

Activity Guide
by
Kathleen Pelley

Kathleen Pelley Storytelling Activity Guide

One of the many things I love about good stories is that they can provide a space in our hectic busy lives to simply **PAUSE** and **PONDER** some truth, some beauty, or some new way of looking at the world.

Each month I will invite you to join me as I **PAUSE** and **PONDER** upon the story I have just read.

Pascual and the Kitchen Angels
Written and illustrated
By Tomie DePaola

PAUSE and PONDER ...

Why I love this story?

Tomie De Paola's tender rendition of the legend surrounding St. Pascual, a boy blessed at birth who receives divine help when the Franciscan monks make him their cook, brims with beauty and truth – the beauty of a simple shepherd boy who wanted nothing more than to serve God by feeding the poor, and the truth that a loving spirit like his can light up the world. He is now recognized as the Patron Saint of Cooks and the Kitchen.

Souvenirs from the story – A wry smile and perhaps some wistful wishing for some of our very own Kitchen Angels?

Emotional/Universal Truth

What is an emotional truth?

Any editor will tell you that a common weakness of many picture book manuscripts is that they are “too trite.” In other words, they will not withstand multiple readings, because they are too one dimensional and lack a universal, emotional truth. It is NOT a lesson, a moral, or a message! Rather it is a simple truth, woven seamlessly throughout the story -some truth about love, hope, pain, joy, or home that a child can understand and connect with. I like to think of it as that whiff of

wonder, that bolt of beauty that lingers with you, long after the last page is turned or the final word uttered.

Why should this universal truth matter so much to the read-aloud quality of a picture book?

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“The storytellers go back and back, to a clearing in the forest where a great fire burns, and the old shamans dance and sing, for our heritage of stories began in fire, magic, the spirit world. And that is where it is held, today.” Doris Lessing

Truth connects us to one another, to our ancestors, and to the world around us. Good books and stories are all about connections. When we read a story aloud to a child – a story that truly touches us at the very core of our being with its beauty and its truth, then, we will naturally breathe our own life and love into those words as we read them aloud. (Notice how life and spirit, breath and voice are all connected). In turn, those words will seep into the little listener’s heart, making her or him feel brave or bold, calm or kind, happy or hopeful.

“Adult books maintain lives; children’s books change lives.” Yolen

The “truth” of this story – when we set out to do good in the world, we may be surprised by how angels (in surprising forms) may appear.

What souvenir and what “truth” I wonder, will you and your children take from this story?

The following discussion questions and activities are designed for use either with a parent and a child, or with a teacher and her class or a small group. Most of the discussion questions are suited for children ages 4-8 but could be adapted for use with younger and older children too.

- Kathleen Pelley
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Pre-Reading Discussion

You may want to explain that this story is about a Saint who lived a long time ago in another country – Spain. He became a Franciscan – monks who followed in the footsteps of St. Francis by helping the poor and finding the holy in all of God’s creation, especially in the animal kingdom.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Pascual’s father know his son was special?
2. How did Pascual’s father know that his son would be a shepherd?
3. What kind of boy was Pascual? Explain your answer.
4. Why did Pascual want to be a friar?
5. Why did he not tell the friars that he could not cook?
6. Why do you think God sent his angels to help Pascual?
7. If God were to send you some angels, what would you want them to help you do? Discuss.
8. Do you know anyone who might like some kitchen angels? Discuss.
9. How did this story make you feel? Discuss
10. Do you know any other stories about angles or saints? Discuss.

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Suggested Art and Writing Activity

Use the image below (or have children draw their own angel outline) and have children color in the angel and complete the face and hair. Then fill in the blanks to share how they would like some angel help. Share their work and or display on classroom wall (or kitchen wall).



I would like an angel to help me

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Suggested Art and Writing Activity (cont.)

Because

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Further Writing Activities

Explain to students that sometimes when people come to help us in times of trouble, we call them AN ANGEL. Can you think of a time in your life when someone came to help you just at a time you needed them most? Write your answer in the space provided. Color and decorate your angel (or have your child draw her own angel)

My _____ was an angel to me because he/she

helped me to _____



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Criss-Cross Words

Read the story words in the Word Box. Read each set of clues and fill in the spaces in each puzzle, using the words in the word box.

friar prayed doves swoosh oven slice feast

stir oranges sheep peeked apron

Criss-Cross #1

1					
2					

EclipseCrossword.com

Across

2. Pascual looked after these animals

Down

1. Birds that appeared in trees when Pascual was born

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Criss-Cross #2

1					2

EclipseCrossword.com

Across

Down

1. Angels wore these

2. Sound the angels made

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Criss-Cross #3

1						

EclipseCrossword.com

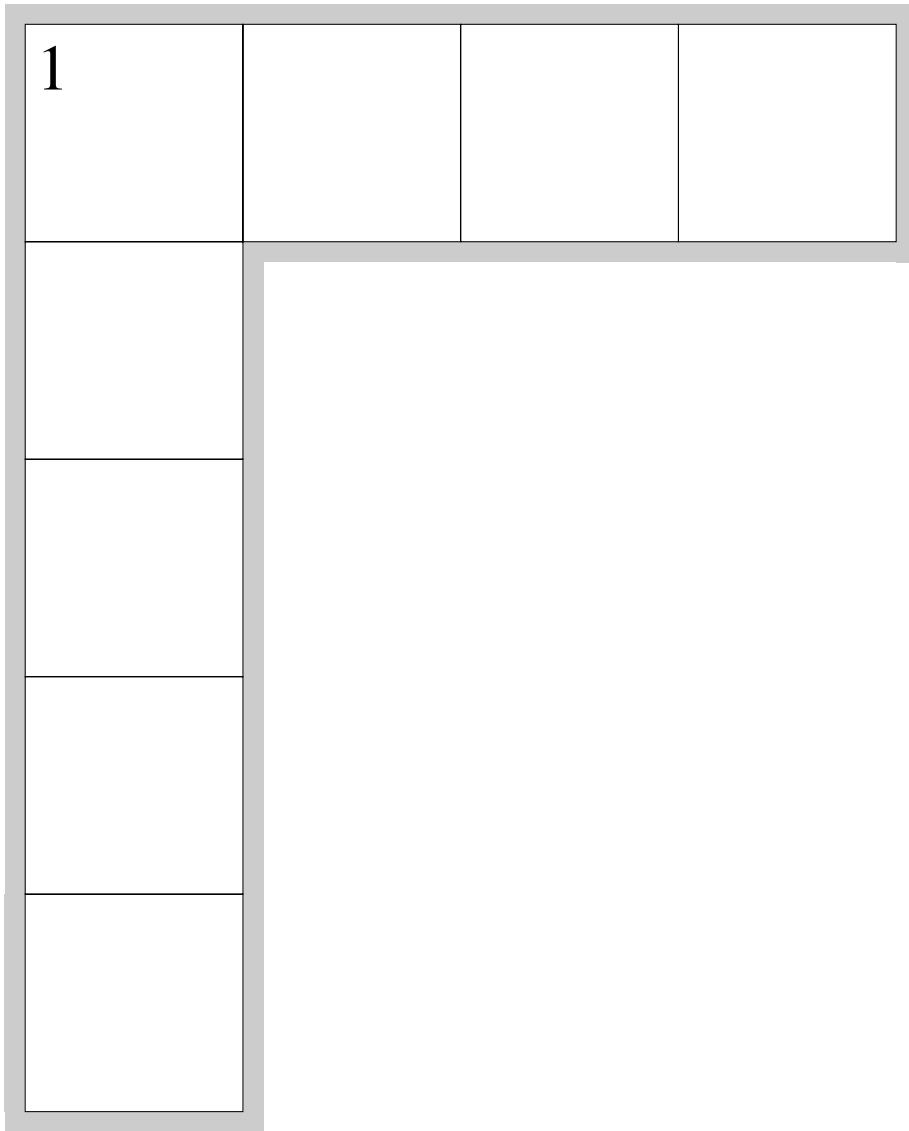
Across

1. Fruit that was in the kitchen

Down

1. Where the angels put the bread

Criss-Cross #4



EclipseCrossword.com

Across

Down

1. To mix ingredients

1. To cut something

Criss-Cross #5

1				

EclipseCrossword.com

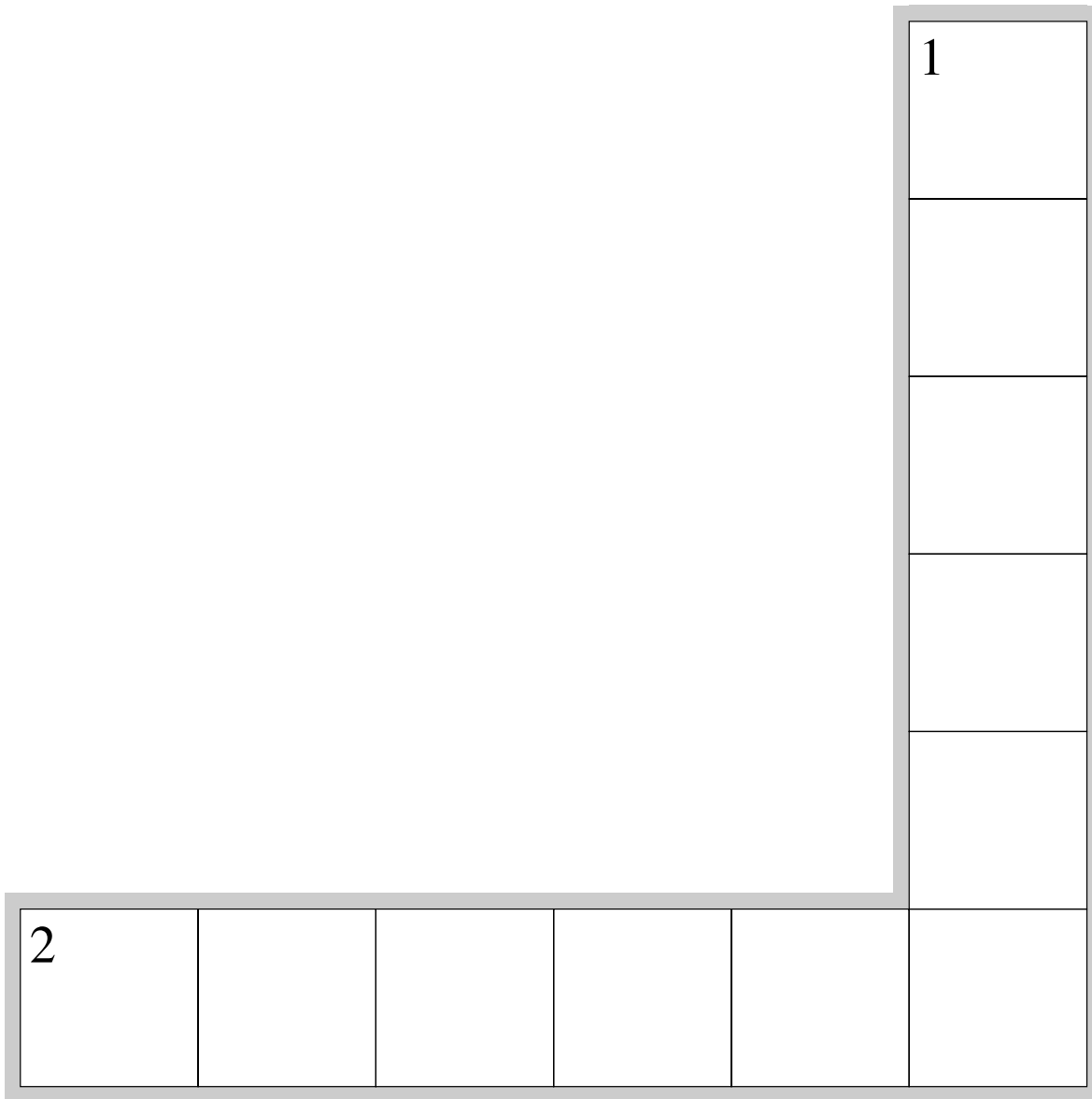
Across

Down

1. The kind of monk that Pascual was

1. A delicious meal

Criss-Cross #6



EclipseCrossword.com

Across

Down

-
- 2. The friars did this when they wanted to see into the kitchen

- 1. While the angels cooked, Pascual did this

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Suggested Thanksgiving Activity

Ask children to go home and find a favorite family recipe that is used by a family member at Thanksgiving - can be a recipe for a pie or a vegetable dish or any other dish of their choosing. Encourage them to bring something that is particular to their family – something special that other people might not know about.

Have each child draw an apron on the angel below and draw a bowl that they can place over the heart (or they can draw their own image). Now have them write out their recipe in their best handwriting on a piece of paper (or directly on outline of Angel)- they can place it inside the bowl or inside the apron.

Display around the classroom - Thanksgiving Angels.



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Suggested Thanksgiving Activity (cont.)

Finish off by having each child complete the sentence below (explain that these “angels “ can simply be real people who helped them in a time of need.... display their answers below the Thanksgiving Angels.

This Thanksgiving, I give thanks for the angels in my life

who helped me by

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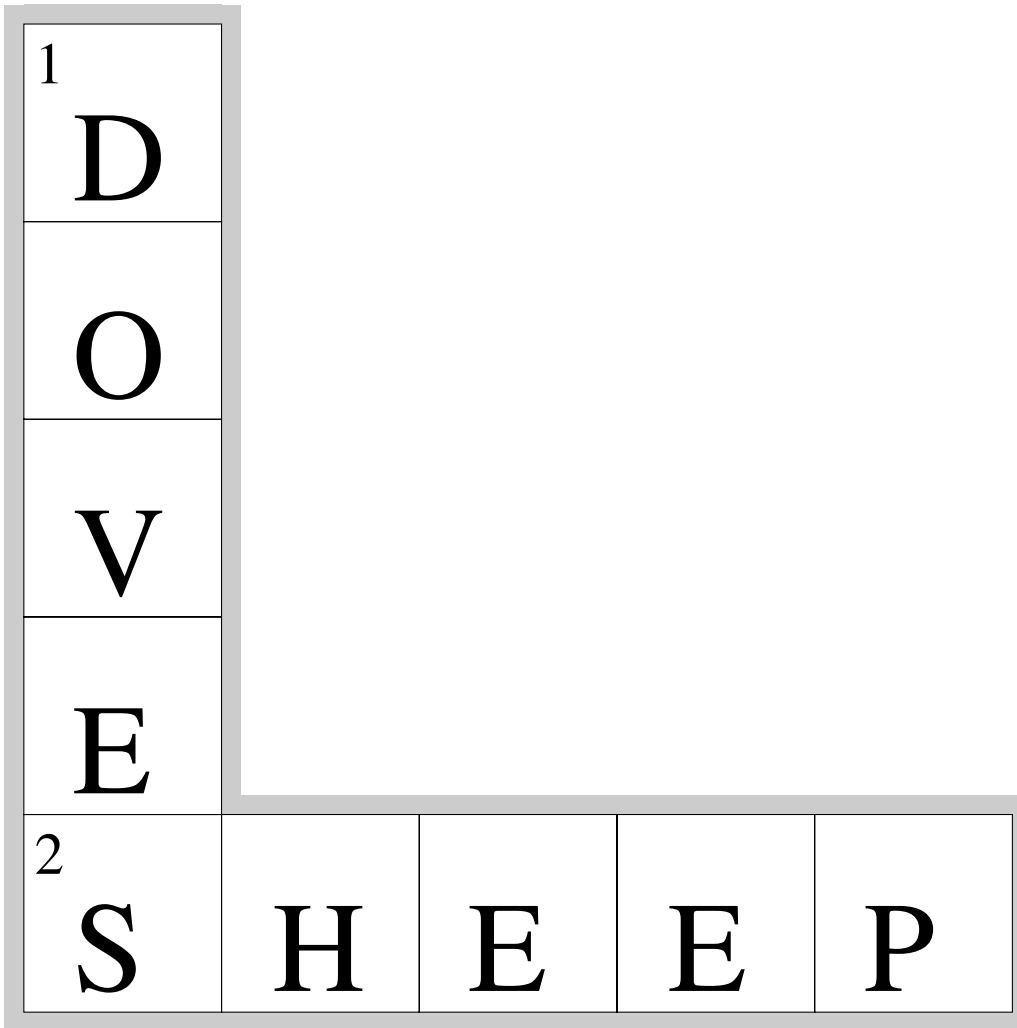
Answer Key

Discussion Questions

1. Doves/Angels appeared on the tree when he was born.
2. He sang to the sheep and they sang back.
3. Pascual was kind and gentle – the animals loved him – sweet natured.
4. He wanted to feed the poor.
5. He thought the friars might send him away if they knew he could not cook.
6. No right answer –but could be – God wanted Pascual to keep praying, or God wanted Pascual to stay with the friars.
7. No right answer.
8. No right answer
9. No right answer
10. No right answer

Answer Key (cont.)

Criss-Cross #1



EclipseCrossword.com

Across

2. **SHEEP**—Pascual looked after these animals

Down

1. **DOVES**—Birds that appeared in trees when Pascual was born

Answer Key (cont.)

Criss-Cross #2

1	A	P	R	O	N	2	S
							W
							O
							O
							S
							H

EclipseCrossword.com

Across

Down

1. **APRONS**—Angels wore these

2. **SWOOSH**—Sound the angels made

Answer Key (cont.)

Criss-Cross #3

1	O	R	A	N	G	E	S
V							
E							
N							

EclipseCrossword.com

Across

1. **ORANGES**—Fruit that was in the kitchen

Down

1. **OVEN**—Where the angels put the bread

Answer Key (cont.)

Criss-Cross #4

1	S	T	I	R
L				
I				
C				
E				

EclipseCrossword.com

Across

Down

1. **STIR**—To mix ingredients

1. **SLICE**—To cut something

Answer Key (cont.)

Criss-Cross #5

1	F	R	I	A	R
E					
A					
S					
T					

EclipseCrossword.com

Across

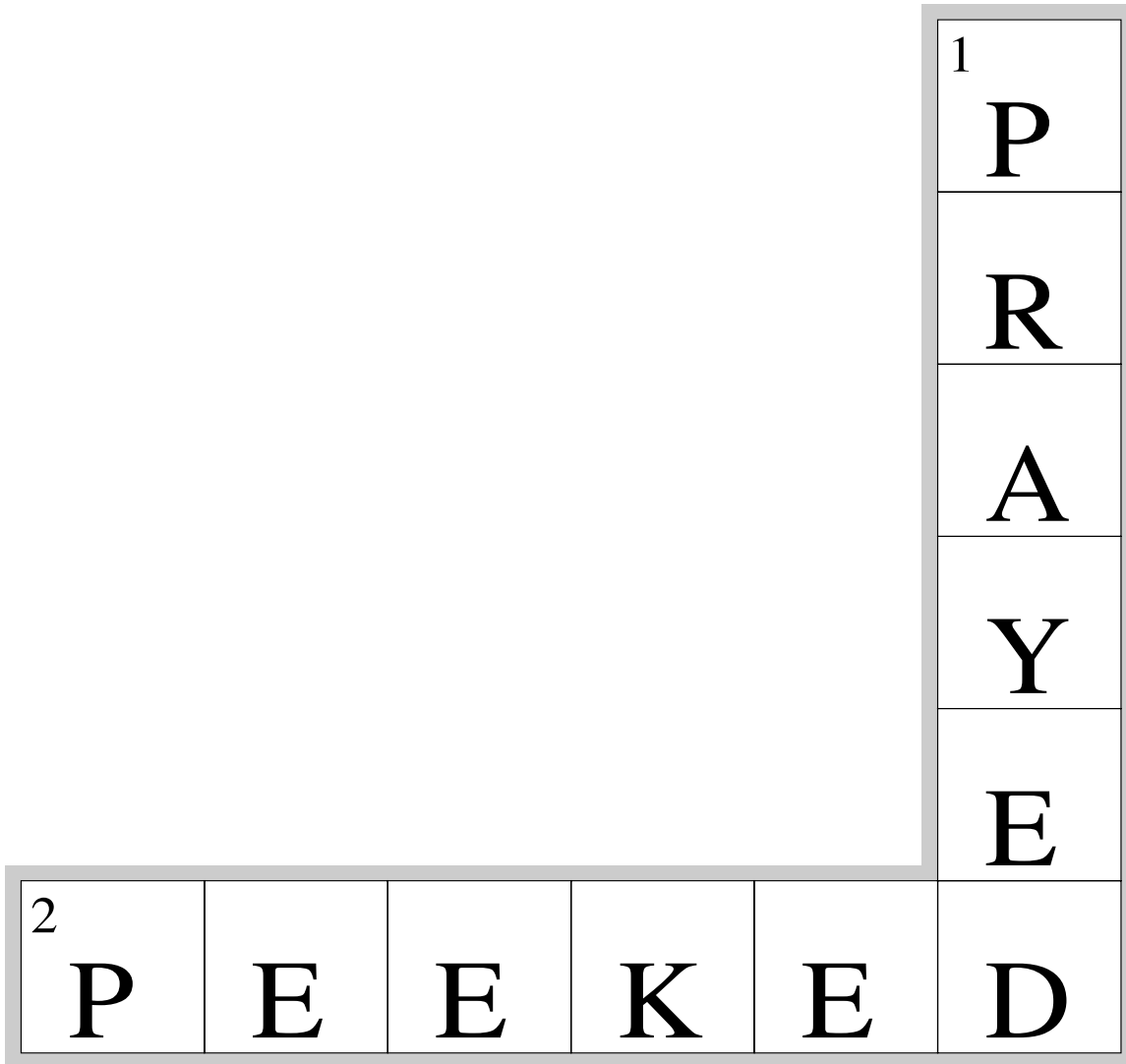
Down

1. **FRIAR**—The kind of monk that Pascual was

1. **FEAST**—A delicious meal

Answer Key (cont.)

Criss-Cross #6



EclipseCrossword.com

Across

Down

2. **PEEKED**—The friars did this when wanted to see into the kitchen

1. **PRAYED**—While the angels cooked, they Pascual did this