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Davy Crockett: Larger Than Life

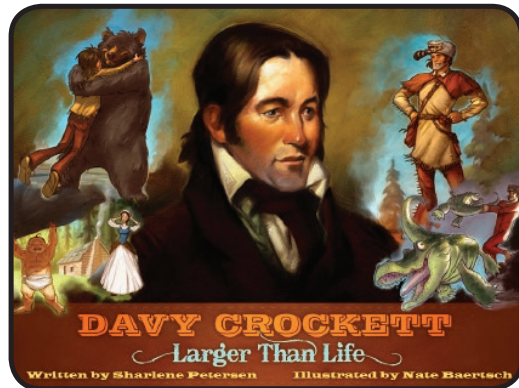
Lesson 105

Paired with *Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind*—Advanced

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David Crockett did many important things. He was a pioneer, soldier, patriot, explorer, and congressman. Stories about David and his adventures are an interesting mix of historical facts, opinions, and exaggeration. This kind of story is called a tall tale.

A fact is something that is true. It is a fact that David lived in America during the late 1700s. An opinion is a person's belief. It is an opinion that David was one of the bravest men in America. Some people may believe that, but others may not.

Stories about David often included exaggeration, so that he seemed bigger and stronger than real people. He would solve problems in funny ways that are hard to believe. Here's a look at some of the facts, opinions, and exaggerations about Davy Crockett.

Some say that when Davy was born, he leaped out of his crib and danced. Davy weighed a whopping 200 pounds and used a garden of large boulders for his playground. Surely he was the strongest, happiest, fattest baby in all of Tennessee.

Davy Crockett was born in Tennessee on August 17, 1786, but unlike the tall tale, he was of average height and weight, like any baby. His parents lived on a mountaintop, so maybe he did play among boulders when he was older.

When Davy was a young lad, he ran away to find himself an adventure—and it wasn't long before he found one. As he was walking through the woods, Davy fell into a crack in the earth. He wiggled and squirmed, but try as he might he couldn't budge. He was stuck as stuck could be.

Suddenly a big bear cub came along and noticed Davy's predicament. Thinking Davy might be a tasty snack, he reached down and pulled and tugged until...WHAP! The bear pulled Davy free.

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Davy was so happy he hugged that big bear, and what do you know—the bear hugged him back! The bear hugged so tight that Davy nearly couldn't breathe. When they finally let go, Davy grinned at that bear and said, "I think I'll call you Death Hug." And they've been best friends ever since.

The real Davy Crockett did run away from home as a young teenager. He got a job as a cattle driver and spent the next few years traveling. When he was sixteen, Davy returned home and continued to work and go to school.

Davy eventually married one of the smartest, bravest girls around. Her name was Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind, and they built a right nice cabin together.

Well, one night some alligators decided they wanted to dance on the Crocketts' cabin roof. The alligators made such a racket that no one could sleep. So what do you think Sally Ann and Davy did to fix the problem? They jumped on the roof, swung those alligators round and round, and threw them all the way to the Mississippi River. Sally Ann and Davy finally got some sleep, and they never had alligator problems again.

Davy Crockett did in fact get married and have a family, though his wife was not named Sally Ann. He married Polly Finley, and together they had two sons. Soon after the birth of their daughter, Polly got sick and died. One year later, Davy married Elizabeth Patton, a widow with two children. In both the tall tales and in real life, Davy made sure to take care of his family.

Davy loved to tell stories, and most often they included a little bit of fact, a few opinions, and a whole lot of exaggeration. Davy Crockett's real life adventures and the tall tales about him have made him a legendary American hero.