



Out of School and Into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story

Suzanne Slade , Jessica Lanan (Illustrations)

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This picture book biography examines the life and career of naturalist and artist Anna Comstock (1854-1930), who defied social conventions and pursued the study of science. From the time she was a young girl, Anna Comstock was fascinated by the natural world. She loved exploring outdoors, examining wildlife and learning nature's secrets. From watching the teamwork of marching ants to following the constellations in the sky, Anna observed it all. And her interest only increased as she grew older and went to college at Cornell University. There she continued her studies, pushing back against those social conventions that implied science was a man's pursuit. Eventually Anna became known as a nature expert, pioneering a movement to encourage schools to conduct science and nature classes for children outdoors, thereby increasing students' interest in nature. In following her passion, this remarkable woman blazed a trail for female scientists today.

Out of School and Into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story Details

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Author : Suzanne Slade , Jessica Lanan (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Out of School and Into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story for online ebook

Janet says

I was totally unfamiliar with Anna Comstock and her work as a naturalist and her introduction of nature study into school studies. I found it interesting that Anna reproduced images of insects in woodblocks, not an easy art form. I enjoyed the illustrations of this title as they convey the peacefulness of nature.

michelle says

A beautiful book about a woman who loved nature and science well before that was truly accepted in society. What is extra special about Anna Comstock, and what young readers will appreciate most, is that she made a concerted effort to get the study of nature into schools and not simply as a classroom subject. She knew that in order to truly have an appreciation of nature, you had to be in nature. Anna Comstock encouraged educators to consider alternate methods of teaching.

Diana Nelson says

This is a book every Charlotte Mason homeschooler would love to share with their young children. Not only does it have biographical information about Anna Comstock, but it is also full of beautiful pictures of animals that are a nature study in itself. Can't recommend this picture book highly enough.

Haley S says

I am reviewing this book at the perfect time! School literally got out this past weekend! So, I am out of school...and sometimes into nature, depending on the day!

This is a perfect story for children who enjoy the great outdoors, and for those who don't! I read this book and learned a lot about Anna Comstock. Quite frankly, I had never really heard of Anna Comstock before this picture book. So, even to me, this story was a history lesson!

Any child who likes science, art, and nature will find a new hero in Anna Comstock. There is no doubt that Anna is a remarkable woman. This short story is very inspiring to any young girl or boy to follow their dream.

The illustrations are very well done. Jessica Lanan is a great artist. Suzanna Slade, on the other hand, wonderfully wrote a small "history" lesson for children to easily comprehend.

The cover is very cute. When I saw it, I immediately picked it up and read the story. I am giving this cover 5 stars.

As for the book itself, I am also giving it 5 stars. This picture book is definitely worth the read for any child, boy or girl, who enjoys science and/or learning about a new person...well, and/or a child who simply enjoys a good picture book!

Title: Out of School and Into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story

Author: Suzanne Slade

Author's Website: <http://www.suzanneslade.com/>

Illustrator: Jessica Lanan

This review is written in my own opinion and words.

Connie T. says

An engaging picture book about Anna Comstock and how her love of the natural environment led to her campaign to get children and students outside to study and appreciate nature and science. Children are naturally curious about their world and this book builds on that. It's lovely!

Becky Shattuck says

This is a beautiful book about Anna Comstock's curiosity and love of nature. She spends so much time outdoors, studying creatures, that she begins to draw and make prints of insects, which eventually are used to help others identify bugs. I'd use this book to highlight women in science, as well as the curiosity-driven and hands-on nature of science.

I wish it was clearer that the insect anatomy she drew and described was some of her own original, award-winning work and not something she just learned and regurgitated from college. I also wish the book was better focused on a theme instead of just being a timeline of her life.

Amazon listed the age range of this book as ages 6-9 (grades 1-4). I don't think the age range for this book is appropriate. It would be better for 4th - 6th grade.

Linda says

It seems appropriate to share this today after Mother Nature has packed such a wallop to places in our world these past weeks. I have spent much time in my years as a teacher out in nature with my students. I was fortunate that my school held the philosophy that "outside" was learning, and the more hours the better. Students kept field journals, learned to identify so many animals and plants, made ongoing observations, etc. Now I think that some of this work is due to the long ago work of Anna Comstock, a person I'm sorry to admit I've never heard of.

Anna grew up loving the outdoors, curious about everything she observed, did not follow the norm of girls at that time, to play inside having tea parties. Instead of a more stately older life waiting to marry, Anna pushed ahead and went to Cornell University, again pursuing the study of natural sciences. She eventually did marry a man who also loved insects, "Harry" Comstock, and began to draw insects, the work which transformed into carvings, then engravings, celebrated as beautifully accurate. One large influence she later had was to be challenged by New York officials to see why so many children were leaving their farms, with little love for the land. Anna discovered that teachers were not teaching about nature at all, keeping children inside with no other kind of learning. She developed a nature-study program for teachers which it was controversial at first, but grew into a nation-wide program.

Suzanne Slade tells a basic and poetic story of Anna's life from youth to old age. She writes: "Through the

years, Anna grew like a sunflower. So did her love of nature." That love of nature told by Suzanne Slade is illustrated by Jessica Lanan in different approaches to the pages, some double-spreads, some in circles, some replicating Anna's detailed insect drawings, and all in beautiful watercolor.

Tiffany says

Glad to see a children's book about Anna Comstock!

ReadingWench says

The illustrations in this book are wonderful. This biography picture book would be great for 3rd, 4th or a tool for 5th grade. This would be a great teaching tool for teachers. We have a garden at our school. We talk about the insects and crops. This would be a great addition to garden club!

Tracie says

Tells the story of Anna Comstock, a scientist, who developed nature education lessons for children.

Mary says

A naturalist, Anna (1854-1930) loved her time outside. She was able to attend college where she began to draw, creating illustrations for an insect book. She began a program in New York state for a nature study curriculum, encouraging students and their teachers to spend time outside, observing the world.

Parks and Education says

An excellent biographical picture book providing information on the life and work of naturalist Anna Comstock. The story is engaging with beautiful illustrations. This book was a wonderful read to introduce our children to the woman who wrote our nature study handbook. After reading this, my daughter wanted to become a naturalist and author like Anna. She was fascinated by Anna's dream to defy societal norms and enter the field of science; a field that was largely not available to women at the time. What more could we want from a book then to inspire our children to follow their dreams and maybe one day become pioneers themselves?

Christy says

"From the time she was no higher than a daisy, Anna was wild about nature." That's how Suzanne Slade's lyrical picture book biography begins the story of Anna Comstock's life. Comstock was a naturalist, a

talented artist, and a pioneer in outdoor in-the-field nature education. Slade weaves together the biography of this strong woman with glimpses into the natural world, quotations from Comstock herself, and information about the exclusion of women from science in the 1800s and early 1900s. Jessica Lanan's illustrations are gorgeous. Back matter is great too-- I just wanted to see more of Comstock's art.

Luisa Knight says

Ages: 6 - 10

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Becky B says

A picture book biography of Anna Botsford Comstock a nature lover, scientist, artist, educational reformer, and author who produced amazing works of art, revolutionized how students learn about nature, and was Cornell's first female professor.

An amazing story about an amazing woman. I looked up some samples of Comstock's illustrations after finishing this. They are truly gorgeous. Some of them look like photographs. I'd never heard of this woman before, but I definitely appreciate the ways she made an impact in this world. In my days of teaching science I most loved the forays out of the classroom into the wild with students, and so I'm especially appreciative of how Comstock paved the way for that to be a recognized successful science teaching method. A fantastic addition to any library or collection, especially recommended for young nature lovers or those who may stay inside too much (perhaps this will coax them outside a little more often).
