



# The Six Fools

By Zora Neale Hurston, Joyce Carol Thomas

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## THE SIX FOOLS

Zora Neale Hurston

Who's the biggest fool?

Is it the girl who floods her basement with cider, the man who jumps into his pants, the farmer who feeds his cow on the roof, or the woman who tries to fill her wheelbarrow with sunshine?

Based on a story collected by Zora Neale Hurston during her travels in 1930s Gulf States, *The Six Fools* is an outrageously funny tale about a dashing young man who finds foolish folks aplenty and true love!

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### The Six Fools By Zora Neale Hurston, Joyce Carol Thomas Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 1-5—A fellow courts a girl, and they agree to marry. Sadly, she and her family are such fools that the young man takes off: ...you are the three biggest fools that I ever laid eyes on. I'm going traveling for a year, and if I find three fools as big as you, I'll come back and we'll get married. Does he find them? Of course. This adaptation of the fool story from Hurston's *Every Tongue Got to Confess* (HarperCollins, 2001) is light and adept. Though Thomas doesn't describe the changes she's made, comparison with the original shows that she's added a small amount of narrative detail and dialogue, hardly altering and not cutting anything from the original. The result is wonderful in voice: rich, hilarious, and satisfying. Tanksley's oil monoprints done in a folk-art style set the story in Hurston's 1920s-'30s with humor and vibrant color in a wide-ranging palette. The combination of single-page, three-fourths-page spread, and spot illustrations, with text varying black on white or white on color, gives a sense of visual movement to the story. Short notes at the end (including a source note and an explanation of the unusual but traditional ending phrase) complete this delightful picture book, perfect for reading aloud and for any folktale shelf. Pair it with Christopher Myers's *Lies and Other Tall Tales* (HarperCollins, 2005) for a Hurston Renaissance.—*Nina Lindsay, Oakland Public Library, CA*

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From [Booklist](#)

PreS-Gr. 2. Stories about foolish adults make kids laugh and feel superior, and Thomas' adaptation, from Hurston's 1930s folklore collection *Every Tongue Got to Confess*, is a good example. A young man thinks his fiancée and her parents are the biggest fools he has ever laid eyes on--until he searches the world and finds fools everywhere: a man jumping up in the air to get into his trousers, a woman trying to haul sunshine into her kitchen in a wheelbarrow, and more. The characters, depicted with rolling eyes and exaggerated gestures, are not nearly as appealing as those created by Christopher Myers for Hurston's *Lies and Other Tall Tales* (2005), but children will still love the uproar and the nonsense. Pair this with one of the many African trickster tales or with Yiddish stories about the fools of Chelm, such as Eric Kimmel's *Jar of Fools* (2000) and Steve Sanfield's *Feather Merchants and Other Tales of the Fools of Chelm* (1991). *Hazel Rochman*  
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About the Author

Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960) was a novelist, folklorist, and anthropologist whose fictional and factual accounts of black heritage remain unparalleled. Her many books include *Dust Tracks on a Road*; *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; *Jonah's Gourd Vine*; *Moses, Man of the Mountain*; *Mules and Men*; and *Every Tongue Got to Confess*.

## Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Earl Hess:**

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**William Wright:**

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