



2020

Cook's Cook: The Cook Who Cooked For Captain Cook

Jaimee Pease

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr>

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Pease, Jaimee (2020) "Cook's Cook: The Cook Who Cooked For Captain Cook," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 41: Iss. 7, Article 7.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol41/iss7/7>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Children's Book and Media Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.



Book Review

Cook's Cook: The Cook Who Cooked For Captain Cook



Author

Gavin Bishop

Reviewer

Jaimee Pease

.....

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Preschool, Primary

.....

Pages

32

Year

2018

ISBN

9781776572045

Publisher

Gecko Press

Captain James Cook leads the HMS Endeavor on a 1768 voyage to search for the mysterious Terra Australis Incognita, and the ship's cook John Thompson chronicles their perilous journey around Cape Horn and deep into the South Pacific. His culinary ability triumphs over each strange ingredient the crew discovers as they pull into new ports. The men feast on delicacies such as Kangaroo Stew and Stingray Soup. When fresh ingredients run short, Thompson gets them through with salt pork and Pease Porridge. The one-handed cook handles anything these unknown lands can give until October 1770, when malaria and dysentery descend upon the entire crew, shifting their focus from discovery to survival.

Gavin Bishop's colorful portrayal of this first voyage offers a subtle nod toward the notorious captain while recognizing the blood, sweat, and years given by the lesser known people who made the journey possible. The journey, portrayed mostly through the form of a ship's log with notes and recipes scrawled between entries, lends a personal quality to the narrative. While Thompson's observations boast the discovery of lands, plants, and people, it also reveals the grim living conditions aboard the ship and the negative impact the crew's presence has on the natives they encounter. Such details are often left out of historical stories of discovery. The front and back matter include maps, diagrams, and definitions to help readers better understand the length of the journey, the cramped size of the ship, and the jargon of the crew. This additional information can help readers better contextualize the details of the historical voyage without disrupting the pace of the narrative. Stunning ink and watercolor illustrations wash over salty sea ports and sunny island cliffs with the most striking illustration along the back matter, representing the length and cost of the journey that Thompson explains in the end.