FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Picture Books

Apple Doll
Kathleen Phillips Poulsen
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On the heels of Indian Summer, just before the killing frost of autumn, young Samantha spies a plump, red apple in one of Gram's orchard trees. As the shiny, round apple dangles high above, Sam's brother climbs the picker's ladder and plucks the sun-ripe apple for his sister to give Gram.

In this story, the author, now retired from teaching reading and writing in learning-disabled classrooms, tells a story grounded in the heritage of Southern Appalachia. As the distant past moves into the present, the apple serves as an inspirational tool for storytelling and tradition-sharing, draws generations together in a wondrous seasonal activity, and enriches family relationships. Gram and her grandchildren share in the fun of apple peeling by tossing each twisted spiral over their shoulders to see what fancy letter will fall to the floor. Songs are sung and rhymes are recited as Sam and her siblings patiently watch Gram carve a perfect doll's face into the apple's juicy surface. While they wait for the apple to dehydrate on the fireplace mantel, everyone partakes in the chores of autumn.
"Outside, the wind grew cold and frosty. Inside, apple slices were baked into bubbly pies. The warm, spicy air turned the apple head tan and spongy."

Precious time is spent picking and shucking corn, pressing pungent cider, and baking sweet, flavorful apple pies. When the apple head finally reaches its prime, Gram shares the task of dressing the new doll with her granddaughter. This activity prompts a memorable conversation about the traditions of her Indian grandmother and the art of making apple dolls. Poulsen's scratchboard illustrations bring the nostalgic past to life. The details in each colorful illustration are skillfully refined, with the woolen hair strands, the doily headscarf, and the charming, puckered face of Sam's apple doll meticulously crafted.

Each page is filled with objects and concepts not mentioned in the text that can readily inspire new discussions. The book's most striking feature is the inclusion of an apple doll

pattern, complete with simple, easy-to-read instructions. Apple Doll is a picture book written for children four to eight, but the doll pattern opens the age range to any classroom or storytelling opportunity where active participation is desirable.

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