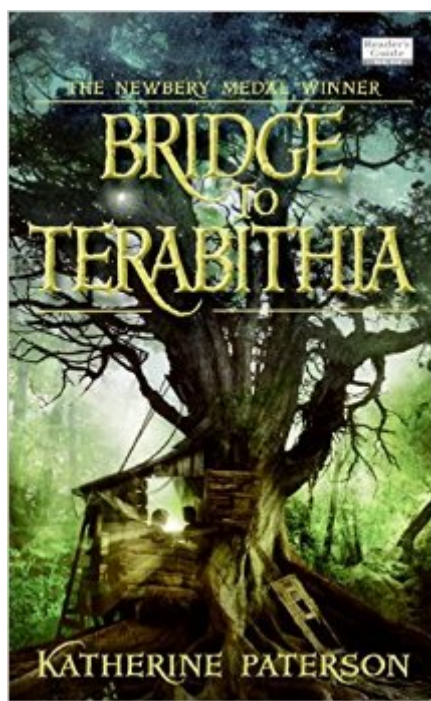


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Bridge To Terabithia



Synopsis

This Newbery Medal-winning novel by bestselling author Katherine Paterson is a modern classic of friendship and loss. Jess Aarons has been practicing all summer so he can be the fastest runner in the fifth grade. And he almost is, until the new girl in school, Leslie Burke, outpaces him. The two become fast friends and spend most days in the woods behind Leslie's house, where they invent an enchanted land called Terabithia. One morning, Leslie goes to Terabithia without Jess and a tragedy occurs. It will take the love of his family and the strength that Leslie has given him for Jess to be able to deal with his grief. In addition to being a Newbery Medal winner, *Bridge to Terabithia* was also named an ALA Notable Children's Book and has become a touchstone of children's literature, as have many of Katherine Paterson's other novels, including *The Great Gilly Hopkins* and *Jacob Have I Loved*. Supports the Common Core State Standards

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Leslie was more than his friend; she was his other, more exciting, self, his way to Terabithia and all the worlds beyond. -*Bridge to Terabithia* Okay, before I make this unmanly confession, let me first state in my own defense that I have two small children and I was listening to the conclusion of this book at a very early hour, before I'd even had breakfast to fortify me for the day. That said, I'll now acknowledge that I very nearly started sobbing... In 1976, Katherine Paterson's son David was 8 years old when his friend, Lisa Hill, was struck by lightning and killed. A year later *Bridge to Terabithia* was published, winning a Newbery Medal and becoming, if such a thing is possible, an

instant classic. Ms Paterson drew upon this personal tragedy to create the story of a boy, Jess Aarons, and a girl, Leslie Burke, in rural Virginia, who become the best of friends. Jess is the middle child, and only son, of a reticent father, who struggles to earn a living. Leslie is the daughter, and only child, of two successful writers who have moved to the country, next door to the Aarons, for lifestyle reasons. The friendship between the two kids is hesitant at first, particularly after Leslie usurps Jess's title as the fastest runner in their 5th grade class at Lark Creek Elementary. But both have some trouble fitting in with their peers, Jess because of his interest in Art, Leslie because of her scholastic ability and her parents' very 70s social attitudes (like not having a TV), and this shared awkwardness gives them a unique bond. Leslie creates an imaginary kingdom called Terabithia for them to rule over, accessible only by a rope swing over a local creek. The imaginary adventures they share there and a series of incidents at school bring the two closer and closer together. But then an ugly reality intrudes upon their idyllic world and the various characters are forced to deal with a tragic death. To say more might ruin the story, so let's leave it at that.

I understand that the use of this book in classrooms is frequently challenged by parents. If the reason for this is that they feel that the central crisis of the book may be too intense for children, I can sympathize with their feeling. But it seems like an intensity that is well worth their children's while. Ms Paterson handles the situation quite beautifully and affords a real opportunity for parents to discuss the matter of death with their kids, a topic which most families hopefully haven't much had to cope with. Reading the book is a difficult emotional experience, but better to first confront these emotions in a controlled fictional setting and begin to learn how to deal with them, than to remain totally sheltered and have to deal with them, completely unprepared, when the tragedy is real. GRADE : A

While I respect parents looking out for their children, I think someone should listen up for a moment and take note of one fact. While many children complain that this book is "boring", we must remember that most fifth-grade children call any book that they did not choose for themselves as boring. In this day and age, children are not satisfied with books, as they require a slightly longer attention span than the television set. Those claims have now been tossed out the window. Now... parents. Sometimes mild censoring of books is understandable. Children should not read books with explicit sex scenes, mostly because they wouldn't understand what's going on. Children should probably not read books like "Mein Kampf" and get the impression that this is right. However, are we now to declare such simple and basic concepts as friendship and death as "inappropriate for children"? Isn't it the opposite? These books prepare children for the inevitable. Sometimes

accidents happen. Grandparents, parents, family, and friends can all die. Fifth graders know what "death" means. Are we to shelter them forever? Of course not. I read this book in fifth or fourth grade, and I loved it. I started crying, and crying. This book made me feel so many emotions, and that's what the purpose of a really good book is. Should we all read action-packed books with no feeling? Of course not! This portrays friendship and the loss of a friend in such a clear, solemn way. We see how Jesse (the main character) struggles to deal with this. He's only a kid, after all. We feel it all - without actually going through that pain. Regarding other claims about this book that it is not for children, let us remember one thing. These are children in the book. They think like children. They act like children. Their friendships and ties and feelings are those of children. Adults and older teens tend to find this book "boring". It is not intended for adults, but for kids to read and grow. I read this as a kid, and I loved it. I read it today, and I love it. It's bound to bring tears to your eyes and is so powerful and wonderful every time you read it. Every child reader will love and appreciate this book.

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