

would be greater if he spent the winter far from of Duluth, Minnesota. So they packed his bags and sent him by train to a logging camp in the North woods. A true story of courage, history, and the warm friendship between a city boy and a giant French-Canadian.

MIRETTE ON THE HIGH WIRE

BY EMILY ARNOLD MCCULLY

K-2 50 pages Putnam, 1992

One hundred years ago in a small boarding house in Paris, there appeared a stranger seeking solitude — the Great Bellini, the daredevil tightrope walker who has lost his confidence. In the weeks that follow, the innkeeper's daughter becomes enchanted with rope walking and is able to restore the man's lost confidence while becoming a star herself. Sequels: *Starring Mirette and Bellini*; and *Mirette & Bellini Cross Niagara Falls*.

MY BROTHER MARTIN BY CHRISTINE KING FARRIS; CHRIS SOENPIET, ILLUS.

Gr. 1-5 50 pages Simon & Schuster, 2005

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s sister shares her memories in this fine narrative, the events of one family's early years that molded, inspired, entertained, and sometimes frightened its three children, including one world-famous leader.

AN ORANGE FOR FRANKIE

BY PATRICIA POLACCO

K and up 40 pages Philomel, 2004

It is books like this that make Polacco one of the great picture book storytellers of our time, whose body of work should outlast most of her contemporaries. Based on the author/artist's family history, we start with a family of nine, Christmas eve, a father missing in a snowstorm, a boxcar of hungry and freezing hobos, one missing sweater, and a lost

Christmas orange — all of it neatly tied into a happy holiday ending.

THE POPPY SEEDS BY CLYDE ROBERT BULLA

K-2 34 pages Puffin, 1994

A selfish old man who scorns the friendship and needs of his neighbors is finally reached through the kindness of a Mexican child who attempts to plant poppies in the man's yard.

THE STORY OF RUBY BRIDGES

BY ROBERT COLES; GEORGE FORD, ILLUS.

Gr. 1-5 26 pages Scholastic, 1995

From the pen of a Pulitzer Prize-winning research psychiatrist comes the true story of six-year-old Ruby Bridges, one of four black children selected by a federal judge to integrate the New Orleans public schools in 1960. Escorted to the school doors by federal marshals, Ruby had to pass through a gauntlet of curses and spittle. Whispering prayers and backed by her parents' love, the child withstood the daily attacks without bitterness. Rarely can we teach American history using a six-year-old — here is a true exception.

A list of several hundred other titles can be found in the Treasury of Read-Alouds in *The Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease (Penguin)



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Jim Trelease's Web site:

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PICTURE BOOKS ABOUT CHILDREN OF COURAGE AND FORTITUDE

At this point, the child knew there was no one else left to save them.



14 READ-ALoud STORIES FOR PRIMARY GRADES

— FICTION AND
NONFICTION

COMPILED BY JIM TRELEASE

Author of the New York Times Bestseller
The Read-Aloud Handbook

A Note on the Availability of These Titles

NOWADAYS books stay in print only a few years, *especially* juvenile titles. But even an out-of-print (OP) title can be easily and freely borrowed from your local library (or, upon request, your library can borrow it from *other* libraries). If you wish to own the book, inexpensive used-copies (including OP) can be found at Web sites like bookfinder.com or Amazon. New copies (but not out OP) can be purchased at your local bookstore.

BRAVE IRENE BY WILLIAM STEIG
K-5 28 pages Farrar, 1986

When Irene's dressmaker mother falls ill and cannot deliver the duchess's gown for the ball, Irene shoulders the huge box and battles a winter storm to make the delivery.

A CHAIR FOR MY MOTHER
BY VERA B. WILLIAMS

K-5 50 pages Greenwillow, 1982

This is the first book in a trilogy of tender stories about a family of three women: Grandma, Mama, and daughter Rosa (all told in the first person by the child). In this book, they struggle to save their loose change (in a glass jar) in order to buy a chair for the child's mother—something she can collapse into after her waitressing job. Sequels: In *Something Special for Me*; and *Music, Music for Everyone*.

CROMWELL DIXON'S SKY-CYCLE
BY JOHN ABBOTT NEZ

Gr. 1-4 52 pages Putnam, 2009

The Wright Brothers initiated the Golden Age of Invention, and that ignited the

imagination of 14-year-old Cromwell Dixon, who began dismantling his bicycle to build an airship, powered by — what else — the remains of his bike. Fiction? Wrong. With his mother's help, Cromwell built it, rebuilt it when it burned, and then propelled it a mile high! At age 19 he was the first airplane pilot to cross the Rocky Mountains. Related book: *Marvelous Mattie* by Emily Arnold McCully.

A DAY'S WORK BY EVE BUNTING;
RONALD HIMLER, ILLUSTRATOR

K-4 50 pages Clarion, 1994

A young Mexican-American boy seeks work for his newly arrived grandfather who speaks no English. In persuading a man that his grandfather knows how to garden, the boy tells a small lie that ends up causing them twice as much work. The lesson in truthfulness is apparent, but so is the tender relationship of the child with the grandfather who needs help in a frightening new land.

EDDIE, HAROLD'S LITTLE BROTHER
ED KOCH, PAT KOCH THALER; JAMES WARHOLA, ILLUSTRATOR

Gr. 1-5 28 pages Putnam, 2005

Eddie idolized his older brother, not just because he was older but because he was the best athlete in the neighborhood. Everyone wanted Harold on their team. The one they didn't want was Eddie. Harold insisted Eddie be chosen for one side or the other but eventually even he tired of Eddie's clumsiness. There was one skill that Eddie did have—he could talk about almost anything. What follows is the event that led the never-lost-words Ed Koch to the mayor's office of NYC.

ERANDI'S BRAIDS BY ANTONIO HERNANDEZ MADRIGAL; TOMIE DEPAOLA, ILLUSTRATOR

PreS.-2 50 pages Putnam, 1999

It was once the custom for women in poor Mexican villages to sell their hair, which was then used for wigs and fancy embroidery. In this tale, Erandi's mother has decided to sell her hair in order to pay for a much-needed fishing net. The barber refuses, saying hers is too short, but that he would gladly take the child's braids. It is now up to the child.

HIGH AS A HAWK BY T. A. BARRON;
TED LEWIN, ILLUSTRATOR

Gr. 1-5 50 pages Philomel, 2004

Famed mountain guide Enos Mills successfully led the campaign to create the Rocky Mountain National Park. His friends and correspondents ran from Teddy Roosevelt and Kit Carson to Helen Keller and Booker T. Washington. But of the more than 250 trips he made as a guide to the top, the one he claimed as most memorable was the one in 1905 with a determined 8-year-old girl named Harriet Peters, the youngest ever. This is the true story of their memorable journey to 14,255 feet.

JOHNNY ON THE SPOT BY EDWARD SOREL
Gr. 1-4 28 pages Simon & Schuster, 1998

Young Johnny and his adult neighbor accidentally invent a radio that broadcasts events one day in advance. The conflict arises when Johnny is sworn to secrecy and forbidden to interfere with the future—even if he knows a calamity is about to occur. The tale is both adventure and morality tale.

MARVEN OF THE GREAT NORTH WOODS
BY KATHRYN LASKY; KEVIN HAWKES,
ILLUSTRATOR

K-4 56 pages Harcourt, 1997

In 1918, one of history's worst flu epidemics was sweeping across the world, killing tens of thousands. The Lasky family believed their ten-year-old son's chances of surviving