

FROM AMERICAN HISTORY TO BANANA PEEL SLIP UP,
AUTHOR JENNIFER ARMSTRONG ENTERTAINS KIDS THIS FALL

Chappaqua, NY – Award-winning author Jennifer Armstrong shows her versatility, creativity, and intelligence this fall with a must-have nonfiction book and a hilarious picture book about bananas. ***The American Story: 100 True Tales from American History*** (Knopf/Random House) is a treasury of fun and accessible tales that show how individuals and events have shaped our nation over the past 400 years. In ***Once Upon a Banana*** (Simon & Schuster), a banana skin left carelessly on the ground turns a city upside down.

Tom Brokaw calls ***The American Story***, “A wonderful gift not only to the children of this country but also their parents. I can’t wait to share it with my grandchildren.”

This color-illustrated “patchwork quilt” of stories is arranged chronologically. Triumph, tragedy, and the struggle for freedom are recurring themes, with emphasis on the human element.

“History isn’t about dry facts,” says Armstrong. “It’s about people. Reading about what they did and what motivated them can be as exciting as fiction or fantasy.” Kids can go back 25 years to catch Pac-Man fever, 50 to visit Elvis in Memphis, 100 to experience the San Francisco earthquake, and 150 to uncover America’s first dinosaur bones in New Jersey.

The American Story shows how historical events are related, even when they occur decades apart. Notes at the end of each story guide readers to story strands, which include familiar themes like exploration and transportation, as well as unexpected ones like cattle and bananas. For example, one story reveals the first bananas shipped to the U.S. rotted on the pier because no one knew what they were.

Bananas also feature prominently in ***Once Upon a Banana***, illustrated by Caldecott Medalist David Small. Kids will return again and again to this story told in rhyming street signs. As the narrative unfolds, one small slip-up for monkey turns into one giant mishap for mankind. Here's a high-concept book with a devilishly hilarious premise, to be enjoyed on many levels.

Jennifer Armstrong www.jennifer-armstrong.com is the author of more than 100 books, including *Photo by Brady: A Picture of the Civil War*, *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, and *In My Hands: Memories of a Holocaust Rescuer*, co-authored with Irene Gut Updyke.

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