

*L* MOSDOS PRESS  
*Literature*

OPAL



SUNFLOWER

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# *L* MOSDOS PRESS *Literature*

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Judith Factor

CREATIVE/ART DIRECTOR

Carla Martin

SENIOR CURRICULUM WRITER

Abigail Rozen

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WRITERS

*Lessons in Literature / Jill's Journals:*

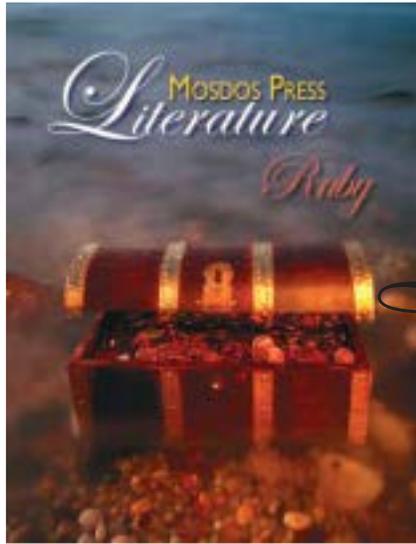
Jill Brotman

*Author Biographies:*

Aliza B. Ganchrow

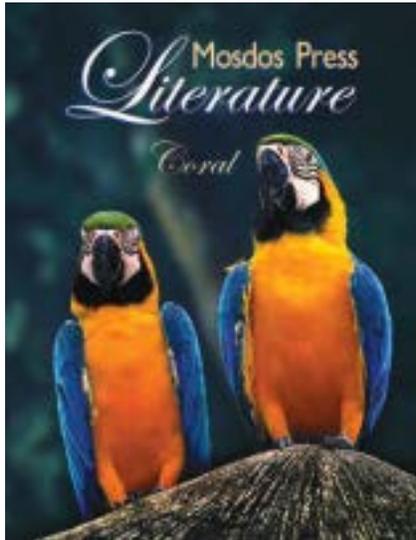
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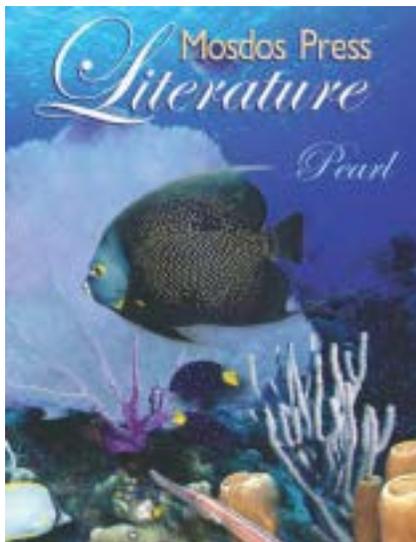
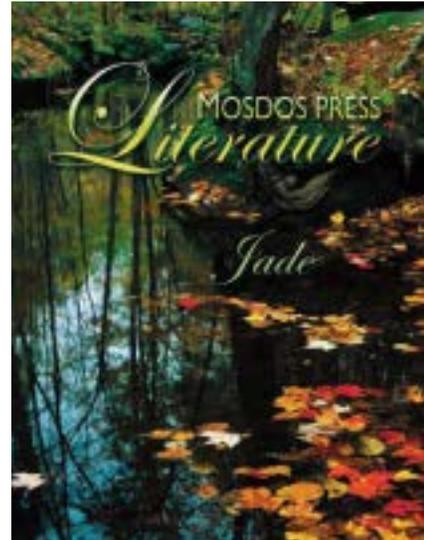
## ANTHOLOGY SERIES



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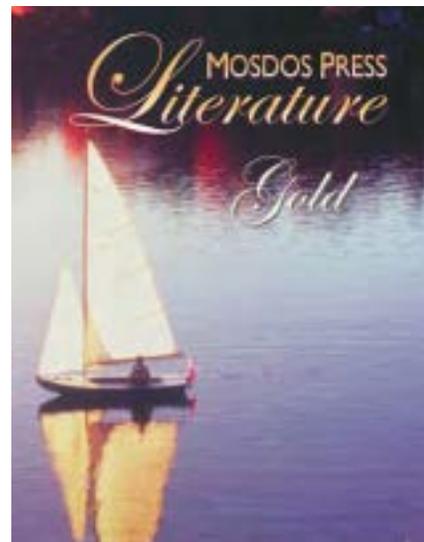
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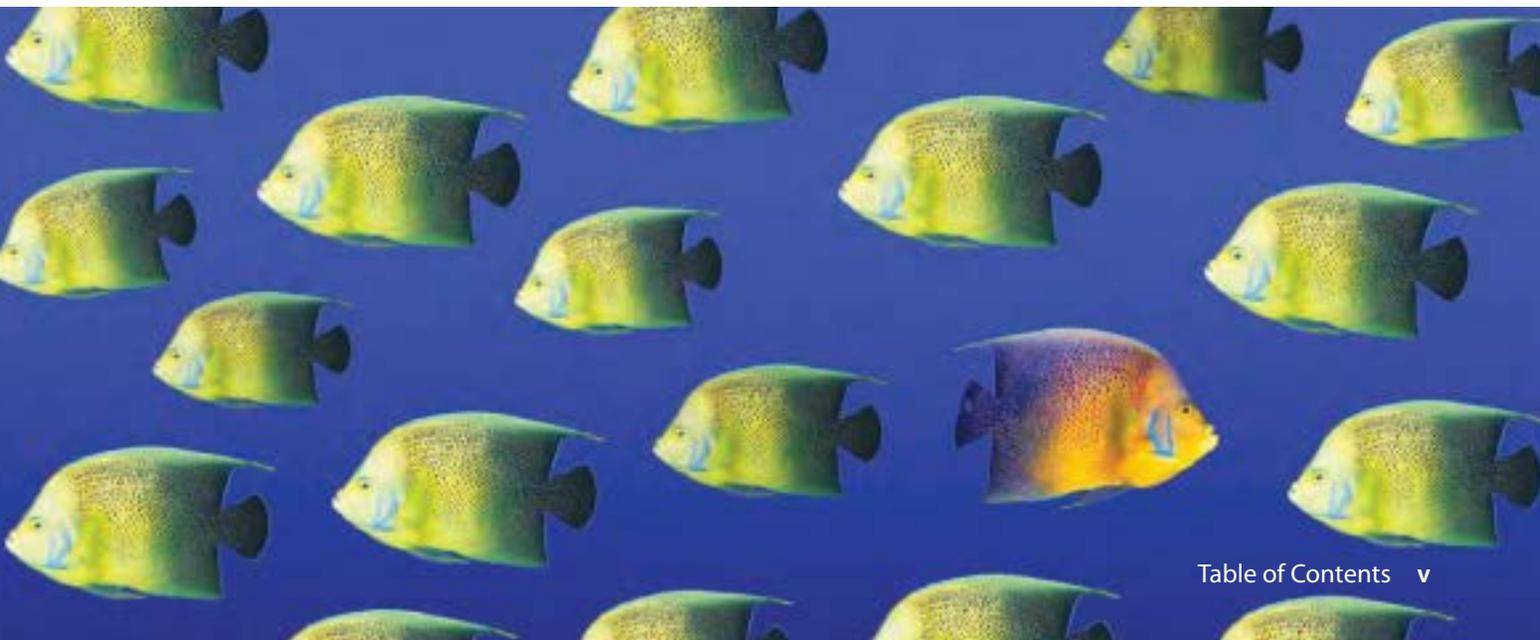
GOLD



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# Urniti



PEOPLE

PLACES

The background of the entire page is a vibrant blue, populated with numerous angelfish. Most are a pale yellow-green with a fine, dark, grid-like pattern on their bodies. One fish in the center-right is a striking multi-colored variety, transitioning from purple at the top to orange and yellow at the bottom. The fish are scattered across the frame, some facing left and some right, creating a sense of movement.

*BRIGHT IDEAS*

**all about  
the story!**

*FEELINGS*

# Lesson in Literature . . .

## TREASURE OF THE ANDES

### WHAT IS A STORY?

- A **story** is about something that *happens* at a certain *time* in a certain *place*.
- What *happens* in the story is called the **plot**.
- The *people* or *animals* in the story are called the **characters**.
- The *time* and *place* in which the events happen are called the **setting**.

### THINK ABOUT IT!

1. How do the boys discover the silver urn?
2. Who are the five characters in the story?
3. Where does the story take place? Name the country the boys live in, and the mountains and the lake that are near their farm.



Carlos sat on the wooden box that his father had placed near the vegetable garden. “Carlos,” his papa had said, “you are such a good boy. You work so hard. Sit down sometimes!”

Carlos was nine. He smiled, remembering his father’s words. He liked taking care of the potatoes, corn, and barley. He would grow up to be a farmer or fisherman just like his mama and papa.

Carlos lived in the Andes Mountains near Lake Titicaca in Bolivia. Bolivia is in South America.

Carlos knew his parents were different from other farmers. They read many books. They knew many things about the world. In fact, they had named him after a famous Bolivian artist.

Oh, to be a painter of pictures! Oh, to be a weaver of brightly colored cloth! Mama made beautiful cloth. But she didn’t have much time to weave. She had to take care of the farm and his brothers and baby sister.





“Carlos! How are you?” It was his friend, Tomie, calling. “Want to search for buried treasure?”

“Sure,” Carlos shouted back. Their favorite game was hunting for treasure. They had always heard stories that something valuable was buried in the Andes. They imagined finding treasure and being heroes. Then they could both go to art school. They would be famous artists! They had talked about this many times.

“You know, Tomie, I’ve been thinking. The legend says the treasure is where the earth is like a mirror or a sheet of glass. Well, Lake Titicaca is so calm. It really looks like a sheet of glass!”

They headed for the lake with their llama, Isabella. She wore her bright pink collar and ear tassels. Their spades were set in the pack that she wore.

Carlos and Tomie were near the edge of the lake. Suddenly, Carlos tripped on a rock and fell. “Are you all right?” cried Tomie.

“My hands are scraped, but I’m okay. It was just a big rock!”

“Hey, wait,” Tomie exclaimed, as he helped his friend to his feet. “Look at that!” he said. “That’s no rock. See, it’s shiny—just the way the lake is shiny.” They set to digging with their spades, excited. But Carlos worried.

What if it were nothing special? Then there would be no art school.

Little by little they uncovered an old and heavy silver urn. “It’s just like what we saw at the museum in the city,” Tomie said. They attached the urn to Isabella’s pack with rope. They wanted to get home quickly, but Isabella had a heavy load.

Soon they saw their mamas working in the field. The boys untied the urn. Together, they held it up for their mamas to see. “Look!” the boys exclaimed. “We found the treasure of the Andes!”

At first their mothers laughed. “Are you certain it belongs to no one else?”

“Mama,” Carlos cried. “How could something so old belong to someone else?”

The two women looked at each other. “Do you know what this means for our families?” Tomie’s mama said to the boys.

Carlos’ mama nodded. “We have not told either of you how Tomie’s little sister needs medicine, or how little food we have had to get by on. We save the food for the children.”

“Thank you so much,” Tomie’s mama said quietly. “You are both heroes.”

# Blueprint for Reading

## INTO . . . *The Jar of Tassai*

Tassai was a Pueblo Indian girl whose family lived and farmed near the desert. Like many children, Tassai had a secret. Slowly and carefully, in a secret place, Tassai was making a jar from clay. She had discovered the clay near the desert. Tassai dreamed of the day when she would surprise everyone with the beauty of the jar. Just as that day arrived, something happened! Her precious jar was endangered, but so was something even more precious. Tassai had to choose between the two in a split second. As you read *The Jar of Tassai*, ask yourself what choice you would have made.



## *Story Elements*

What makes a story? You would probably agree that, in a story, something has to *happen*. What happens is called the **plot**. You might add that a story must have *people*, or animals, or maybe even robots! These are the **characters**. The characters live at a certain *time* in a certain *place*, which are the story's **setting**. Finally, if the story is a good one, it will have an *idea*, or **theme**. As you read *The Jar of Tassai*, see if you can identify the plot, characters, setting, and theme.



# The Jar of Tassai

Grace Moon

Tassai<sup>1</sup> lived on the top of a mesa<sup>2</sup> that looked far out over the Painted Desert.<sup>3</sup> The air was as clear as thin ice. It even made the faraway mountains and blue hills look nearer than they really were. Tassai was a Pueblo Indian<sup>4</sup> girl. She was as brown as a nut that has dried in the sun. She liked to lie on the edge of the mesa. She would look over the desert and dream long dreams.

But Tassai did not often have time for dreams. There was too much work for her to do. Tassai worked with her mother in the little fields at the foot of the mesa. It was not hard work, and it had magic in it. It had the magic of watching green things spring up out of the ground where only brown earth had been before.

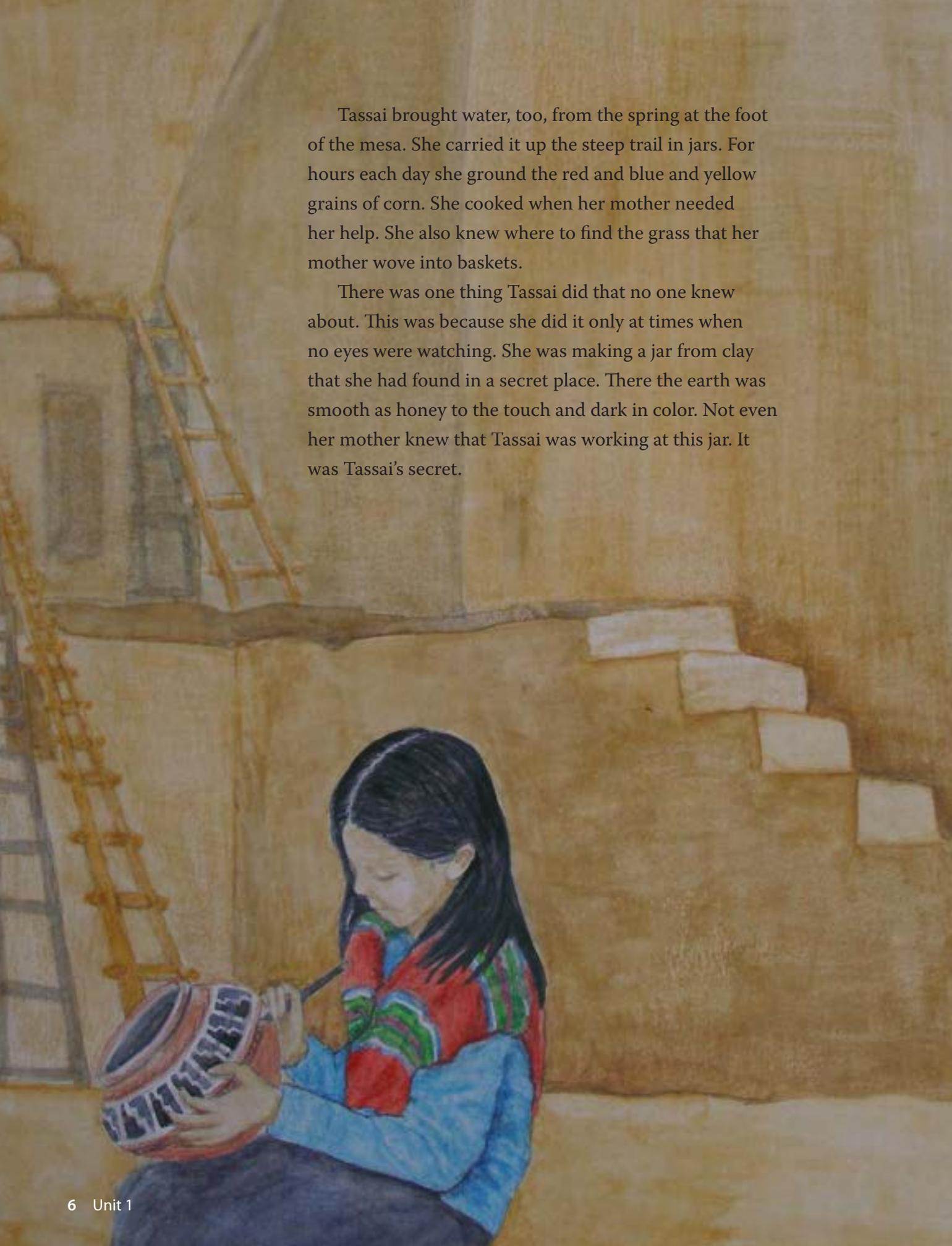
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1. *Tassai* (TASS EYE)

2. A *mesa* (MAY suh) is a flat area at the top of steep mountainsides.

3. The *Painted Desert* is a desert in Arizona, east of the Colorado River.

4. The *Pueblo* (PWEB lo) *Indians* are Native Americans who live in the American Southwest. The stone or adobe houses they live in are also called *pueblos*.



Tassai brought water, too, from the spring at the foot of the mesa. She carried it up the steep trail in jars. For hours each day she ground the red and blue and yellow grains of corn. She cooked when her mother needed her help. She also knew where to find the grass that her mother wove into baskets.

There was one thing Tassai did that no one knew about. This was because she did it only at times when no eyes were watching. She was making a jar from clay that she had found in a secret place. There the earth was smooth as honey to the touch and dark in color. Not even her mother knew that Tassai was working at this jar. It was Tassai's secret.

She shaped it and smoothed it. She knew how to do this from watching her mother. The most beautiful jar of all started to form itself in her hands. She painted fine black lines on it and baked it a golden brown. Tassai thought that there had never been a jar as lovely as this one. She carefully wrapped it in a blanket and put it away in a safe place.

All through the hours while she worked in the fields, Tassai thought of her jar. In her thoughts a little song sang itself over and over again until her feet danced to the music of it:

It is so beautiful,  
My big, round jar!  
So round and beautiful!  
Only the Moon,  
When it walks on the edge of the world  
Is like my jar.  
Round and smooth it is,  
And has a shine that sings!  
Maybe the Moon has come to me  
To be my jar!





Not long before Tassai made her jar, the Governor of the Pueblo called the people of the town together. They gathered in the little open place where meetings were held. He told them that the people of three towns were going to meet for a time of dancing and feasting. He asked that each man, woman, and child bring to the feast something he or she had made. Prizes would be given for the very best things brought to the feast.

Everyone was very excited about the Governor's news. There was much talking and planning of what should be done. Tassai was excited from the first. She could hardly wait for the time to come.

The day itself was wonderful. There was a feel in the air that was different. Tassai felt that she could not walk or talk or even breathe as she did on other days. The open place in the town was bright with color. It was like a fair.

There were good smells and different sounds everywhere. There were baskets and pottery and woven things all spread out for everyone to see.



There were silver bracelets and rings and belts. There were bright blankets and things of leather and wood. There were ears of corn that were bigger than any Tassai had ever seen before. There were beaded shoes and nets for carrying things. There were little cakes made of pine nuts and seeds. There was good food cooking in pots.

Tassai was one of the very last to come into the open place on that big day. She had been busy since sunup, helping her mother. At last she was free. She picked up the blanket in which her jar was wrapped and ran to the open place. There she stood, holding the blanket close to her side.

The Governor of the Pueblo moved from place to place with some elderly people. They looked long and closely at each of the many things that had been brought. With them was a visitor from a nearby town. He had come with his little daughter to see the dancing and feasting.

The little girl danced ahead of them as they walked. She looked at everything with bright eyes.

When the people had seen everything else, they started walking up to Tassai. She was nervous now. Maybe they would not think her jar was beautiful. Others began to gather around. They had not known that Tassai would have anything to show.

“Maybe it is not very good,” she said in a voice that was so low no one heard her. “Maybe it—” Then her words would not come at all.



When she opened the blanket, the beautiful jar was not there. She had not noticed that there were two piles of blankets in the room of her home. The one she had picked up in her hurry held only an old corncob doll.

There was a big laugh from those who stood near. The words of Tassai, explaining what she had done, were lost. Quickly she pushed her way through the laughing people and ran home. She did not know that the little girl had wanted to see that doll again and was following her.



The house of Tassai was the last one in the little town. It was on the very edge of the mesa top. She ran into the door. She did not notice that the little girl who had followed her had stopped suddenly just outside the doorway. The child was watching, with wide eyes full of fear, a snake that picked up its head from behind a big stone. It was a rattlesnake. It moved its flat head

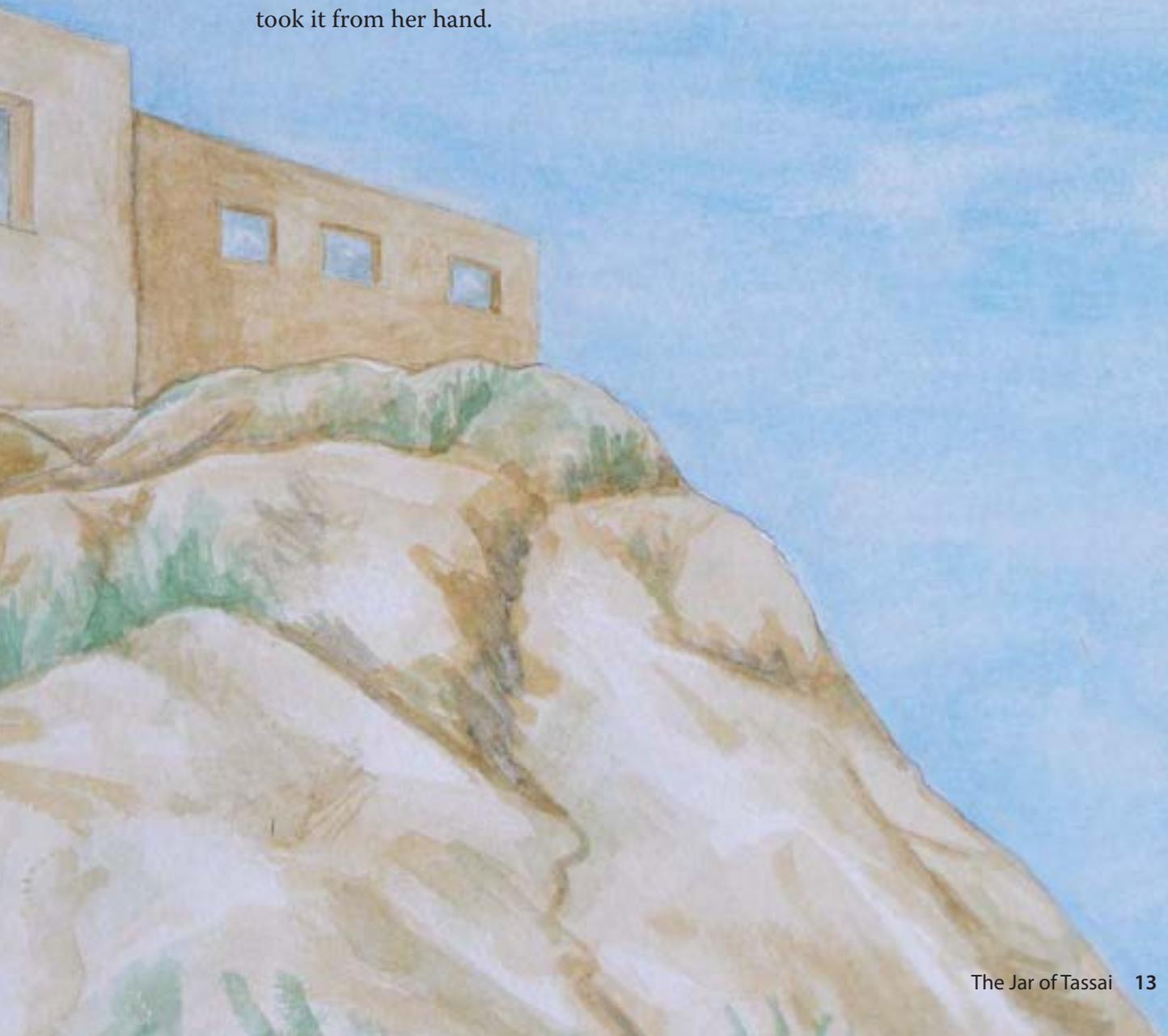


closer and closer to the little girl. She gave one loud cry as Tassai came out of the door with the jar in her arms. Tassai had thrown off the blanket and held just the jar in her arms.

There was no time to think. There was no time to call for help. Tassai did the only thing she could do. With all her might she threw the jar at the rattlesnake. It broke into many pieces on the rock, and the snake lay flat and still.

The little girl did not make another sound. Her father, who had heard her first cry, came running. He held her in his arms.

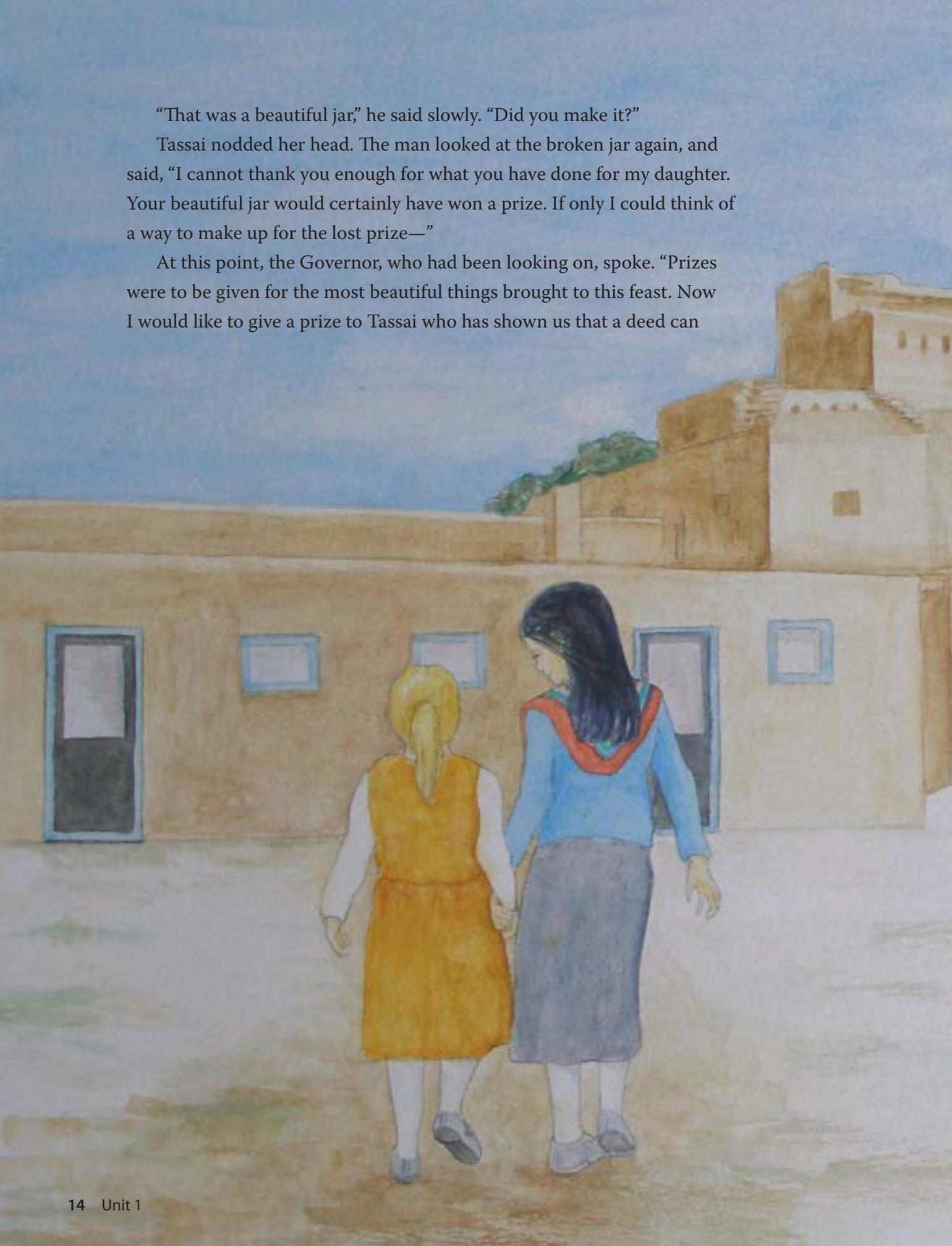
For the first second, Tassai thought only that the rattlesnake was dead. Then she thought of her jar. No one would call it beautiful now. She picked up a little broken piece. As she was looking at it, the father of the little girl took it from her hand.



“That was a beautiful jar,” he said slowly. “Did you make it?”

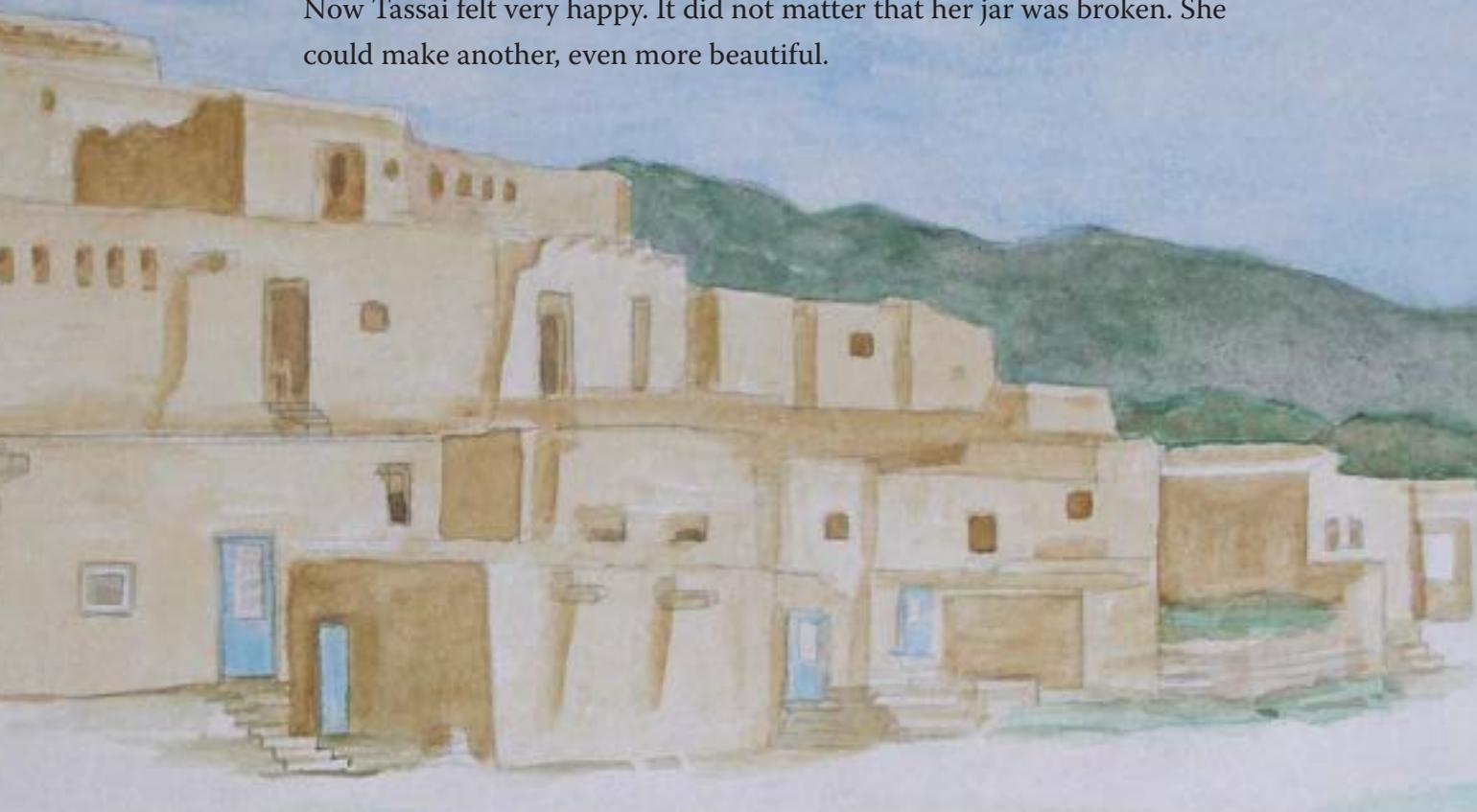
Tassai nodded her head. The man looked at the broken jar again, and said, “I cannot thank you enough for what you have done for my daughter. Your beautiful jar would certainly have won a prize. If only I could think of a way to make up for the lost prize—”

At this point, the Governor, who had been looking on, spoke. “Prizes were to be given for the most beautiful things brought to this feast. Now I would like to give a prize to Tassai who has shown us that a deed can



be very beautiful, too.” With this he handed her a prize. The elderly people nodded their heads with pride. The children who were gathered around clapped and cheered.

The little girl whom Tassai saved came up and smiled at Tassai. She asked, “Can I see your pretty corncob doll again?” Tassai held out her hand to the little girl and soon they were walking together toward Tassai’s house. Now Tassai felt very happy. It did not matter that her jar was broken. She could make another, even more beautiful.



## About the Author

**Grace Purdie Moon** always loved Indians. When she was a little girl, she thought she actually was an Indian since she was born in Indianapolis, Indiana! She and her husband, Carl Moon, who was an artist, spent years traveling in Indian Country, living with different tribes and gathering material for their work. Grace Moon is famous for her paintings of Indian children. She wrote 19 books, and her husband illustrated all of them. They even authored some of these books together.

# The Secret

Emily Dickinson

We have a secret, just we three,  
The robin, and I, and the sweet cherry-tree;  
The bird told the tree, and the tree told me,  
And nobody knows it but just us three.

But of course the robin knows it best,  
Because he built the — I shan't tell the rest;  
And laid the four little — something in it —  
I'm afraid I shall tell it every minute.

But if the tree and the robin don't peep,  
I'll try my best the secret to keep;  
Though I know when the little birds fly about  
Then the whole secret will be out.



# Studying the Selection

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Would you have been able to think as quickly as Tassai did?

### QUICK REVIEW

1. What work did Tassai do secretly?
2. What did Tassai hope to do with her jar?
3. Why did Tassai leave the feast and run home?
4. How did Tassai's jar get broken?

### FOCUS

5. At the end of the story, Tassai felt very happy, even though her jar was broken. Why did she feel this way?
6. Every story has a plot, characters, a setting, and a theme, or main idea. Copy the chart below onto a piece of paper and fill in the empty boxes.

List three characters	1. 2. 3.
List two settings	1. 2.
List two important things that happen in the story	1. 2.

### CREATING AND WRITING

7. In the story, the Governor gave Tassai a prize for doing a good deed. What do you think it was? Imagine that you are the Governor, and write a letter to Tassai that describes the prize and thanks her for her brave deed.
8. Tassai loved making her jar. At home, find an empty jar. Clean it well and decorate it. Fill it with something you like, such as candy or small pieces of a game.

**Most pages are omitted from this preview.**

*This content is included with purchase of the book.*

**MOSDOS PRESS**

# Unit

# wrap-up

**all about  
the story!**

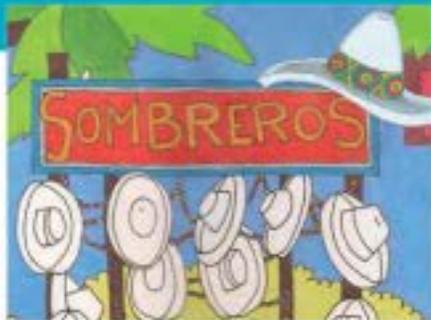


## ACTIVITY ONE

The stories in Unit One take you to many places. *The Jar of Tassai* takes place on a mesa near the Painted Desert in Arizona; *The Story of the White Sombrero* takes you to Mexico; *A Cane in Her Hand* takes you to an unnamed city in America; *Boom Town* takes you to the California of the 1850s; *Taro and the Tofu* takes you to Japan. Your teacher will provide you with some pictures of each location and materials for making a poster. Choose one of the stories in Unit One and design a travel poster for the story's location. Add a slogan like "Come Join Us in Japan!" or "A Golden Opportunity Awaits You in California!" If you wish, your poster can be three-dimensional. For example, you could use little orange balls to paste onto a drawing of an orange tree in Mexico.



*The Jar of Tassai*



*The Story of the White Sombrero*



*A Cane in Her Hand*



*Boom Town*



*Taro and the Tofu*



## ACTIVITY TWO

### *What Did You See?*

1. Your teacher will ask you to sit in a circle.
2. The teacher will choose three to five stories from Unit One to use for this game.
3. The game starts when the first person says, "I read *The Story of the White Sombrero*, and this is what I saw: I saw *wasps*." The student must name one detail from the story. The next student repeats, "I read *The Story of the White Sombrero* and this is what I saw ..." and adds a new thing.
4. Whenever a student cannot think of something else to add, the student must drop out of the circle.
5. The next student starts a new story.
6. The last person to remain in the circle is the winner.



# wrap-up

## continued

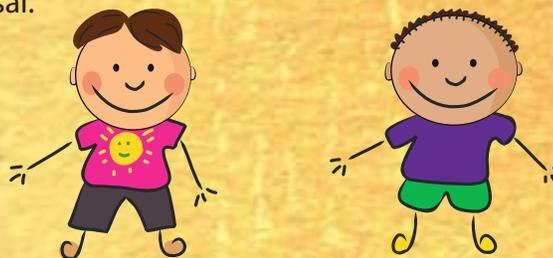


### ACTIVITY THREE

#### *Who Am I?*

1. Your teacher will choose five students to represent the main character in each of the five stories in Unit One: Tassai, Andres, Valerie, Amanda, and Taro.
2. The five students will be seated in a row in front of the classroom. They will keep which character each is representing a secret.
3. Your teacher will now divide the rest of the class into groups. The groups will take turns asking questions to the students sitting in the front to help uncover their “identities.” Each group gets to ask two questions per round.
4. At the end of five rounds, a student from each group will stand up and “identify” each of the five students in the front. Then, the “characters” will stand up and identify themselves. The group with the most correct answers wins.

Here’s an example: Mike is playing Andres and Leah is playing Tassai. One student asks: “Mike, do you know how to ride a burro?” Mike answers, “Yes.” It looks like Mike might be Andres. A second student asks, “Leah, can you make pottery?” Leah says, “No.” Leah is probably not Tassai.





## ACTIVITY FOUR

### Advice Column

Each of the characters in Unit One has many strong points. For example, Amanda is practical and full of ideas. She is a good baker and knows how to take care of a baby.

1. Choose one character from Unit One and write a list of all the personality traits, talents, and skills this character has.
2. Now, pretend that this character has an advice column.
3. Make up a letter from a person with a problem that this character would be good at solving. It could be a serious problem or a small or even silly problem.
4. Sign the letter with a made-up name.
5. Make up an answer that your story character would write, and sign it with the character's name.

