



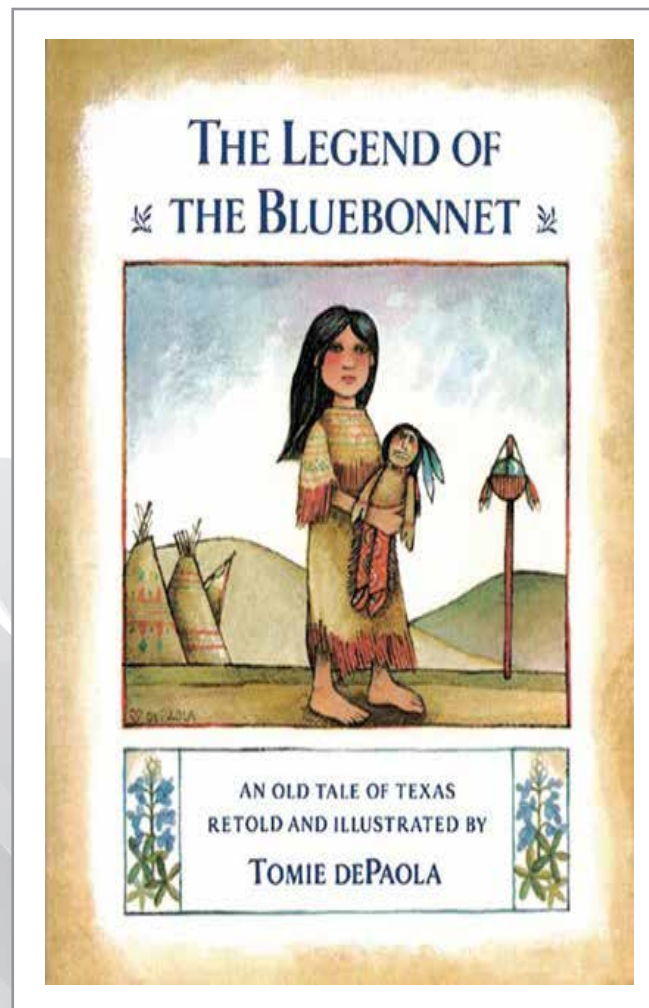
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES K-3**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# The Legend of the Bluebonnet

Tomie dePaola



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# The Legend of the Bluebonnet

Tomie dePaola

## TEACHER GUIDE

### NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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## Table of Contents

Summary .....	3
About the Author .....	3
Introductory Information and Activities .....	3
Four Sections.....	9
Sections contain: Vocabulary Words, Discussion Questions and Activities, Predictions	
Vocabulary Activities.....	18
Supplementary Activities.....	19
Bulletin Board Ideas.....	28
Teacher Information .....	30
Recipes .....	34
Assessment.....	36

## Skills and Strategies

### Thinking

Brainstorming

### Vocabulary

Alphabetical order

### Comprehension

Predicting, comparison/  
contrast

### Listening/Speaking

Discussion

### Writing

Creative, alliteration

### Literary Elements

Characterization, story  
elements, legends

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## Summary

This is an old tale of Texas retold and illustrated by Tomie dePaola. It is about a tribe of Comanche Indians who suffer from draught and famine. Many have lost their lives, among them the entire family of a small girl named She-Who-Is-Alone. Being cared for by the People of the tribe, She-Who-Is-Alone is comforted by the one thing that remains from her family life, a warrior doll made of buckskin, having brilliant blue feathers from the blue jay on its head.

The shaman reports to his People that the Great Spirits say that the people must sacrifice a burnt offering of the most valued possession among them. After everyone has returned home to think about this request, and to sleep, She-Who-Is-Alone uses a firestick to ignite some gathered twigs. As the twigs burn, the girl offers her doll to the Great Spirits, and puts it into the fire. After the ashes grow cold, the girl scatters the ashes to the Home of the Winds, the North and the East, the South and the West.

She-Who-Is-Alone falls asleep there. When the morning sun wakes her, she sees, where the ashes had fallen, the ground covered with beautiful blue flowers. The People of the tribe gather, and give thanks to the Great Spirits, and a warm rain begins to fall. From that day on, the little girl is known as One-Who-Dearly-Loved-Her-People.

## About the Author

Tomie dePaola was born in 1934 in Meriden, Connecticut. He graduated from the Pratt Institute in 1956, and received advanced degrees from the California College of Art and Crafts, and the Lone Mountain College in San Francisco, California.

His love of children's literature came as a result of his mother reading to him. He has worked as a teacher, designer, artist, and as a writer and illustrator of children's books.

## Introductory Information and Activities

### Initiating Activities:

You may choose to do one of these activities previous to the reading of the story, and the other activity after the story has been read. They are appropriate at any time.

#### 1. Native American Legends

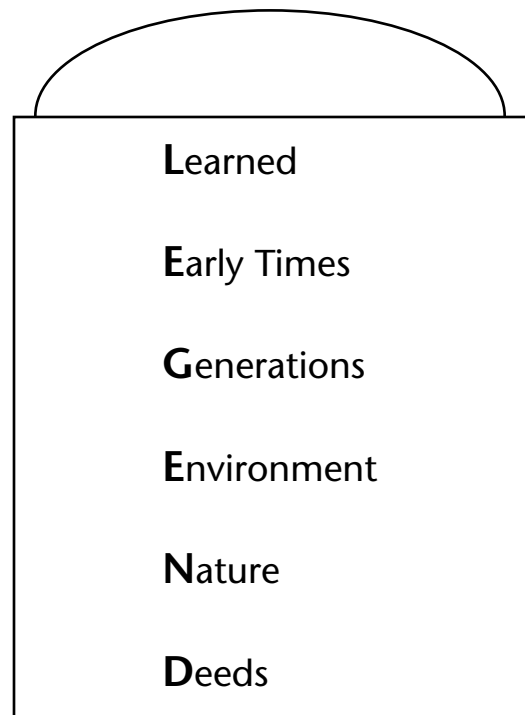
Put up the "Native American Legends" bulletin board. (Legend: An unverified popular story handed down from earlier times.)

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Make a banner of the word "Legend." Have the word "Legend" written vertically on a large sheet of paper.

Introduce, or review, the legend as a story form. Bring into the discussion the legends handed down by the Native Americans. *(The Native American Indians have told their tales to one another for centuries. Their stories reflect their ways of life, their beliefs, the laws of their tribes, and a regard for the beings, animate and inanimate, among which each must live his life.)*

Referring to the word "Legend" written vertically, ask for words that may be used to describe the Native American Legend, beginning with each of the letters. For example:



For information regarding tapes of Native American music, request a catalog from:

Music For Little People  
Post Office Box 1460  
1144 Redway Drive  
Redway, California 95560

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## Section 1

### Vocabulary:

drought  
buckskin

Comanche  
warrior

famine  
brilliant

### Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What major weather event has happened to cause a problem for the People in the story? *(There is a drought.)*
2. What is a drought? *(A drought is a long period without rain, especially during planting season.)*
3. Discuss the effects of drought. How has the drought affected the People in this story? *(The People are dying.)*
4. To what Indian tribe do these people belong? *(Comanche)*
5. How long did the dancers dance? *(three days)*
6. What is the name of the small girl in the story? *(She-Who-Is-Alone)*
7. Why do you think that she has that name? *(Opinion—answers will vary.)*
8. What kind of a doll does the girl have? *(It is a warrior doll.)*
9. Describe the doll. *(“The eyes, nose and mouth were painted on with the juice of berries. It wore beaded leggings and a belt of polished bone. On its head were brilliant blue feathers from the bird who cries ‘Jay-jay-jay.’”)*

### Predictions:

Do you think that the girl will play a major part in the story? Do you think that it will rain? How do you think that a small girl could help the Comanche people?

## Section 2

### Vocabulary:

shaman  
thought  
cease

buffalo  
sacrifice

plentiful  
possession

### Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. What is a shaman? *(a medicine man of the tribe)*
2. What was the shaman to do? *(Go to the hill, and to listen for the words of the Great Spirits.)*