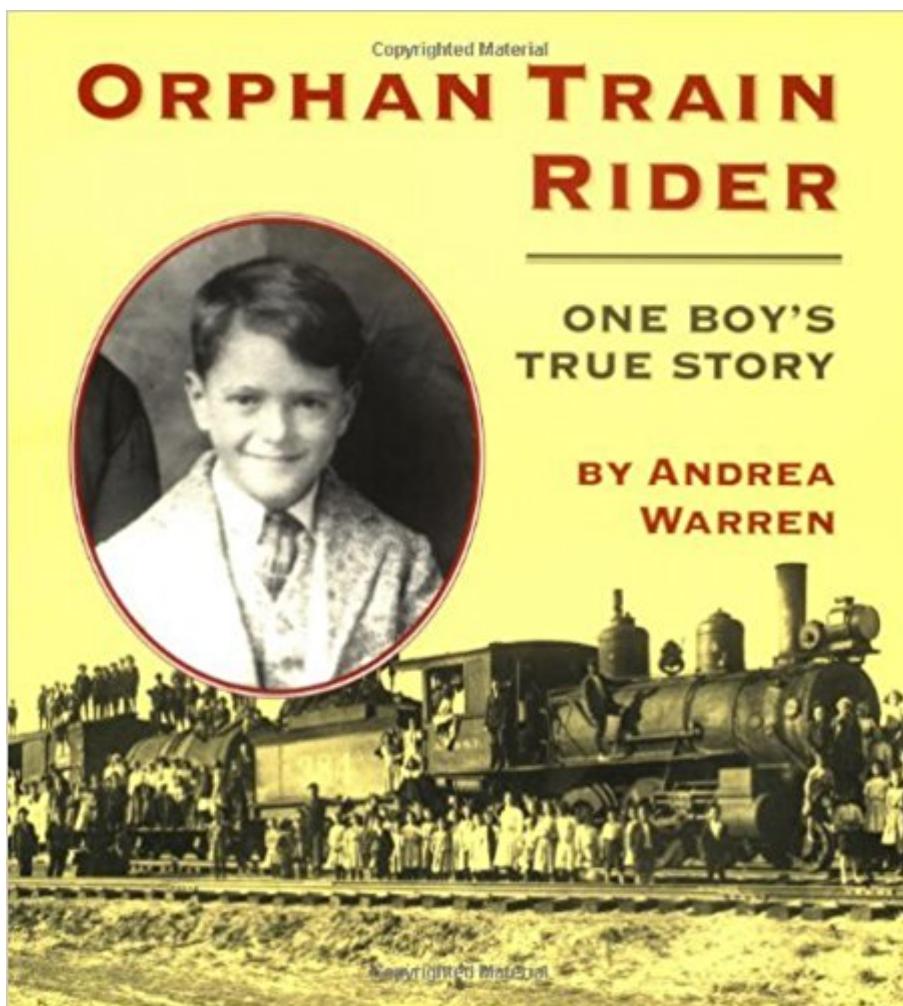


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Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story



Synopsis

Between 1854 and 1930, more than 200,000 orphaned or abandoned children were sent west on orphan trains to find new homes. Some were adopted by loving families; others were not as fortunate. In recent years, some of the riders have begun to share their stories. Andrea Warren alternates chapters about the history of the orphan trains with the story of Lee Nailling, who in 1926 rode an orphan train to Texas when he was nine years old.

Book Information

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Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

Customer Reviews

Grade 4-8?Between 1854 and 1930, more than 200,000 orphaned and abandoned children from the cities of the eastern seaboard were "placed out" to new homes and families in the midwest and western states. Warren's account of the "orphan-train" phenomena, and of one man's story of how it affected his life, is an excellent introduction to researching or discussing children-at-risk in an earlier generation. The book is clearly written and illustrated with numerous black-and-white photographs and reproductions. The chapters alternate information about the largest agency, the Children's Aid Society, and its history, with the story of Lee Nailling, from whom the author has gathered the facts of his own childhood journey to Texas and his eventual reunion, late in life, with some of his long-lost siblings. Human interest is skillfully interspersed with factual information to create a fascinating book about a social movement that predated today's foster homes, adoption agencies,

and homeless shelters. Annette R. Fry's *The Orphan Trains* (New Discovery, 1994) is written for the same age group and efficiently provides detailed information for research and reports. Eve Bunting's *Train to Somewhere* (Clarion, 1996), a picture book, tells the story for younger children. Together these books offer opportunities for discussion about the sometimes happy and sometimes misguided efforts to care for the orphaned and abandoned in our country's past. But if only one book can be acquired, Warren's title offers a wealth of information and is rich in human interest. It should be the primary purchase. Shirley Wilton, Ocean County College, Toms River, NJ
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Gr. 4^6. From 1854 to 1930, the orphan trains took homeless children from cities in the East to new homes in the West, the Midwest, and the South. In Warren's book, one man's memories of his childhood abandonment and adoption give a personal slant on the subject. Chapters telling the story of Lee Nailing, who took an orphan train west in 1926, alternate with chapters filling in background information about the trains and the experiences of other children who rode them to their destinies. Throughout the book, black-and-white photos show both the people and places in Nailing's story and the broader topic of the orphan train experience. Children will find this a good resource on an intriguing subject. Carolyn Phelan --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

This is a startling true story that should jar the minds of all people! In many ways this story shows some compassion of so many orphans in the U.S. yet it also shows the cruelty of how we treated (& in some ways still treat - in foster care) our children. The decisions of a few people can sway the justice of humanity in the world. This story tugs at my heart - very well done!

I thought it was very interesting, however, the author seemed to focus on the more successful orphan train riders. After reading other stories about the horrific treatment and conditions they had to endure just to survive, I think children were treated as commodities in most situations.

I was not aware of the Orphan Train. While visiting a Quilt Museum in Lincoln, Ne. last year, I heard another visitor talk about her experience in Concordia, Ka. with another orphan. I wanted to learn more about their history. Why is there not more information about this part of our history and it isn't taught in schools? With the current influx of underage children coming across the Southern borders, will we see the same thing happen again? I really enjoyed the book and all the facts.

It was surprising to gain the knowledge of those practices in the United States during the earlier years

Loved this book! Bought it for my granddaughters, but couldn't resist reading it myself. Good for young readers, especially in this day & age. It's quite humbling. Much heart/felt admiration for the boy taking care of his baby brother all those yrs., thru such adverse conditions. Was a bit teary-eyed when I saw the pic of the all reunited.

An almost forgotten time, difficult for hundreds of children in America!

This was a great "little" book with many interesting facts I didn't know. It captivated me because of the personal account of one of the children. It would be a good resource book for a school report. I had purchased it with audible capabilities to listen for a trip from Calif to Washington and it was done in under 1 1/2 hrs.

My husband ordered this book; he said it was very good. We have a friend whose husband's family adopted one of the orphans. Also, we had been to a program where a speaker told about the Orphan Train with pictures. There were also three women there whose families had adopted some of the orphans. And one of the women there was the daughter of one of the adopted orphans. Another woman there said the orphan they were connected with still kept in touch with the family.

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