but he neglected to help Squanto sound like an actual person. Instead, he recites his experiences in a dry, mechanical way as if he weren't actually the one in the experiences. Different terms are randomly swapped out to refer to the same Indian tribes and areas of the world...I had to keep putting the book down and explaining to my kids, "that must be a translation for the name of that Indian tribe." It feels like a non-native person did a lot of research and tried to "sound native" by sometimes using English-language translations of Indian words and other times using the words themselves...it just doesn't work and feels like someone is trying to work in as much research as possible rather than write a successful children's book. This is the real problem: the story isn't presented compellingly and it ignores its young audience's needs. It's short (but not short enough to keep a young person engaged) and has big colorful pictures (probably the only thing that kept my audience engaged at all), but narrative Squanto's speech is wooden and too concerned with listing facts and events; the humanity that might help the reader believe this is someone relating a personal experience is missing. Despite all of that, I had to have something to share with the kids other than the Rush Limbaugh Thanksgiving story they received from a relative. This is getting 3 stars because it features a native American protagonist (my kids have native ancestry) and it's not written by Rush Limbaugh. To have such a promising subject and much-needed perspective on how Squanto's story intersects with the Plymouth colony's Thanksgiving delivered so poorly is really disappointing.

After reading over the book and putting myself in the shoes of an elementary school child, the information in this book seems to be somewhat confusing and overwhelming for students. Only the most advanced child would be able to make some sense out of the language and academics of this book.

Bought it for my son's school project, good product fast shipping

Read to 3rd grade students as an alternative to Pilgrim-centric versions of the first Thanksgiving. May have opened the eyes of some about the difficulties of the Pilgrim/Native American interaction. Was Squanto's support of the immigrants wise? Was it justified?

Finally, another perspective and a little more accurate than the run-of-the-mill children's books!

This definitely not for first graders. The words and story much too difficult to capture their attention and keep it. The pictures are very nice. I had to skim the book and tell the story to them.

A very important book to put the landing of the Pilgrims in perspective.

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