

Join us for the exciting story of a brave young Cheyenne girl who helps her people



The **THUNDER EGG**

By Tim J. Myers



Illustrated by Winfield Coleman




Could Stands-by-Herself's mysterious rock be the key to saving her Cheyenne people?

Only if it wasn't actually a rock at all, but a Thunder Egg!

A terrible drought was threatening to wipe out Stands-by-Herself's people. One day, all alone on the Great Plains, she came upon a strange egg-shaped rock and took it home. Could it be the key to saving her village?

Filled with vibrant and authentic illustrations of the unspoiled West, *The Thunder Egg* is the story of a young girl's realization that life often asks us to think of others before ourselves, and to follow our hearts even when that path is difficult.

FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT *THE THUNDER EGG*

-  *The Thunder Egg* is set in The Time of the Dog, before the coming of horses to the Cheyenne, and before they split into the Northern and Southern Cheyenne in the early 1800s.
-  The Cheyenne refer to themselves as *Tsistsistas*, which translates as "the People." The Cheyenne word for the Creator is *Maheo*, which can be translated as "One Who Creates." Thunderbirds (*nonóma'eo*) are often depicted in Cheyenne stories and art.
-  The author, Tim J. Myers, and the illustrator, Winfield Coleman, took great care to accurately represent Cheyenne culture during the time period of the story. *The Thunder Egg* contains fascinating notes about its illustrations. For example: "About the cover, Stands-by-Herself wears a side-fold dress, used in the early 18th century. The red paint on the part of her hair represents the sun's path." Or "Page 16: Little Wood Satyr butterflies (*megisto cymela*) are called 'Thunder's lice' by the Cheyenne, as they are noted for flying about in storms, when other butterflies seek shelter."

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Tim J. Myers' story, *The Thunder Egg*, contains a conflict within Stands-by-Herself. What big decision does she have to make and why is it so difficult for her?
2. Why do you think Stands-by-Herself loves the thunder egg so much?
3. What if you needed to make Stands-by-Herself's decision and give away something you love. What would you decide?
4. Different cultures are alike in some ways and different in others. What are some of the ways Stands-by-Herself's Cheyenne people are different from the culture you belong to? What are some of the ways her Cheyenne culture is similar to yours?
5. The illustrator, Winfield Coleman, is a scholar of American Indians, and he made even the smallest details in his illustrations accurate. Do you think it is important to be careful to show Indian life—in this case of the Cheyenne—the way it was actually lived?
6. Stands-by-Herself is teased by some of the other children, which can be a kind of bullying. Have you ever known someone who had this happen?
7. Why does Stands-by-Herself want to “fly away with the ducks”? Have you or someone you know ever felt that way?
8. Why does Stands-by-Herself decide to give up the thunder egg? And what does her decision tell us about what kind of person she is?
9. Stands-by-Herself gives up something she loves in order to help her Cheyenne people. Can you think of ways people today have done that, or can do it? Can you think of ways you and your classmates can do that? It could be in little ways or big ways.

ABOUT THE THUNDER EGG

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