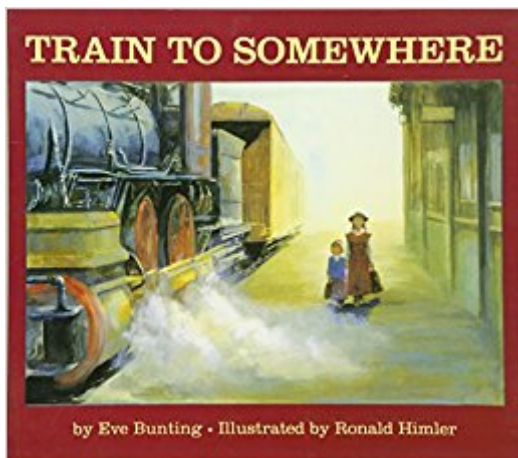


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# Train To Somewhere



## Synopsis

Marianne, heading west with fourteen other children on an Orphan Train, is sure her mother will show up at one of the stations along the way. When her mother left Marianne at the orphanage, hadn't she promised she'd come for her after making a new life in the West? Stop after stop goes by, and there's no sign of her mother in the crowds that come to look over the children. No one shows any interest in adopting shy, plain Marianne, either. But that's all right: She has to be free for her mother to claim her. Then the train pulls into its final stop, a town called Somewhere . . .

## Book Information

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (April 17, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0618040315

ISBN-13: 978-0618040315

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 0.1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 44 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #32,760 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Homelessness & Poverty](#) #21 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Adoption](#) #41 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s](#)

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Inspired by a little-known chapter of American history, this characteristically incisive collaboration from Bunting and Himler (*Someday a Tree*, see p. 90; *Fly Away Home*) imagines a journey on one of the many "Orphan Trains" that, between the mid-1850s and the late 1920s, brought children from New York City orphanages to adoptive families in the West. The narrator of this finely crafted, heart-wrenching story is Marianne, a plain girl secretly dreaming of being reunited with her own mother, who promised to return for Marianne after making a new life for them in the West. Bunting ably weaves the girl's hopes and anxieties into her perceptive account of how each of Marianne's 13 companions is chosen for adoption at the various train stations while she futilely searches the crowd for her mother. Finally only Marianne remains. In the tale's optimistic ending, Marianne finds

a new family in Somewhere, Iowa, the train's last stop. Here an elderly couple, who clearly had planned on adopting a boy, take Marianne in, with ultimately comforting, resonant words: "Sometimes what you get turns out to be better than what you wanted in the first place." Himler's watercolor and gouache paintings offer polished portraits of the period as they convey the plot's considerable emotion. Like Bunting's text, his art is at once sobering and uplifting-and assuredly memorable. Ages 5-8. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 2-4?From the mid-19th century until after World War I, thousands of homeless "orphans" were sent West by charitable agencies to find homes with families seeking workers, children to adopt, or mother's helpers. In telling the story of one child, Bunting encapsulates the fears and sometimes happy endings of those fateful trips. Marianne is among the oldest and least attractive of the 14 children sent on a train to the Midwest, and she starts the journey with hopes that her mother will be waiting at one of the stops. At each station, papers are signed and children are placed, until only Marianne remains when the last town of Somewhere is reached. Only an elderly couple, hoping for a boy, is waiting there. They look kindly at Marianne, and the grandmotherly wife sums up the story's theme when she remarks that "Sometimes what you get turns out to be better than what you wanted in the first place." By making this slice of American history into an appealing tale, Bunting offers an opportunity to compare present-day social policies with those of times past. The book is timely yet universal in showing the desire of every child for a loving family. Himler's full-page, bordered paintings portray the people and towns in warm colors and softly blended brush strokes. Beyond this gentle story lie the social issues of our own day.?Shirley Wilton, Ocean County College, Toms River, Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Beautiful story and decidedly my favorite Childrens book of all time. I stumbled upon this at our local library - admittedly picking it up because I thought it was about trains. Major, wonderful surprise. On first reading, I couldn't make it through page ten without tears - my voice catching in my throat. I quickly bought three copies and will continue to give this precious book as gifts. The author brings you directly onto the train seat with the characters - feeling the dashed hope of the main character as she seeks her mother at each station. I am so glad this book found me and have read it to my boys many times.

I love this historical fiction story! The story is about Marianne, a little girl who's mother dropped her off at an orphanage and promised to come back and get her. Marianne and 14 other kids board the train and hope to find their family or someone to adopt them at all the stops. You feel sad for Marianne's situation and also feel as you are reading the story and her mother isn't at each stop, a sense of nervousness, hoping that her mother will show up or that someone will adopt her. True that this is a story with sad elements, but it's a great way to showcase to children that there are many children who are less fortunate than them and that there are children who don't have families like they do. It's a great reality check for kids. Sadly, these orphan trains were reality many years ago and the author does a fantastic job of bringing this concept to the modern age of children and making it understandable. Be prepared for some tough questions from kids as they try to understand how this could happen to other kids. The book is very well written and the illustrations capture that time period so well. The concept is more suited to older children between the ages of 8 and 12.

Charmingly illustrated book based on true stories of the Orphan Trains. Great book for children today to learn to understand something of our history without "preachiness," and with a positive ending. Good book to use to discuss what is an orphan and why the Trains were needed, as well as the fact that not all of the orphan stories had a good ending. Some were mistreated. Some orphans had to be relocated, and some returned to the orphanages. Age seemed to be a factor, too. So glad to have this book!

Very informative book

This is such a good picture book.

Beautiful story about 14 children that rode the orphan train. (fiction). My students really enjoyed this story and had lots of questions following.

I loved this book very much! I read it aloud to my middle school students, and they were surprised to learn that orphans were transported across the country and sent to live with families who got to select an orphan to adopt when the train stopped in their town. My students felt a lot of empathy for the main character and expressed their concern for her. I recommend this book!

it was very informative for kids on not all kids have family and house to live in. these days kids are so demanding and expecting to have every thing they desire. this book shows there are/were many kids that don't even have a house to live with their families.

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