

## Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [www.dorchesterlibrary.org/library/aoakley.html](http://www.dorchesterlibrary.org/library/aoakley.html)  
This site contains biographical information about Annie Oakley and the Annie Oakley House in Cambridge, the last place where Annie Oakley lived.
- [www.buffalobill.org/](http://www.buffalobill.org/)  
A good site with a lot of useful information about the real Buffalo Bill. Activities for young students are included.
- [www.indians.org/welker/leaders.htm](http://www.indians.org/welker/leaders.htm)  
This site contains biographical information on a wide variety of Native American chiefs.

## Suggested Print Resources

- Aller, Susan Bivin & Tim Parlin. *Sitting Bull*. Lerner Publishing, Minneapolis, MN; 2004.
- Macy, Sue H. *Bull's-Eye: A Photobiography of Annie Oakley*. National Geographic Society, Washington, DC; 2001.
- Shields, Charles. *Buffalo Bill Cody*. Chelsea House Publishers, Langhorne, PA; 2001.



# Annie Oakley

## Grades K-4

Tall tales are stories in which the characters and their actions and adventures are extremely exaggerated, and the audience is aware of the exaggeration and therefore in on the joke. Most American tall tales grew out of specific parts of the country and are connected to particular lines of work: lumberjacks in the Midwest, cowboys in Texas, and frontiersmen and women in the South and along the Mississippi River. The tall tale is not static; it is a living thing. The tall tale is very much a part of American folklore tradition, constantly evolving as it is retold with the teller's own particular spin. American tall tales have been around for several hundred years. They began in the oral tradition, as a form of entertainment, and have continued to evolve ever since.

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### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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### COMPLETE LIST OF TITLES

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| • ANNIE OAKLEY         | • MOSE HUMPHREYS      |
| • CREATING A TALL TALE | • OLD STORMALONG      |
| • DAVY CROCKETT        | • PAUL BUNYAN         |
| • JOHN HENRY           | • PECOS BILL          |
| • JOHNNY APPLESEED     | • REGIONAL TALL TALES |

Teacher's Guides Included  
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## Program Summary

In this program, students will meet Phoebe Ann Moses, better known as sharpshooter Annie Oakley. Annie's family was poor, and after her father died, she was sent to live with foster parents who treated her cruelly. After a time, brave and resourceful Annie found a way to escape and return to her family who were struggling to make ends meet. In order to help her family put food on the table, Annie learned how to shoot. At the age of nine, there was no way that Annie could foresee that the skill she learned to help keep her family from poverty would eventually make her one of the most famous women in the world! Annie's reputation spread far and wide, especially after she won a shooting competition with Frank Butler, who later became her husband. She joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and entertained international audiences with her breathtaking displays of marksmanship. She won favor not only with the general public, but also with the European aristocracy and Chief Sitting Bull, who dubbed her "Little Sure Shot."

## Background to Annie Oakley

Phoebe Ann Moses was born in Drake County, Ohio on August 13, 1860. Her siblings didn't like the name Phoebe so they called her Annie instead. Annie's family was poor. Her father died when she was five years old, and Annie was sent to live in an orphanage. Eventually, young Annie was placed in foster care. After two years, Annie ran away from her foster home and back to her mother. It was there, at the age of nine, that Annie taught herself how to shoot in order to help her family put food on the table. Annie became such a good shot that she began to enter and win local shooting competitions. It was at one of these competitions that she met her future husband, Frank Butler, who was a very famous marksman. At the age of 25, Annie, along with Frank, joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Annie became a celebrity and was with the show for about 17 years. During her time with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, Annie met and befriended Sitting Bull. It was Sitting Bull who gave Annie the nickname of "Little Sure Shot," a name with which she has always been associated. Annie was seriously injured at the age of 61. At the age of 66, Annie Oakley died of pernicious anemia. Her husband died 18 days later. The zeitgeist of Annie Oakley's generation encouraged her fame. The emergence of mass communication, photography, and more efficient travel combined with the public's nostalgia for a romanticized and vanishing Wild West helped forge her legendary status.

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- Explain to students that at the time that Annie Oakley lived, the roles of women were very narrowly defined, and that this fact makes Annie's achievements even more special. Have them brainstorm current occupations in which women are in the minority and have them come up with reasons as to why they think this is.
- Explain to students that there was a time in America's history when people relied on firearms to secure food. Have them discuss how and why this reliance has diminished over time.
- Discuss with students the various forms of entertainment that existed before the age of electronic media. Have students discuss how they would spend their leisure time if they did not have access to television, radio, video games, etc.

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- Remind students about the elements of fiction, such as characters, setting and plot (containing a problem and a solution), and explain the importance of exaggeration in tall tales.

## Follow-up Discussion

- Have students discuss Annie's early adversity and her later success. Do students think there is a connection between overcoming difficulties and achieving success? If so, how are they connected?
- Annie taught herself a difficult skill in order to help her family. Have students discuss the importance of family members helping each other. What sorts of things have students done in order to help family members?

## Follow-up Activities

- Chief Sitting Bull nicknamed Annie "Little Sure Shot" because of her ability with a rifle. Have students think of at least three friends or family members who have a particular skill or talent and have them create nicknames that reflect those special abilities.
- Annie Oakley was famous for wearing the medals she won in shooting competitions on her clothing whenever she performed. In small groups, have students create medals with foil that represent their best talents in school (for example, *Best Classroom Helper*).
- Sitting Bull is just one of many famous Native American Chiefs. In small groups, have students research the life of Sitting Bull, along with others, including Geronimo and Crazy Horse. Students' work can be displayed on a bulletin board in honor of these great men.
- Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was hugely popular and entertaining in its day. Have students pretend that they are modern day Buffalo Bills and have to put together a traveling show. What sorts of things would they include in their show? What entertainers? Make sure students understand that their show should reflect what is currently popular or unique about the culture. For instance, the show might feature the best video gamers in the country. Students can create print advertisements that announce the show and tell about what people will see.
- Have students pretend that they are preparing to interview Annie Oakley. Have them brainstorm a list of questions for the sharpshooter.
- Using shoe boxes, construction paper and other art materials, have students create dioramas that depict their favorite scenes from the Annie Oakley tale. Students could also create a new adventure for Annie and depict that in their diorama.