

# The Jimjick King

by Dina McClellan

Once a week, Asa Dogwood and his wife, Mary, would fetch the wagon and make a long journey. They took the wagon to Bearport to pick up supplies.

Asa was always in a rush to get back, but Mary liked to stop at barn sales along the way. On this particular day, Mary saw a sign that said JUNK SALE TODAY. The sign was hanging on a barn. Mary begged Asa to stop.

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## READ & RESPOND

Author's Craft

**What is the mood at the beginning of the story? What words help you to know the mood?**

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“Now, Mary,” said Asa, sighing, “you know what’s in there—the same silly things we have in *our* barn. We’re always trying to get rid of the stuff!”

“Please, Asa?” Mary said. She smiled sweetly.

Of course, Asa agreed.

Together, they walked up to the farmhouse and knocked on the front door. A pleasant woman greeted them and led them to the barn.

**READ & RESPOND**

Author’s Craft

**How does the author show how Mary and Asa interact with each other?**

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Mary picked her way through piles of old furniture, clothing, rusted farm equipment, and bad family portraits. Asa wandered off, bored.

Then Asa's eyes landed on an object he couldn't identify. He picked it up. He turned it around. He thumped it on the table. He gave it a sniff. He decided to ask the pleasant woman what it was.

"It's a—a—a jimjick!" she said.

She doesn't know, Asa thought.

He bought it for twenty-five cents.



### READ & RESPOND

Author's Craft

**Does the author describe the jimjick? Why do you think that is?**

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When they got home, Asa showed Mary his new purchase.

“Ooooooooooh! It’s beautiful!” Mary exclaimed. “Um—what exactly is it?”

“It’s called a jimjick,” he said.

She furrowed her brow. “I’ve never heard of a jimjick.”

“Oh, they’re extremely rare,” said her husband. “They can only be found here in Indiana.”

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## READ & RESPOND

Main Ideas and Details

**How does Asa try to fool Mary in this scene?**

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The next time they drove into town, Mary suggested stopping at another barn sale. This time, Asa had no problem agreeing.

Another pleasant woman led them to a barn. Mary bought a painting of a prairie that looked like the view from their bedroom window. Asa bought an object very much like the first one. He batted off a cobweb and held it up.

“Another jimjick!” Mary clapped her hands in excitement.

**READ & RESPOND**

Author's Craft

**How does the story make you feel? Is the story funny or serious?**

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Asa built a fancy cabinet to show off his jimjicks. Word got around. Soon Asa was known as a collector of jimjicks.

Farmers all over the county were now on the lookout for jimjicks to buy. Soon it was hard to find any. Jimjick prices went up and up to 50 dollars each!

Whenever Asa found a jimjick, he bought it. He built a much bigger cabinet to show off his new jimjicks. He now had hundreds of them.



**READ & RESPOND**

Main Ideas and Details

**Why do jimjicks go up in price?**

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Asa was recognized as the country's leading expert on jimjicks. Many newspapers printed articles about him.

Soon Asa's cabinets could no longer hold all his jimjicks. He added a special room onto his house to show off the jimjicks. After Asa died, Mary turned this room into a museum.

Unfortunately, tragedy struck. About a hundred years ago, the Jimjick Museum was hit by lightning. It went up in flames, and all the jimjicks were destroyed. Since then, jimjicks have all but disappeared.

That's why you never see any.

### READ & RESPOND

Main Ideas and Details

**Do you think jimjicks really existed? Why, or why not?**

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# Reread and Respond



**1** What clues tell you where this story is set?

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Hint

There are clues on almost every page!

**2** How does Asa become a jimjick expert?

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Hint

For clues, see pages 231 and 232.

**3** What eventually happens to Asa's collection of jimjicks?

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Hint

For a clue, see page 232.