

FOURTH GRADE STATE WINNER

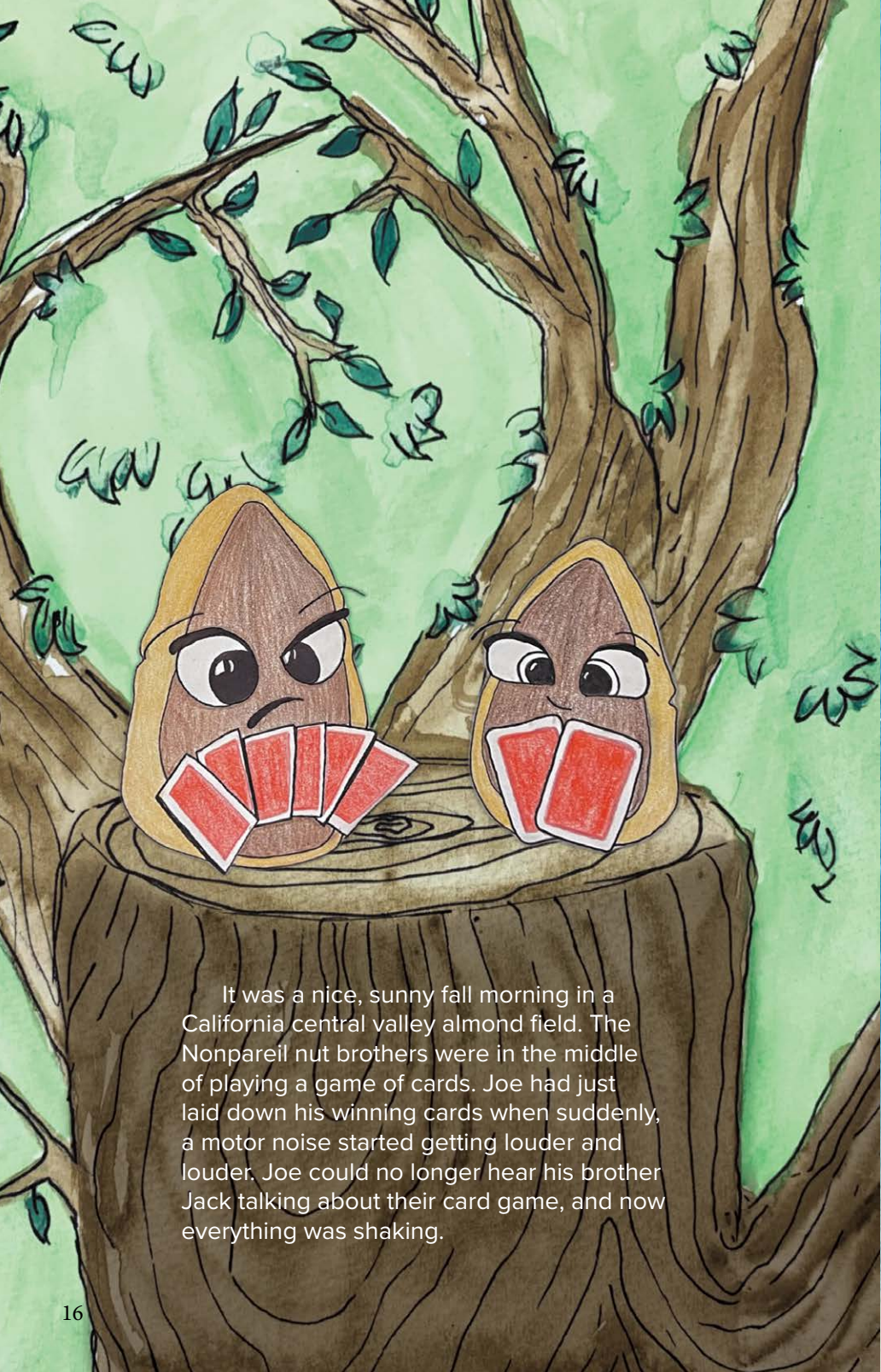
# Not Just Another Nut Story

BY: JOSIAH WENGER

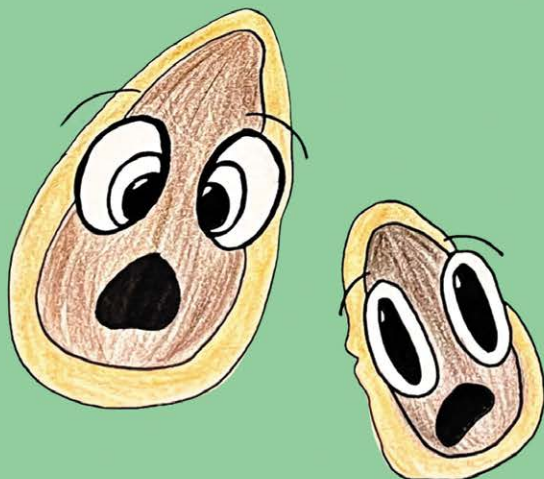
SHEILA AMARAL  
4-H CLUB LEADER  
SHILOH 4-H CLUB, TURLOCK  
STANISLAUS COUNTY

- ILLUSTRATED BY -  
CALVINE  
HIGH SCHOOL





It was a nice, sunny fall morning in a California central valley almond field. The Nonpareil nut brothers were in the middle of playing a game of cards. Joe had just laid down his winning cards when suddenly, a motor noise started getting louder and louder. Joe could no longer hear his brother Jack talking about their card game, and now everything was shaking.



Whatever was making the loud noise was now shaking the entire tree of nuts! Joe and his brother were frightened.



Next thing Joe knew, he was in the air along with all the other nuts from the tree. Joe frantically yelled, "Jack! Where are you?" Before he finished shouting for his brother, he landed on the ground where the two were reunited.

"What just happened Jack?" asked his little brother Joe.



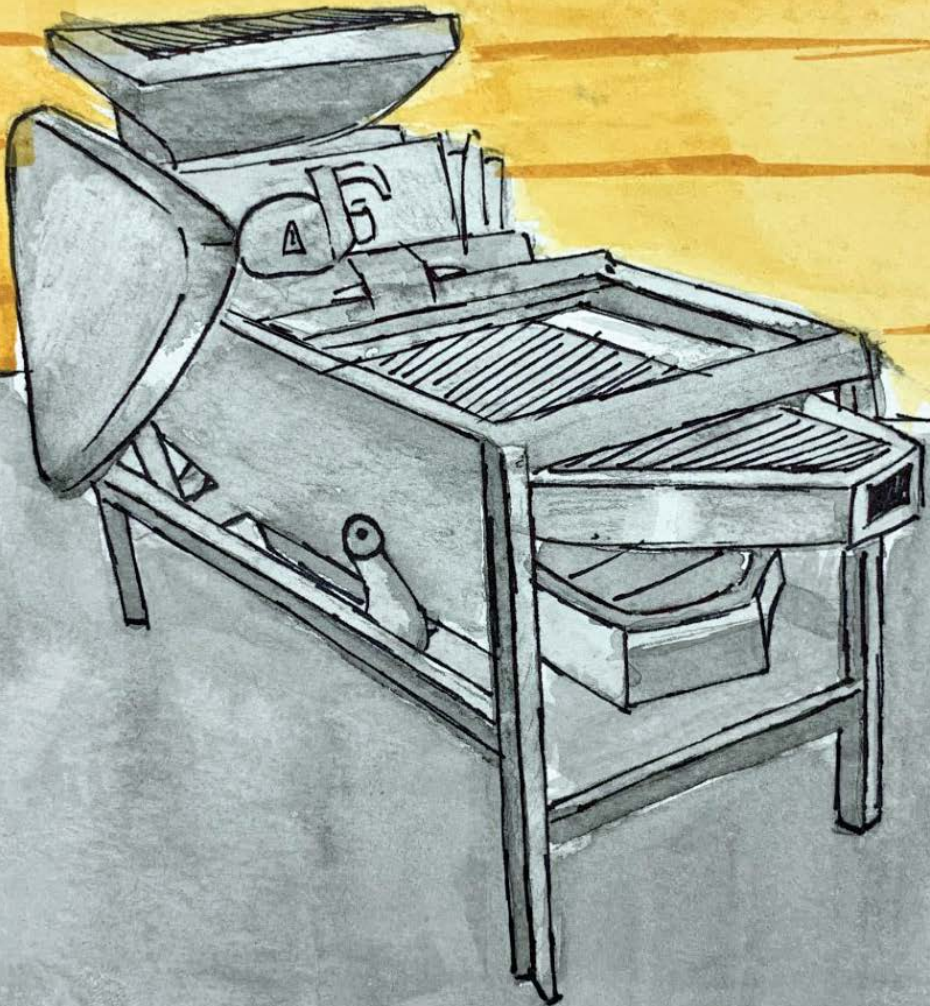
“It’s all part of a bigger plan,” answered Jack. Jack went on to tell Joe what he knew was coming for the two Nonpareil brother’s futures. “It’s a journey that will put us in the hands of almond lovers all over the world,” said Jack.

“Now that we’ve been shaken off the tree, over the next five to ten days, (which is how long it takes almonds to dry out on the ground), we’ll get to lay out and dry,” explained Jack.



“Like sun-tanning?” asked Joe.  
“Yep, just like that. We are California grown, after all,” Jack added.

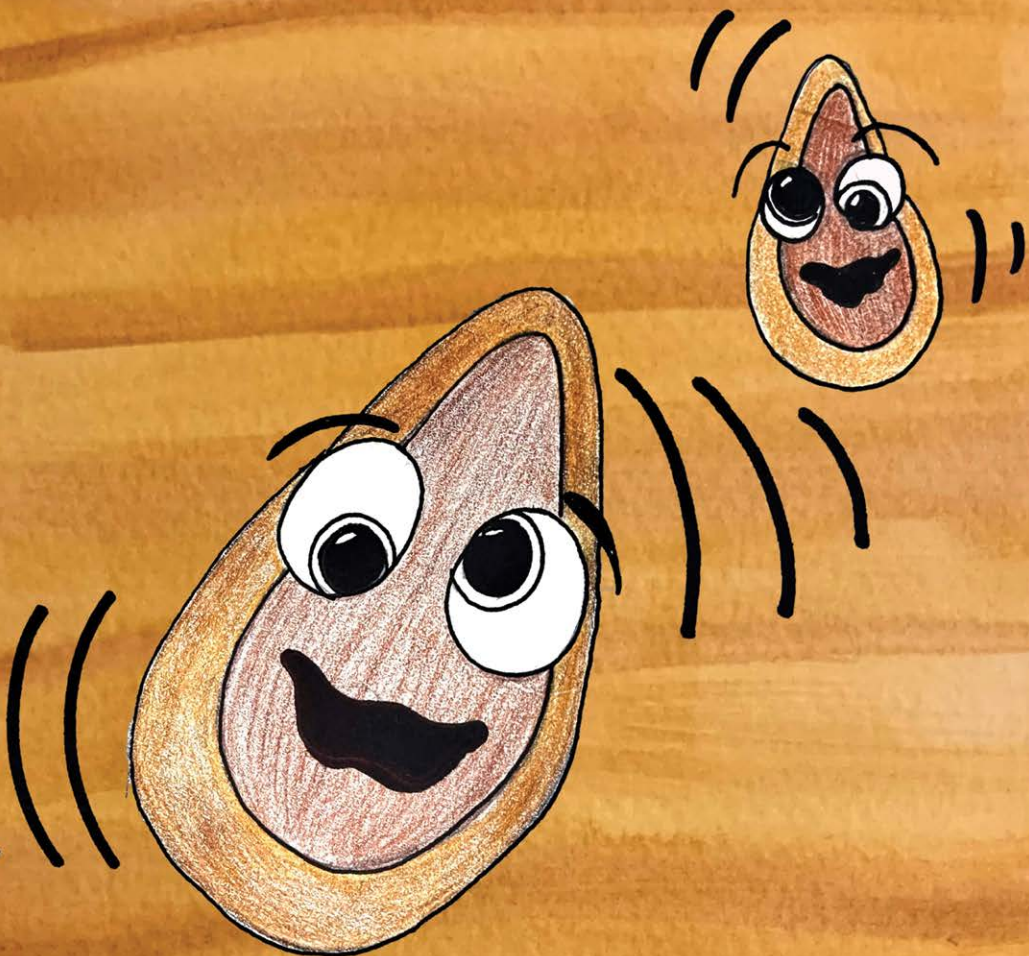
“It’s important to be dry enough with little moisture so that mold or pests don’t bother us,” continued Jack. “Next, our farmer will sweep us off our feet and haul us into the huller. We’ll be cleaned and scrubbed from this hard, dry shell and separated from all that dirt, rocks, leaves and sticks.”



Just then, another machine they call the pickup machine entered the field.

“Here we go Joe, it’s time to leave the orchard and really start our journey,” said Jack, as they were picked up. The Non-pareil brothers traveled up an elevator and were dropped into a big trailer. Next, they traveled a few miles to the local huller, which felt like a long time for the two little nuts. After that, they were dumped into the biggest pit they’d ever imagined.



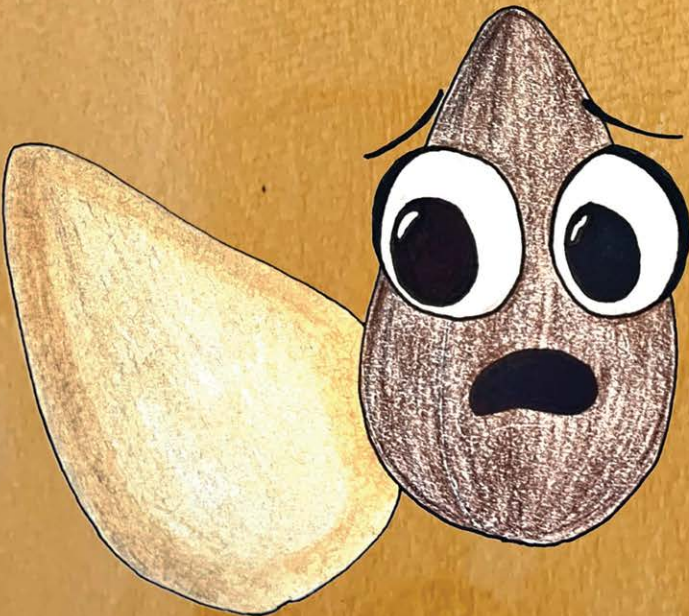


“Wow,” sighed Joe.

All of a sudden they fell through a hole that got them away from all the sticks, and rocks, called a grate. As they shook back, forth and vibrated to the end, the boys thought it was funny how the vibration changed their voice.



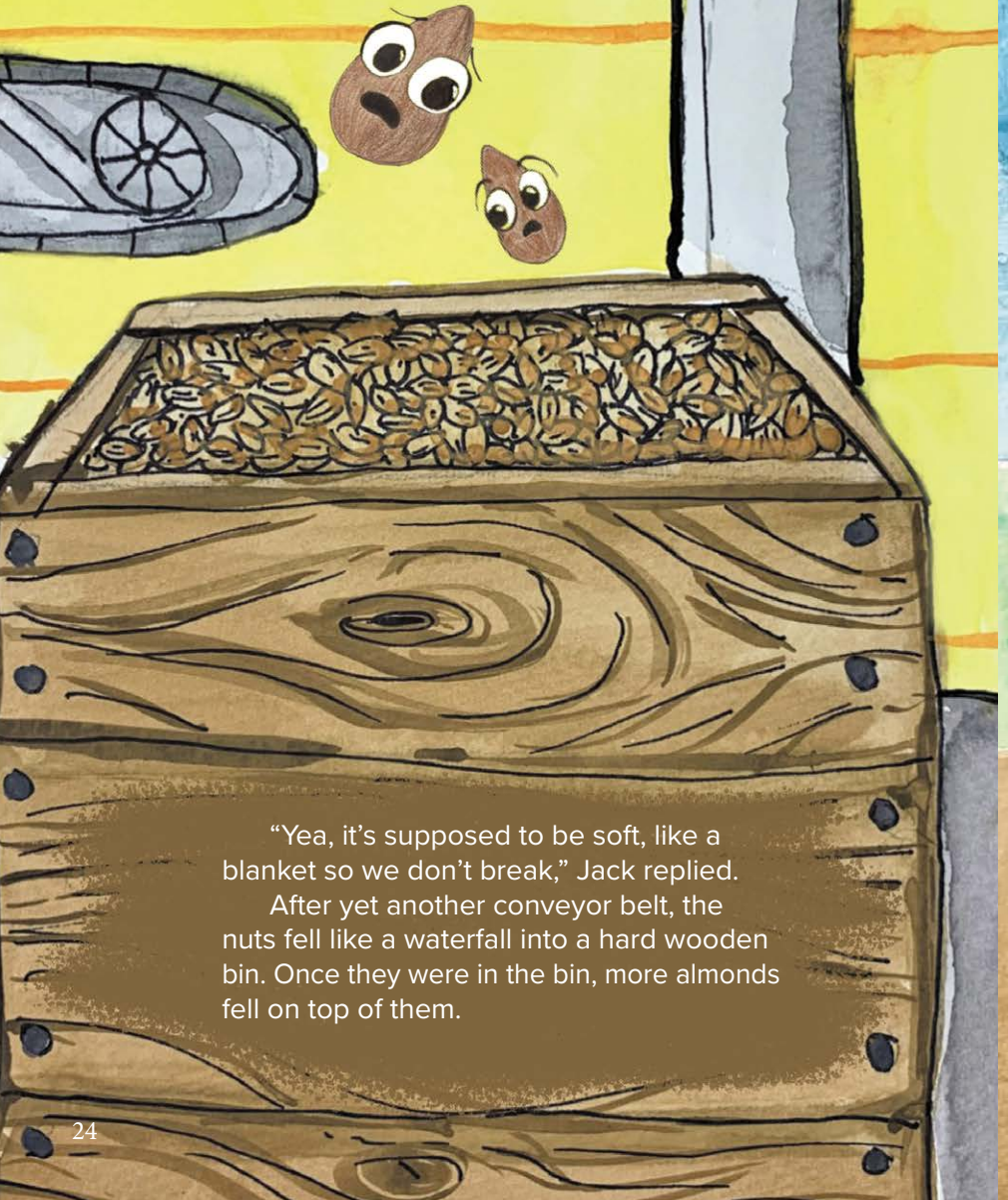
After that, they fell into a big dark hole where they were sucked up and shot out onto another conveyor belt. This time, the power of the vibration knocked the hard shell off and the nuts were separated into two parts, the nut and the shell. By this time in their process, the nuts had dried even further. The almonds must be less than 6% moisture content at this point in order to be shipped out of the huller.



Joe was scared not knowing what would come next. "That was quite a workout!" exclaimed Joe.

"It's not over yet, Joe," replied Jack, as they bounced up and down, and through the nice, soft brushes.

"That felt like a massage all over!" said Joe.



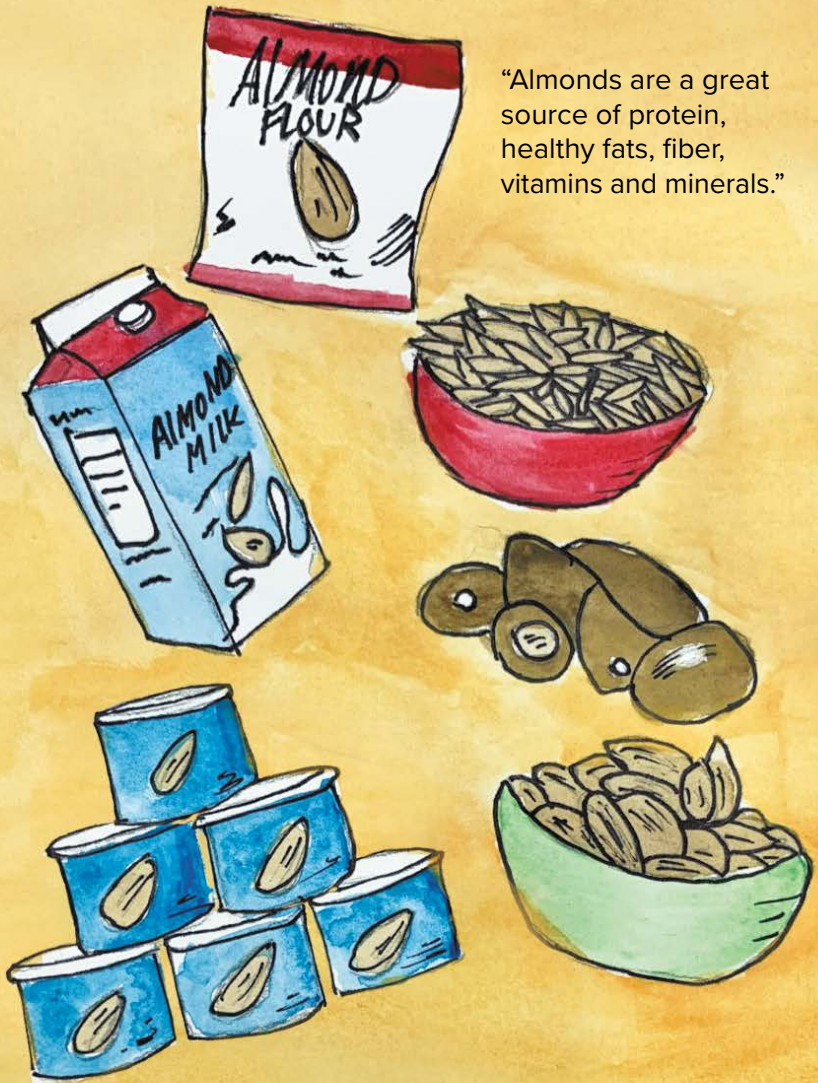
"Yea, it's supposed to be soft, like a blanket so we don't break," Jack replied.

After yet another conveyor belt, the nuts fell like a waterfall into a hard wooden bin. Once they were in the bin, more almonds fell on top of them.

“Now, the bin is going to be picked up by a forklift and loaded onto a big semi-truck,” Jack told Joe. Then just as Jack said, they were lifted and stacked with other bins of almonds onto a semi-truck. The semi-truck took them to a big building known as a processor.

“Well Joe, this is almost the end of our story,” Jack explained. “Now that we’re at the processor we will get our finishing touches.”





“Almonds are a great source of protein, healthy fats, fiber, vitamins and minerals.”

“Therefore, we are what they call a ‘hot commodity’ for people to eat. We will either be kept whole, slivered, dipped in chocolate, flavored or turned into flour or milk. There are so many ways people like to enjoy us. This is how we’re part of the bigger picture and not just another nut story.”

Just like Joe and Jack, millions of California almonds are processed and make it into the hands of consumers all over the world.

---

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---



---

# Josiah Wenger

4TH GRADE

4-H CLUB LEADER: SHEILA AMARAL

It's all about almonds in this fourth-grader's home! Ten year old Josiah's dad manages an almond huller, making the nut a natural fit for a story topic.

While Josiah enjoyed researching almond facts and coming up with the story title, it was a special tour of his dad's work, which he really enjoyed, where he gathered visuals and ideas for the story.

The author hopes readers learn about the many steps in processing almonds and is excited for the illustrations to bring his story to life.

---

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATORS

---



---

### Malakai Newbery & Serena Vining

CALVINE HIGH SCHOOL  
CORRIE SODERLUND, ART TEACHER

It takes many machines to get almonds from tree to table! That was the first thing these high school juniors learned as they illustrated “Not Just Another Nut Story.”

The team started their illustration process with research, watched videos of almond harvests, and investigated what cartoon facial expressions best conveyed emotions that almonds Jack and Joe experienced during their adventure.

Next, they divided the work. Serena created the main cartoon characters, which gave her the opportunity to work with a new artistic style. Meanwhile, Malakai drew and painted the backgrounds, machinery and various environments. Watercolor, ink and colored pencil were all utilized and Jack and Joe were digitally added to the background pages. Both artists enjoyed illustrating this fun story about a well-loved California commodity.