

Thank You for Your Service, Sheep!

Carmela Snelbaker

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Wool is used in many ways and by many people, as Carmela Snelbaker's informative book, *Thank You for Your Service, Sheep!*, points out.

Wool is used in the airline industry, in the medical field, and by the military. It is even used in sports. "Water resistant, flame resistant, wrinkle resistant too, long lasting, fashionable and easily dyed for you," writes Snelbaker of wool's properties.

In this book, the author thanks the unsung helpers and heroes of this versatile material—sheep. After all, they provide the wool, which goes through several processes before it is spun into fibers to produce fabric for clothing, airplane upholstery, and many other products. Sheep are also earth-friendly lawn mowers, even mowing the White House lawn during Woodrow Wilson's presidency. Wool is resistant to bacteria and mold, and it can insulate against both warm and cold temperatures.

This nonfiction rhyming book is told in first person, from the point of view of a sheep: "I am a sheep and you are you, I have a job and you benefit too." Snelbaker uses rhyme to share some history of sheep in America, the process of turning wool into usable fabric, and the different traits of wool. The book ends with a page about the real-life sheep Moses, who inspired Snelbaker's book, and pictures of Moses with his human family.

The layout of the book is simple. Each spread includes text displayed in a fun black font on the left-hand page and brightly colored graphics and photographs on the right-hand page. Rhyming words are set in italics, helping the reader recognize the rhyming pattern. This is especially helpful because of the asymmetrical layout of some of the paragraphs and the inclusion of some near-rhymes.

The illustrations include a cartoon sheep on each page, combined with a photograph or computer graphic. Many of the photographs are slightly fuzzy, and some of the computer graphics are a bit busy, even for children's eyes. The book has some spelling and punctuation errors ("hero's" instead of "heroes," for example), causing the writing to be a bit choppy.

This book is recommended for children in kindergarten through second grade, especially those who love sheep and want to learn more about these animals and their wool, along with some interesting facts about the work they do.

BETH VANHOUTEN (May 30, 2013)

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