

Johnny Appleseed

Is Johnny Appleseed a real person? No, but John Chapman is. Johnny Appleseed is the folk hero who evolved from the life of John Chapman. So if you want to know more about Johnny Appleseed, you must learn who John Chapman was and what he accomplished.

John Chapman was born on September 26, 1774 in Leominster, Massachusetts. His father fought in the Revolutionary War, and his mother died when he was a young boy. When John's father returned from the war he farmed and taught John the trade as well. By the time John was in his twenties he was working on his own.

The legend of Johnny Appleseed says that he traveled through the frontier planting apple seeds everywhere he went. That is part of the legend but not the real story. John Chapman was more sensible and practical in his planting. He planted his apple seeds and grew trees and created apple orchards. According to frontier law this gave him claim to the land. Later he would sell this land to settlers.

The apples that John Chapman planted were not used for eating like we do today. They were used to make cider for drinking. It was a very popular drink during this time period. John started planting his trees in Pennsylvania and then traveled through Ohio. He died in Fort Wayne Indiana in 1845 at the age of 70. When he died he owned more than 1,200 acres of land.

Exactly when John Chapman started to be called by his nickname, Johnny Appleseed is not known for sure. But the legend of Johnny Appleseed intensified after his death, and it is still talked about today.

Test Your Thinking Skills

1. Which of the headings below would be best for paragraph four?

- A. Apples for Cider
- B. How to Make Cider
- C. Delicious Tasting Apples

2. Which of the following is NOT true about Johnny Appleseed?

- A. He was born in the southeast.
- B. John was taught to farm by his father
- C. He owned 1,200 acres when he died
- D. His father fought in the Revolutionary War

3. Read the sentence below from the passage.

*But the legend of Johnny Appleseed **intensified** after his death, and it is still talked about today.*

What does the word **intensified** mean in this sentence?

- A. became more realistic
- B. increased in popularity
- C. became less talked about
- D. was destroyed

4. Write 3 things you learned from the article about Johnny Appleseed. Please use complete sentences.



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