

Bookfolio for **John Henry and His Hammer**

Author: [Harold W. Felton](#)

First Publication Date: 1950

Publisher: Troll

ISBN: 081673156X

Recommended for: [Grades 4-6](#)

Classification: Fiction

Genre: [Legends and Folktales](#)

Story Summary: John Henry was born with a hammer in his hand during a strange wild night that was black and white and red. He worked hard as he grew up on his parents' farm, but he never used a hammer. He was the strongest worker on a steamboat and the best fireman on the railroad. Before long he took a hammer in hand and quickly became the best worker on the crew that built the Big Bend Tunnel. He broke through to the far side three times. John Henry encouraged the other men and saved the crews' lives twice. He raced against the white men's steam drill to drill a railroad tunnel in West Virginia and John beat the machine, but his heart burst with the effort and he died "with his hammer in his hand." Some people say his friendly spirit still haunts the dark.

Read-aloud Recommendation: Chapter 4, pages 17-23

The skills for each activity are identified by the following abbreviations:

R=Reading, W=Writing, S=Speaking, L=Listening, D=Drawing

John Henry and His Hammer - Independent Activities	Skills
1. A Full-Blown Legend (Creating a tall tale based on fact)	S
2. Heroes as Models (Researching a topic)	R , S
3. I Was There (Writing a journal)	W
4. A Character Sketch (Writing a character description)	W
5. The Red Moon on a Stormy Night (Writing a report)	R , S , W
6. The Railroad's Impact (Writing a report)	R , S , W
John Henry and His Hammer - Group Activities	Skills
1. The Ballad of John Henry (Presenting a ballad)	R , S
2. Contemporary Tall Tale Heroes (Writing a tall tale)	W
3. Color Similes (Creating similes)	W
4. Sequential Tales (Telling a tall tale)	S
5. Big Wheels, Little Wheels (Discussing a topic)	L , S
6. "Let's Talk About..." (Discussing the story)	L , S

Terms of Use - When you purchase products at [literatureplace.com](#), you are granted **exclusive** use of our products in download or print version as follows:

You have the right of reproduction that is limited to your use only in whatever quantity is necessary to meet your needs and those of your students. This right is unlimited and extends for as long as you need the materials during which time they cannot be given to or shared with any other person(s) through any means of delivery, materially or digitally via the Internet. As such, you have the right to store the product(s) on the hard drive of your computer or as hard copy in your resource file. Upon completion of your use or requirement applies to the three product lines: **Bookfolio Series, Reading Guide Series, and BookfolioPLUS Series**. Any misuse of these rights is in direct violation of copyright law.