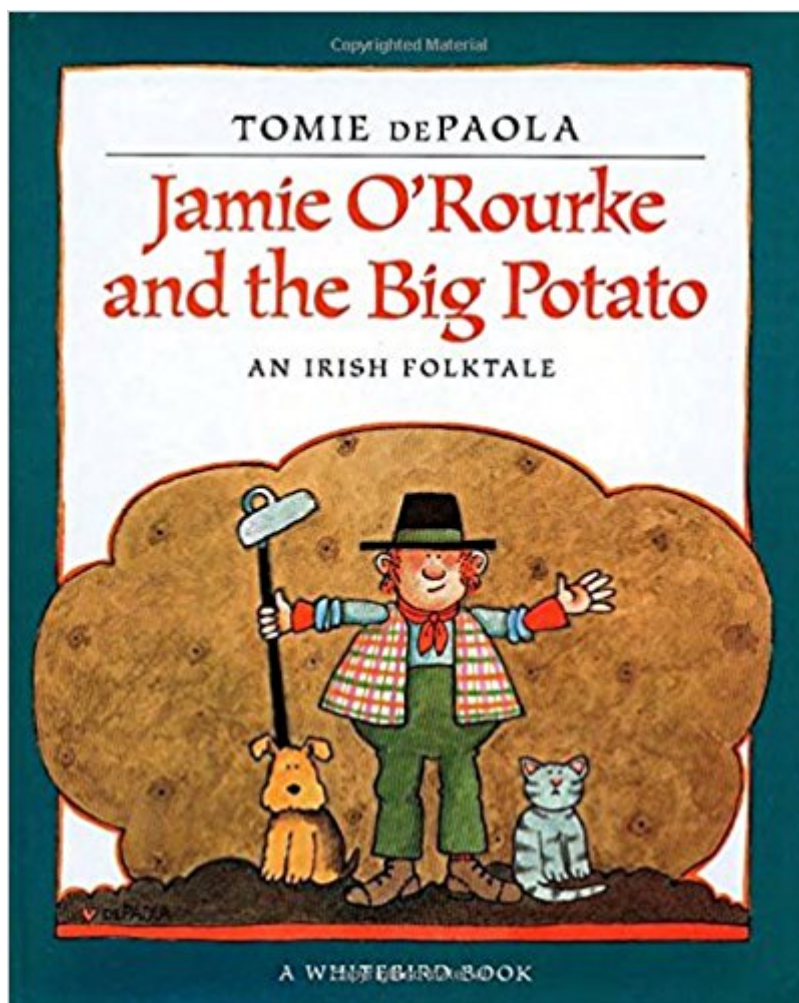


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# Jamie O'Rourke And The Big Potato



## Synopsis

"Illustrated in dePaola's signature style, this has an inviting look. Buoyant watercolors are framed by thin orange borders....An engaging read-aloud choice for St. Patrick's Day." -- Booklist  
A Cheery picture book, with the artist using the lighter, brighter side of his palette....Attractive and amusing." -- Kirkus Reviews

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 790 (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reprint edition (January 27, 1997)

Language: English

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Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 73 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #62,763 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 in [Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > St. Patrick's Day](#) #53 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Europe](#) #63 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

"Jamie O'Rourke is the laziest man in all of Ireland." So begins well-known children's book author and illustrator Tomie dePaola's retelling of a popular Irish folktale. Jamie is accustomed to his wife doing all the household and garden chores, so when she injures her back, he figures he's sure to starve to death. But as luck would have it, he chances upon a leprechaun. The elfin man offers Jamie the biggest "prat" in the world in exchange for letting him go. Feeling self-satisfied, Jamie plants the seed, which soon grows into a potato big enough to be a logistical nightmare for the village. Luckily, his wife comes through for him once again, and everyone ends up happy and full. This is not a redemptive tale--Jamie does not learn to be industrious. It is, however, a lively, simple-yet-outlandish, brightly illustrated story about a man and a potato, with a leprechaun thrown in, for luck. (Ages 4 to 8) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This inspired Irish folktale clearly illustrates that taking the easy way out of a situation is sometimes more trouble than it's worth. Potato farmer Jamie O'Rourke, "the laziest man in all of Ireland," is unfortunately not the brightest of men either. The prospect of a harsh and foodless winter, due to meager crops, and the ceaseless nagging of his hardworking wife impel Jamie to the church to pray for help. As Irish luck would have it, Jamie happens upon and captures a leprechaun who cunningly offers magic potato seeds instead of the traditional pot of gold. The resulting colossal spud feeds the O'Rourkes and the other villagers far longer than anyone could have imagined. Although the comical tone works well here, readers may be surprised that Jamie is rewarded for being lazy. Thatched-roof cottages, stone hedges and sheep dot the green landscape, depicting rustic life on the Emerald Isle. DePaola's distinctive homespun style and genial gentry round, child like faces add plenty of zip to this silly story. Ages 4-8. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Pure magic, the watercolor drawings of this book for 2 to 5 year-olds, bringing to life 22 new friends--24 if I include the giant potato and the leprechaun. Set in an Irish-like countryside of about 200 years ago, Tomie dePaola retells an old story that appears in many cultures. Jamie doesn't like to work; his wife Eileen does what's needed for them to eat. When her back goes out, Jamie fears he'll die from lack of food, so off he goes to get ready for the sad event. On his way to the village, he finds a fairies' shoemaker (the leprechaun) who outsmarts his captor by giving him a seed for the biggest potato on the world, rather than his treasured gold. The blessing becomes first a bane (can't get that veggie out of the ground), then a blessing (the curious villagers help), then a bane (oops! it blocked the road), then a blessing thanks to quick-witted and kind Eileen (every one can have all they want), then a bane (the villagers eat and eat and eat and eat until they never want to see a potato again), and then a blessing as they offer food for life if Eileen and Jamie plant no more giant potatoes...the big pratie for sure. The story has a fine lilt of words and as I mentioned, the drawings are wholly charming in DePaola's much-loved style. Is there anything more though to reading children this story? To me, this is a classic tale of the apparently not-too-bright person--a schlemiel, a trickster, a lazy person---who by a "fortunate misfortune" and a certain talent for keeping on, brings fortune to her/himself and the community. I particularly like that the heroine is the hard-working, cheerful, and very bright Eileen who invites everyone to take all the potato they want, and how the community eventually pitches in to deal with the situations. The children with whom I have read this giggled at the turns of the story and loved the gay illustrations and the rhythm of the

tale. Recommended with delighted enthusiasm for the humor, imagination, and good things to be shared here. It seems to me an opportunity for readers, if they chose, to add some history.

As far as creativity and originality goes, this is a cute story. I love the fact that the reader/listener can sense Jaime's wife's frustration with him. I love that the villagers worked together to solve a problem. I love the wit the leprechaun displayed. It is true that Jaime did not get a lasting consequence for his slothfulness, but it is no different than reading a book like 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer' where Tom got out of painting the fence white because he outwitted his friends. There are people like this my friends. It is just a part of life. We just have to be aware about our gullibility. Also, it isn't like the village community got nothing in return for their industry. It is all about perspective. I disagree with the reviewer who stated that it was an awful book.

when I read this to my first grade class they were enthralled by the humor.

A cute and fun story that is a perfect addition to our March themed books at home! Thanks!!

this was a St. Pats gift for an Irish child. She loved it and so did I.

This was a very neat little story and my students liked it.

I love this book!! I read it on St. Patrick's Day. The artwork is fantastic.

thanks product was intact

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