

**Minnesota Storytime  
Reading Guide**

**Title:** *Apples (Let's Investigate)*

**Author/Illustrator:** Shawndra Shofner

**Publisher and  
Copyright Date:** Creative Company, 2002

**Connection to  
Minnesota:** Minnesota author, Minnesota publisher

**Summary:** This is a non-fiction book about apple history, beliefs, orchards, varieties, science, nutrition and uses. This book is part of a "Let's Investigate" series of agriculture books with full color photographs and over 30 sidebars of apple trivia. It can be used as a research tool and a teaching aid for educators of all grades who use apples in their curriculum.

**Suggested ages:** 7-10

**Tips for Reading:**

- Become familiar with the content of the entire book. Then pick and choose the sections that you wish to read aloud. Use sidebars to provide additional information or provoke discussion. Follow the children's interests in selecting facts and answering questions using the book.
- Use the book several different times, repeating some sections and adding new ones.
- Review the glossary words.
- Point to the relevant photographs while reading sections.

**Questions  
before reading:**

- When you think of apples, what image first comes to your mind?
- Do you know any stories or traditions about apples?
- What do people use apples for?

**To introduce  
this story say:** Today we're going to discover delicious details and fun facts about one of the most popular fruits in the world.

**Questions  
After Reading:**

- What did you learn about apples that you didn't know before?
- Why are apple trees grafted by growers rather than planted by seed?
- In what ways are parts of an apple tree used?
- What activities take place in an orchard in the winter? Spring? Summer? Fall?



## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### Art:

- Make an apple head doll. Directions for this project can be acquired from Duluth, Minnesota artist, Pamela Matson at <http://www.appledolls.org>.

### Culture:

- Ring in the New Year with the traditional Jewish spread, Haroset. Recipe at <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Haroset-for-Passover/Detail.aspx>
- Give each child an apple. Ask her/him note its special qualities (They'll look at outside details such as cuts, bruises, shape, color, stem size, etc.). Ask them to rate or make a judgment about their apple. Ask them what they are basing their decision on. Ask them if they ever make judgments about others based on their outward appearance. Discuss. Next, cut their apples in half. Show that every apple has a star on the inside. Ask how this is like human beings. (Answers for discussion might be that on the inside we all have the same feelings, dreams, needs, etc.) Have each child pick a letter and develop a story about the object depicted by each letter.

### Math:

- A fully pollinated apple has ten seeds—two in each chamber. Have students count the number of seeds in their own apple and write it on a classroom chart. How many apples were fully pollinated? How many weren't? What is the ratio?

### Music:

- Preface listening to Rossini's **William Tell Overture** by discussing the legend from which the overture came and the life of its composer. Visit <http://www.classicsforkids.com/activitysheets/February2004.pdf> for more information.

### Science:

- Compare and contrast the effect ethylene gas emitted by apples has on fresh fruits and vegetables. In each of two large, clear plastic bags, place two carrots, a celery stalk, a green pepper, an orange, and a bunch of grapes. In one of the bags add an apple. Seal both bags. Check the bags daily. Note what happens. (The bag with the apple should ripen the fruit/vegetables more quickly, lessening their shelf life.) Discuss. Ask what this experiment reveals about storing fruits and vegetables alongside apples. Ask how they can apply what they learned at home.

### Suggestions for English Language Learners:

- Discuss the words in the glossary.

### Related Books:

- ***The Apple and the Arrow*** by Mary and Conrad Buff (Houghton Mifflin, 2001)
- ***Apples and Pomegranates: A Family Seder for Rosh Hashanah*** by Rahel Muslea , illustrated by Judy Jarrett (Kar-Ben Publishing, 2004)
- ***Apples*** by Elaine Landau (Children's Press, 1999)
- ***How Do Apples Grow?*** by Betsy Maestro, illustrated by Giulio Maestro (HarperCollins, 1992)
- ***Johnny Appleseed*** by Reeve Lindbergh, paintings by Kathy Jakobsen (Little, Brown, 1990)

