

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF WOOL

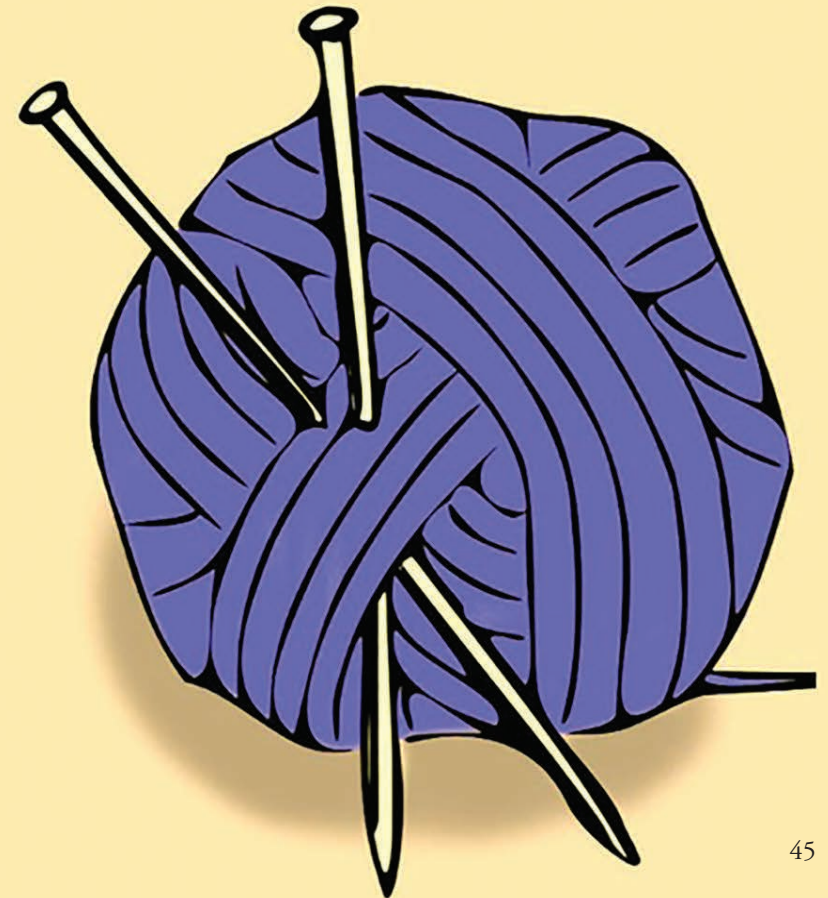
BY HAILEE LUIZ

- 6th grade -

SCOTT VALLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

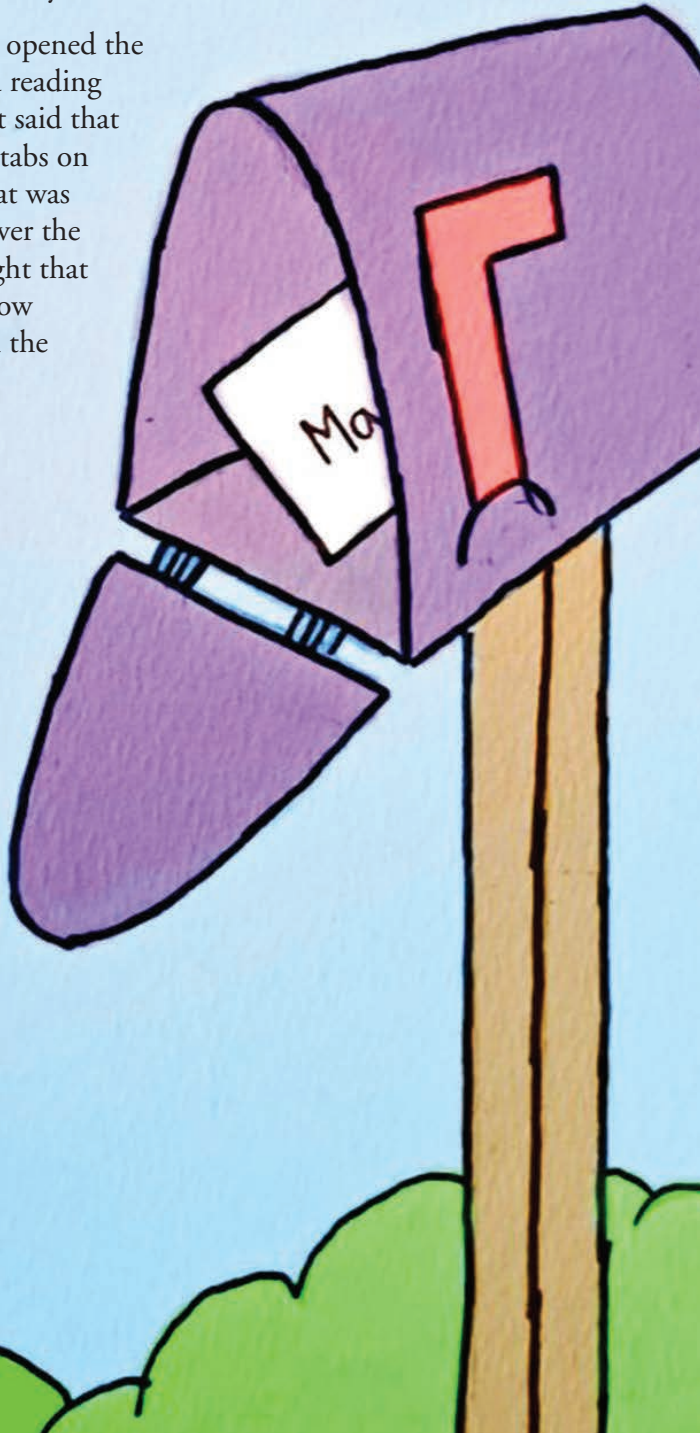
Jed Merrihew, Teacher
Siskiyou County

Illustrated by Florin High School

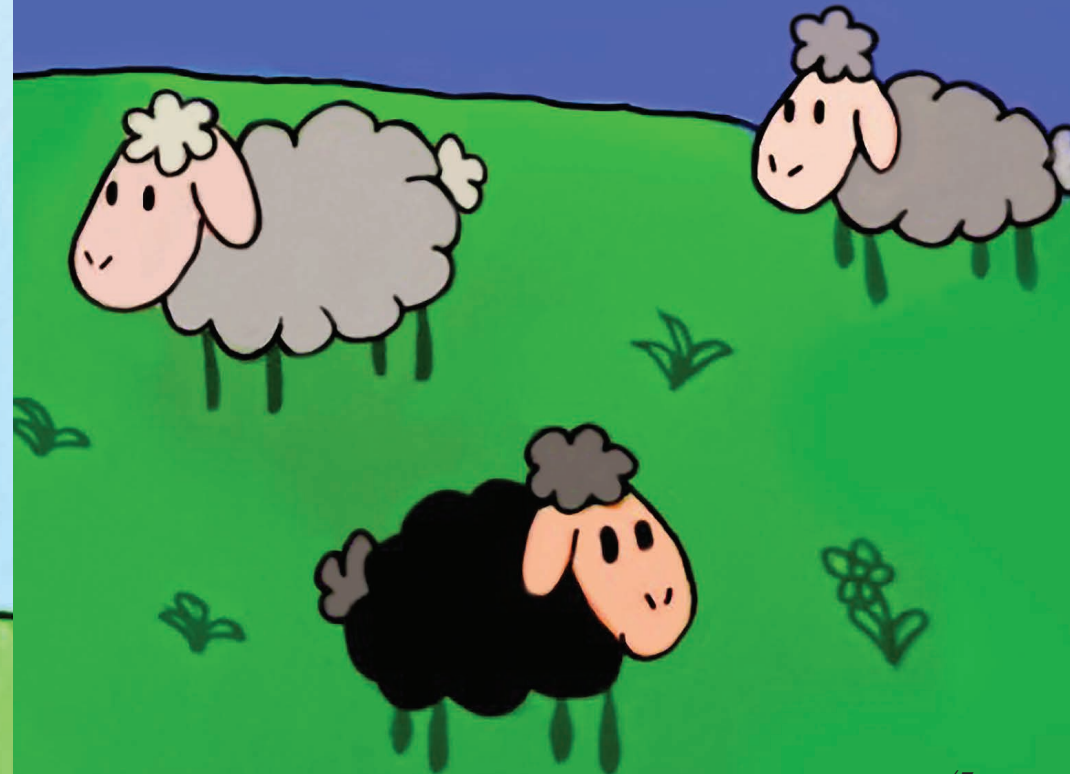


One day a girl named Mary went to the mailbox and found a very interesting envelope addressed to her. It was from a wool buyer that her family had always sold their wool to.

She went inside, opened the envelope and started reading the enclosed letter. It said that the buyers had kept tabs on some of the wool that was sent to the market over the years and they thought that she might like to know what happened with the wool that was sold to them.



Mary had one sheep in particular, Marshmallow, that was her favorite, so she decided to look for information on Marshmallow.



After reading the letter, she discovered when Marshmallow was a yearling, her wool went to a wool insulation factory in San Francisco, California. Mary didn't know that sheep wool could be turned into insulation, so out of curiosity, she searched sheep wool insulation facts on her laptop.

One article Mary read said that wool is a natural insulator because it has a crimped nature that traps air in thousands of very small pockets.



Wool Insulation Factory

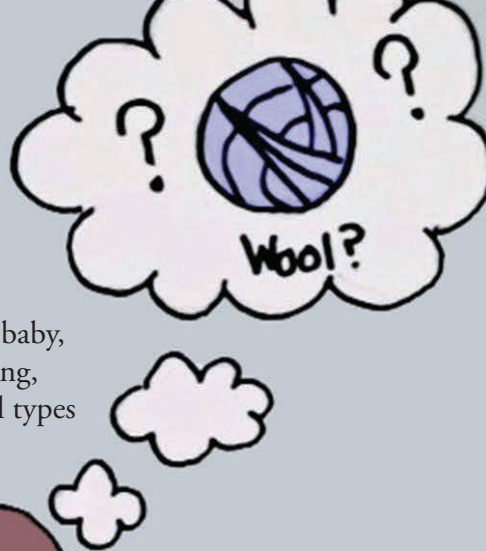


After Mary tired of looking up wool insulation facts, she grabbed that letter and read on. One year, as she found out, Marshmallow's wool had been sent to a factory and it was used to make lipstick and lotion.

She didn't understand this process, so again she turned to her computer and searched, "How is sheep's wool used to make lipstick and lotion?"



She learned from one article that lanolin is extracted by washing the wool in hot water with a special wool scouring detergent to remove dirt, wool grease (crude lanolin), and anything else stuck to the wool. She found out that lanolin is used on baby, skin care, shaving, hair care, manicuring, and suntan products, as well as several types of makeup.

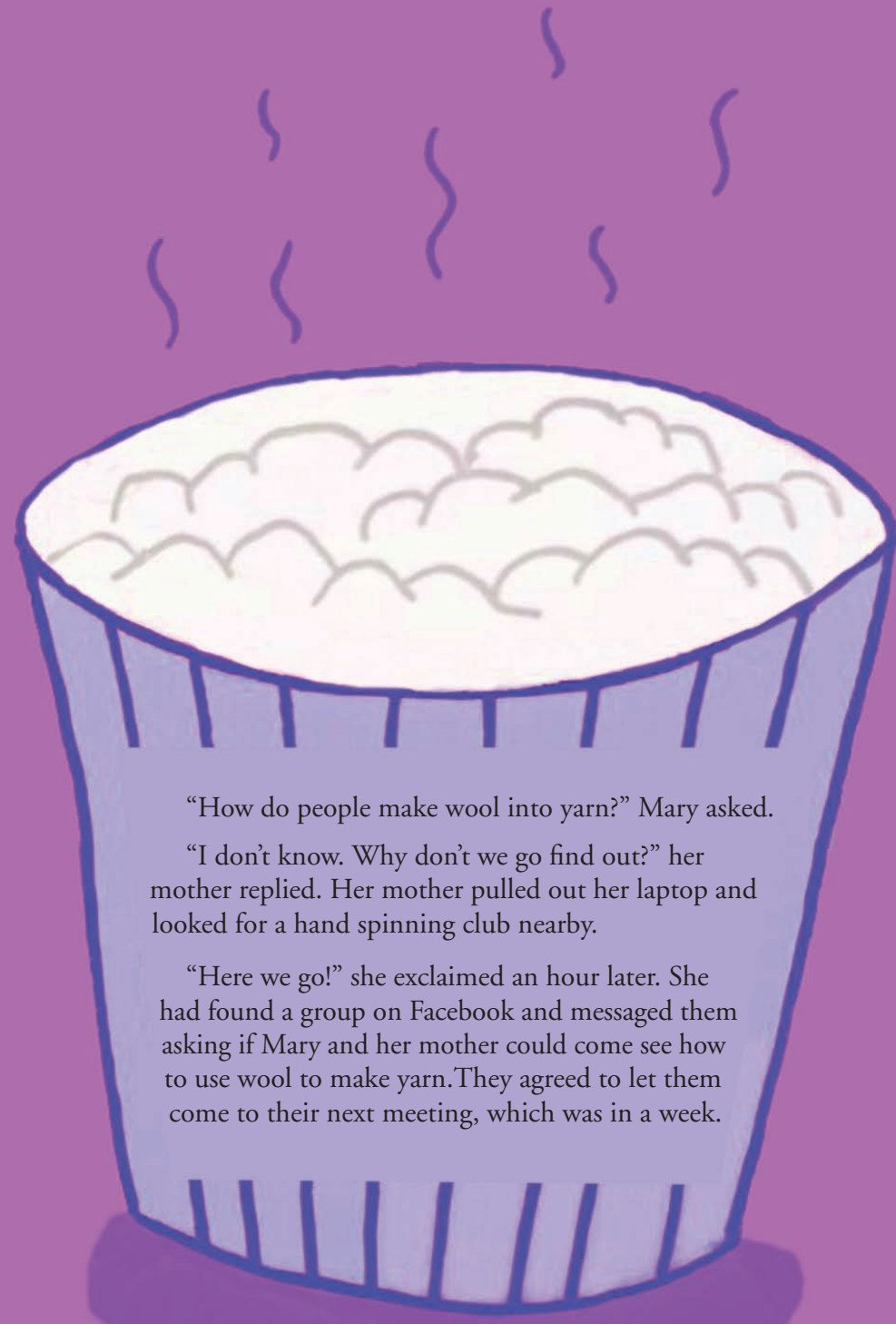


When she turned back to the letter after about 30 minutes of researching, she found that another year her wool had been sold to a clothing and textile company. That year, the wool was shipped to China instead of being processed in California.



After Mary finished reading the letter, she was curious about how much wool was produced in California versus how much was processed. She found out that just in California, over 400,000 wool-producing sheep provided 2.6 million pounds of wool in 2013, but only 0.03% of that wool was processed in state.

Later that night, Mary showed the letter to her mom and she told her what she had learned about different ways wool could be used.



“How do people make wool into yarn?” Mary asked.

“I don’t know. Why don’t we go find out?” her mother replied. Her mother pulled out her laptop and looked for a hand spinning club nearby.

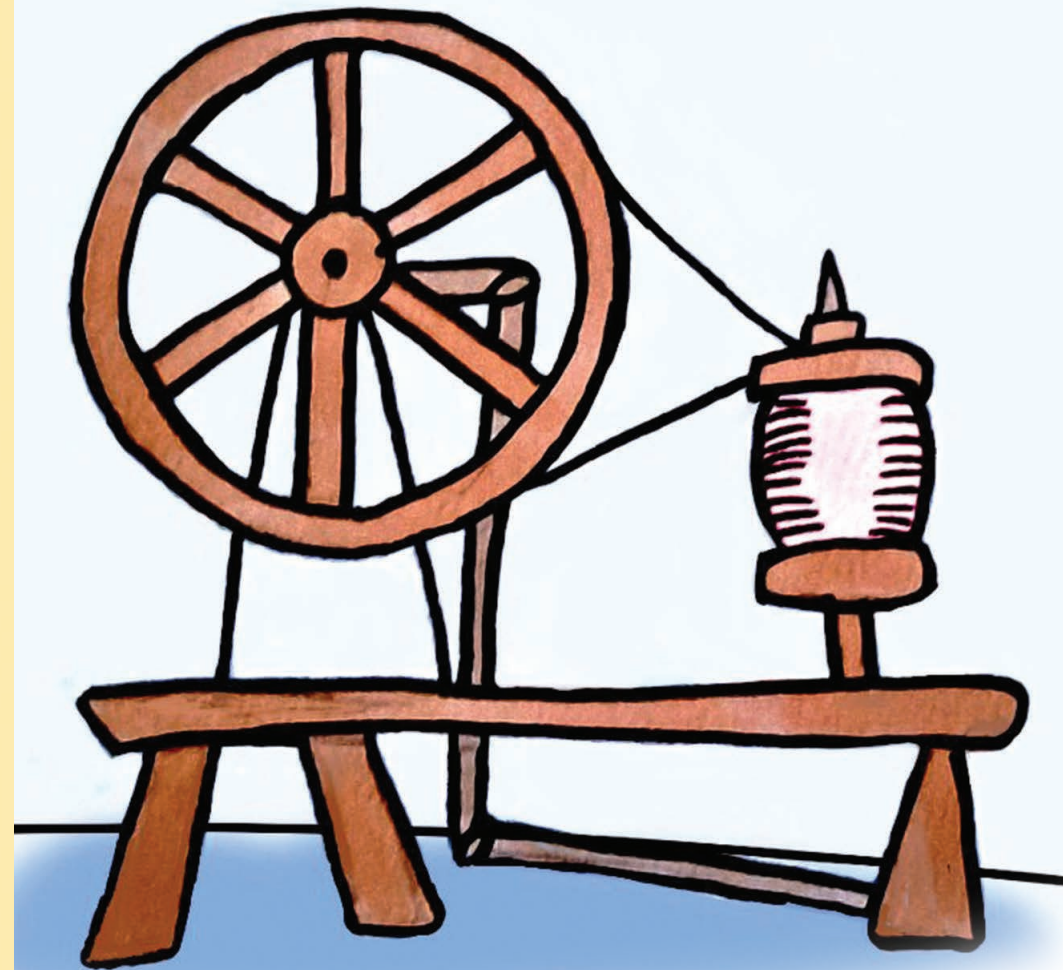
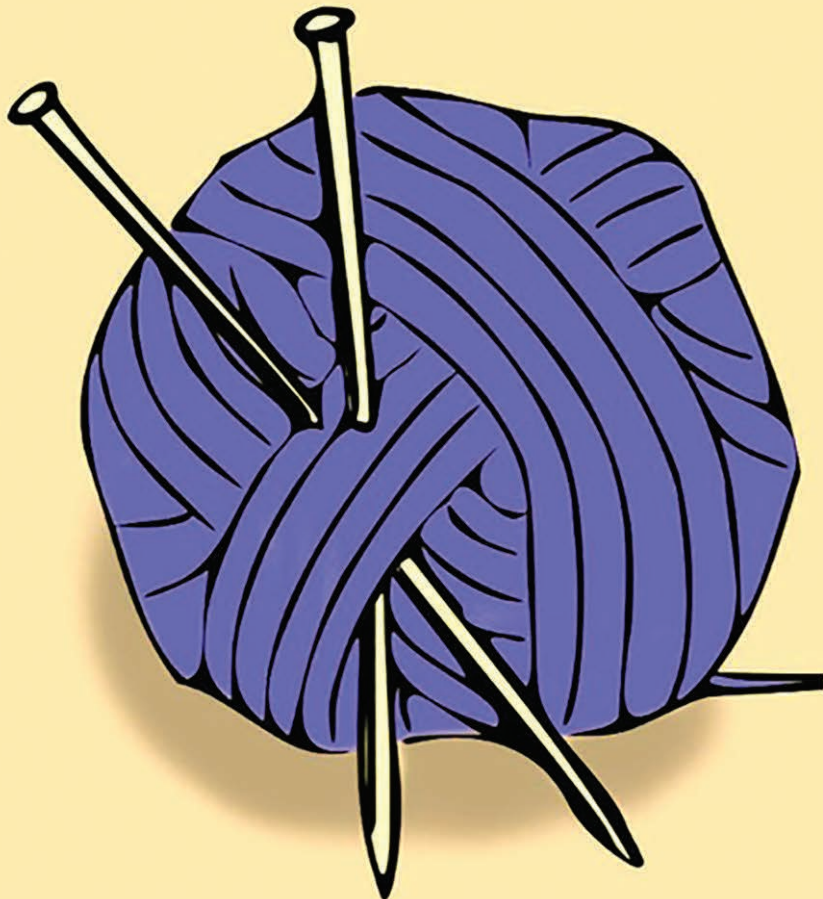
“Here we go!” she exclaimed an hour later. She had found a group on Facebook and messaged them asking if Mary and her mother could come see how to use wool to make yarn. They agreed to let them come to their next meeting, which was in a week.

The next week, Mary and her mother arrived at the building the spinners used to hold their meetings. The president of the club, Maggie, showed them the fleeces that they used to make the yarn. They were already skirted and cleaned, with all of the belly, leg, face, and head wool taken out, leaving the fleece with the usable wool.

After Maggie had shown them the fleeces, Mary saw how the spinners had to card the wool and separate the fibers using a carding paddle.

“After the fibers are separated, you move onto roving. Roving is the final step before spinning the wool into yarn,” Maggie explained.

“We don’t have a tool, so we use spice lids with a hole in the middle and we push the carded wool through it, making thin strips.” The three walked over to a circle of women using spinning wheels.



“And then the final step is to use the spinning wheels to make it into yarn!” Maggie said.

“How much yarn can one fleece make?” Mary asked.

“Well, 1 ounce of yarn can make up to 110 yards of yarn and most fleeces are 2 to 30 pounds,” Maggie replied.

“It’s amazing how much you can do with wool, and I never would have known if it hadn’t been for that letter!” Mary exclaimed. “I wonder what will happen to Marshmallow’s wool this year!”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



HAILEE LUIZ, AGE 11

Hailee was inspired to write her story by her own flock of sheep but was excited to learn more! After brainstorming her story idea, Hailee started researching and just began writing. She got the idea for the character Mary's name from the song, Mary had a Little Lamb.

Hailee's favorite part of writing the story was using her own ewe, Marshmallow, for inspiration. Hailee hopes that readers will learn that wool isn't just used for clothes but is used in many things you might not think of, like insulation. She is excited to be a published author and to meet the illustrators of her story!

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATORS:



LUNA PEASE AND HALEY SEVIGNY

FLORIN HIGH SCHOOL | ALEXANDRA PEASE, ART TEACHER

Before illustrating *The Wonderful World of Wool*, Florin High School art department students Luna and Haley knew very little about the topic. Through illustrating the story, they learned about some of the many uses of wool and how yarn is made. The students researched sheep and how to color wool to make sure their illustrations were factually accurate. Hayley sketched and created the illustrations and Luna added color by starting with a base color and then adding texture and shades. The students created the illustrations through digital art applications. They really enjoyed working on this project and thought the story was cute and very informative.