

# Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide

for the Sun-Up Series

## SUMMER ON THE SUN-UP, CHRISTMAS ON THE SUN-UP, and SPRINGTIME ON THE SUN-UP

Written and Illustrated by Margaret Jane Jones

### Book Information

#### Summer on the Sun-Up

*The Ranch with the Quarter-Circle-Three-Bar-Brand*

Margaret Jane Jones, Author and Illustrator

Create Space, 2012

ISBN-13: 978-1475078107

Historical Fiction. Middle Grades. Ages 8-12. Pages: 145

Interest Level: Middle Grades/Chapter Book

In 1943, a young American family works together to help save the ranch from foreclosure and fights World War II on the home front.

**Topics:** Family Cooperation, Cattle Ranching, Wheat Farming, Work Ethic, World War II, Community Life, Adventure, Financial Worries

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#### Christmas on the Sun-Up

*The Ranch with the Quarter-Circle-Three-Bar-Brand*

Margaret Jane Jones, Author and Illustrator

Create Space, 2013

ISBN-13:978-1482357769

Historical Fiction. Middle Grades. Ages 8-12. Pages: 204

Interest Level: Middle Grades/Chapter Book

An American family steps into Christmas of 1943 as World War II rages. A missing-in-action telegram turns their Christmas upside-down.

**Topics:** Christmas, Family Cooperation, Community Life, Sunday School Pageant, World War II

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#### Springtime on the Sun-Up

*The Ranch with the Quarter-Circle-Three-Bar-Brand*

Create Space, 2016

Margaret Jane Jones, Author and Illustrator

ISBN-13: 978-1530435821

Historical Fiction. Middle Grades. Ages 8-12. Pages: 197

Interest Level: Middle Grades/Chapter Book

Eleven-year-old Jane Eaton steps into 1944 wishing for adventure and excitement. Nothing turns out as expected. Does odd, bizarre, and out of the ordinary count as adventure?

**Topics:** Family Cooperation, Valentine's Day at School, Cattle Ranching, Mumps Epidemic, World War II

### Short Summaries

***Summer on the Sun-Up*** takes place in the summer of 1943. The entire Eaton family, including the children, struggle to cope with the hard work of the ranch—raising cattle, baling hay, harvesting wheat, and putting food by for winter. They save every penny earned to keep their house and land from foreclosure. All the while, they do what they can to help the war on the home front—World War II.

***Christmas on the Sun-Up*** takes place in 1943 in the midst of World War II. The Eaton family shares: working the ranch in winter; making Christmas candy for their men at War; putting on a smash-hit Sunday School Christmas Show; meeting Santa at the Town Christmas Party; buying gloves for Mother; and visiting the bank to pay off the year-end mortgage payment on the ranch. A missing-in-action telegram from the War Department turns all Christmas hopes upside-down until a most-hoped-for gift arrives delivered not in a sleigh but a black Chevrolet.

***Springtime on the Sun-Up*** takes place in the in spring of 1944 while World War II drags on. The Eaton family is caught-up in the work of the ranch: searching for newborns calves at midnight; gathering eggs guarded by a mean old hen; moving cattle to new pasture, and teaching day-old chicks to drink. Eleven-year-old Jane longs for something to set days ablaze with excitement. What she doesn't expect is a Valentine's Day calamity, Mother's drive to straighten out manners and behavior before a birthday overnight with a friend, a first piano recital, the mumps and a long time in quarantine. What does happen counts as adventure, but not in the way Jane had expected.

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### Main Characters

**The Eaton Family:** **Dad** (John), **Mother** (Claire), **Ann**-ages 12/13, **Jane**-ages 10/11, **Ellie**-age 5, **Tom**-ages 3/4

**Scott Eaton:** 14/15-year-old favorite cousin who comes to live on the Sun-Up until his father, Pops, comes home from the War

**Pops:** Scott Eaton's father and a sailor serving in the United States Navy in the South Pacific. World War II.

**Uncle Robbie:** joins the U.S. Army in World War II and after basic training serves in Italy.

## Constructing Meaning

How was life on the Sun-Up in the 1940s without electricity different from life today with electricity?

*Instead of electric lights, people used kerosene or coal oil lamps that flickered with candle-like flames.*

*On the Sun-Up, Mother cooked on a wood burning kitchen stove. Dad felled trees for firewood. He sawed and split the logs into 15-inch lengths. Next, the children stacked the wood in the woodshed. After that, it was split again into cook-stove size pieces and carried to the wood box beside the kitchen stove and then burned in the stove as needed.*

*Tools such as eggbeaters and drills needed human muscle power. Human foot-power ran the sewing machine. A car battery provided power for the radio.*

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## Initial Understanding

Give examples of how the War (WWII) changes the lives of the Eaton family.

*Worry about Uncle Robbie and Pops who serve in the War, brings the war into the daily life of the Eatons. They listen to war news on the radio. They write letters to Uncle Robbie and Pops.*

*In Summer on the Sun-Up the rationing of sugar, gasoline, and other products changes and diminishes the quality of life on the Sun-Up. For example, because of wartime sugar rationing, there is not enough sugar to make pies for everyone when Mother cooks for the haying crew also.*

*In addition, the family scours the ranch for scraps needed for the War: metal such as old nails, broken pitchforks, and car parts. They collect old rubber tires, paper, burlap, and rags. They donate a heaping truckload of scraps to the War effort.*

*In Christmas on the Sun-Up, Mother and the children make Christmas candy to send to Pops and Uncle Robbie. Because of sugar rationing, saving enough sugar for the candy takes months. Homemade-candy is a welcome Christmas gift for those serving in the War and far from home.*

## Vocabulary

### Summer on the Sun-Up

**alfalfa**—a plant grown for hay to feed livestock

**canyon**—a deep valley with high steep slopes

**cattle brand**—an ownership mark on an animal made with a hot branding iron

**coastal transport**—a small ship used in World War II to carry men and supplies

**caterwauling**—harsh yowls like the wail of cats

**granary**—a storehouse for grain—like wheat

**heifer**—a young female calf or cow

**shivaree**—a party for newly weds which often includes a serenade of discordant noises made with pots and pans, tin horns, and other noise makers

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### Christmas on the Sun-Up

**The South Pacific**—area of the world which includes many islands in the South Pacific Ocean

**New Britain Island**—located in the South Pacific

where Pops' Apr 21 Coastal Transport ship sinks

**telegram**—a written message sent by a telegraph machine

**coastal transport ship**—a small ship used to deliver supplies to locations on the coast, often places that have shallow harbors

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### Springtime on the Sun-Up

**etiquette**—rules of behavior that help people get along with one another

**The Law of Human Kindness**—another name for *The Golden Rule: treat others as you want them to treat you*

**Novocain**—medicine often used by a dentist to deaden pain

**Rome**—Famous city in Italy

**walkie-talkies**—special field telephones used in WWII used on battle fields and areas of fighting

**quarantine**—a place to keep persons with contagious illnesses apart from others; to isolate

## **Initial Understanding (continued)**

*In Springtime on the Sun-Up, the Eaton family follows the War in Italy as Uncle Robbie serving with the U.S. Army fights his way toward Rome.*

*The War news on the radio tells of Italy's winter rains, muddy roads, and the long fight to get past Monte Cassino in order to liberate Rome from German occupation.*

*Uncle Robbie's letters from Italy to the family at home ease the worries for his survival in the War.*

### **Literary Analysis**

Why is family cooperation and working together stressed? Why does this theme parallel the coordination and cooperation needed to fight the war?

*Only by working together, can the family accomplish the endless work on the ranch. Only by working together can they save the ranch from foreclosure and make it a success. Only by working together, can embattled Americans hope to win the war.*

## **Understanding the Author's Craft:**

The author's use of the cattle brand as a symbol of hope adds depth to the story. The brand that looks like the rising sun inspires the Eaton motto:

***The rising sun reminds us  
that each day  
begins with hope,  
a new start—another chance.***

Hope gives the Eatons courage to face their day-to-day work no matter what the weather or the task. Because of hope, days look brighter, moods are lighter, and humor takes flight.

Hope uplifts the family when Uncle Robbie joins the Army and goes to War. It eases their concern for Scott's father, Pops, serving in the Navy on a small coastal transport ship in the South Pacific. Danger lurks as Pops and his crew deliver marines, sailors, airmen, food, and supplies to island battlefronts and airfields.

As the war grinds-on, most American families are in need of hope because a father, son, brother, cousin, uncle, or neighbor serves in the war. In addition, daughters and sisters serve as nurses and non-combatants. Men and women on the home front work in industry to build airplanes, tanks, ships, and weapons.

During World War II, Americans live with their hearts in their throats—hope is vital.