



Jamie O'Rourke and the Big Potato

READ ALOUD GUIDE

Themes: Problem-Solving

Book Brief: A funny Irish folktale about Jamie O'Rourke, the laziest man in Ireland, who gets more than he bargained for when he grows an enormous potato!

Author:
Tomie dePaola

Illustrator:
Tomie dePaola

BEFORE READING

The Cover: Ask students to make a prediction about the story based on the cover and title.

The Pictures: Take a quick picture walk and ask students what they notice about the illustrations.

Prior Knowledge: Ask, "What does it mean to be lazy? What might happen if someone doesn't want to do any work?" (Optional: Think, Pair, Share)

Vocabulary:

- "praties" = potatoes
- Tier 2 [Vocabulary Guide](#).

Purpose for Reading: "As we read, think about the message or lesson of this story. What does Jamie learn about his laziness?"



Think Aloud: "Jamie wanted something magical to happen so he wouldn't have to work. When he got the enormous potato, it created even more problems! The message seems to be that taking shortcuts or being lazy can lead to bigger troubles."

DURING READING

Check for understanding & make connections:

- Why is Jamie O'Rourke known as the laziest man in Ireland?
- Who does Jamie meet?
- What happens after Jamie meets the leprechaun?
- What problem does the enormous potato create?

AFTER READING

Our Purpose: "What is the message or lesson of this story? What did Jamie learn about laziness and hard work?"

Extending Our Thinking: Ask students, "If you found a pot of gold like leprechauns are said to have, what would you do with it? Would you use it wisely or make the same mistakes Jamie did?" Encourage students to complete RIF's [If I Had a Pot of Gold](#) writing activity, where they write and draw about what they would do if they found a pot of gold. Students can share their ideas with the class and discuss how their choices are different from Jamie's choices in the story.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Read other books by Tomie dePaola, such as [Strega Nona](#) or [The Popcorn Book](#).
- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.