



Shackleton's Journey

William Grill

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Winner of the 2015 Kate Greenaway Medal

A New York Times Best Illustrated Book of 2014

Best Children's Book of 2014, Wall Street Journal

Best Children's Book of 2014, Brain Pickings

A 2015 USBBY Outstanding International Book

Young, up-and-coming illustrator William Grill weaves a detailed visual narrative of Shackleton's journey to Antarctica.

Grill's beautiful use of colored pencils and vibrant hues effortlessly evokes the adventure and excitement that surrounded the expedition. His impeccably researched drawings, rich with detail, fastidiously reproduce the minutiae of the expedition.

Children will love examining the diagrams of the peculiar provisions and the individual drawings of each sled dog and packhorse. This book takes the academic and historical information behind the expedition and reinterprets it for a young audience.

Shackleton's Journey Details

Date : Published February 18th 2014 by Flying Eye Books (first published January 1st 2014)

ISBN : 9781909263109

Author : William Grill

Format : Hardcover 80 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Childrens, Picture Books, History, Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Adventure, Travel, Historical, Biography, Comics

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From Reader Review Shackleton's Journey for online ebook

Susan says

This is a wonderful book, showing the epic journey of how Ernest Shackleton and his team managed to cross the frozen heart of Antarctica. Winner of the AOI Illustration New Talent Award Winner and a New York Times Best Illustrated Book, this is something a little special and will appeal to slightly older children (7+ would be my suggestion), especially those interested in non-fiction. This is a very visual read – there is only a small amount of text compared to the illustrations, sometimes only a paragraph or two on each page, so it is ideal for reluctant readers. The illustrations help the reader visualise the sheer expanse of snow and ice, as well as the equipment needed.

The book begins with a potted history of who Shackleton was. As a member of Captain Scott's famous Discovery expedition (1901-1904) he was always drawn to the unexplored parts of the world. However, once Amundsen reached the South Pole ahead of Scott, he felt that the only challenge left was a crossing of the Antarctic continent, from sea to sea and via the Pole. This is the story of how Shackleton and his crew set out in 1914 to make that expedition.

There are pictures of everything in this book – from every member of the crew, all the dogs, the ship Endurance, all the equipment, maps and a thrilling explanation of everything that happened. If your child has any interest in exploring, factual books or just beautifully illustrated reads, then this has much to explore within its pages. A lovely edition to any child's bookshelf.

Katie Handford says

This is a fabulous retelling of Shackleton's Journey along with his crew on the Endurance, a rightly named ship. The book tells of one man's journey to save not only to save himself, but to save his entire crew. Grill perfectly captures the journey Shackleton endures with both words and wonderful illustrations and diagrams. A book that could be used throughout Ks2 and inspire children to strive to achieve that dreams and ambitions.

Hilary says

William Grills illustrations are wonderful, I can't fault them, I love their soft, carefree qualities and the well designed pages. I love the use of a couple of well chosen colours. This story covers Shackleton's expedition to Antarctica. My son would have loved this book when he was younger, he would have loved the details of the expedition, the maps, the provision and dog details, although my daughter loved the illustrations she couldn't see the point of the expedition and didn't think it right that the dogs should be taken into danger without being able to consent to this expedition.

Ksenia (vaenn) says

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Elena says

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Anna says

Finally! Yes! Finished.

80 pages, that took me more than 2 weeks to read. That's insane.

Okay, rant aside, the book was good. Illustrations are superb, but the text felt lacking and a bit rushed.

Kalpana Clarke says

What an inspiring historical story; courage in the face of continuous immense danger, adventure and bravery. The illustrations were simply drawn but effective; William has used the same colour format throughout the book- blue and white for the seas and yellows and browns for the men, dogs and the ships. The book itself is probably suitable for Year 6 children, since it does contain a lot of factual information but each topic is set out under different sub- headings, for instance, Endurance, Weddell Sea, Ocean camp and Escaping the ice, so specific information is easy to find. Also included are maps of the journey. Must read!

Dov Zeller says

This is a big, beautiful 70 page non-fiction sequential-art plus text exploration of Shackleton's unsuccessful journey of 1916-17. The ship was called Endurance and it endured a lot, but at a certain point, the ice flexed its muscles and that was that. The men, however, endured, and this book details their adventure.

While this book seems great for middle-graders, and maybe even younger, the text is very small and might be hard for younger kids to read and there is something sophisticated and intense about the organization and illustration. The book does its best, on the other hand, to remain light-hearted, in the way the leaders did in order to keep the crew from despairing.

Very early on in the book (just after "Funding and Recruitment") Grill introduces readers to the crew of the ship and on the next page, the dogs (which I hope to read more about.)

Here is a text excerpt.

“In 1914, a cargo of 99 dogs was sent from Canada to London. Of these, 69 were chosen for the expedition. Shackleton and the crew gave them all names, and you may notice that some are named after famous people and crew members.

“The dogs came from a mongrel mixture of breeds, including Newfoundlands, St. Bernards, Eskimo dogs, Wolfhounds and wolves. Cross-breeding the dogs mean that they were very strong and had qualities such as a thick coat or a good temperament. The average weight of each dog was 100 lbs!

“They included:

“Alti, Amundsen, Blackie, Bob, Bo’sun, Bristol, Brownie, Buller, Bummer, Caruso, Chips, Dismal, Elliott, Fluff, Gruss, Hackenschmidt, Hercules, Jamie, Jasper, Jerry, Judge, Luke, Lupoid, Mack, Martin, Mercury, Noel, Paddy, Peter, Rodger, Roy, Rufus, Rugby, Sadie, Sailor, Saint, Sally, Sammy, Samson, Sandy, Satan, Solider, Songster Sooty, Spider, Split Up, Spotty, Steamer, Steward, Stumps, Sub, Sue, Surly, Swanker, Sweep, Tim, Upton, Wallaby, Wolf...”

There is a lot of great, interesting details in this book, and I appreciate the way illustrations vary from technical in nature (for example, a full page analysis of the ship) to dramatically narrative to naturally descriptive, to some combination of two or more of these.

I'm very glad I got this one out of the library and look forward to reading "The Wolves of Currumpaw" by the same author.

Evgeniya says

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Mrs G says

Loved this book. Can't wait to use it to inspire our next topic in Year 5.

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L.H. Johnson says

This is craft, this book.

It's hard to know where to begin with Grill's masterpiece; whether to talk about the palette of clear and clean colours, or his use of space on the page and that conscious decision to let the visuals work for his story to their utmost, or the vivid little marks of humanity dotted in each scene - the men dotted across the white expanse of the page, or huddled together for warmth under the curve of a broken up boat held together by oil paints.

Perhaps it's best to start with the facts: Shackleton's Journey details one of the expeditions of Ernest Shackleton to the Arctic. Grill's love and knowledge of his topic shines in his awareness of the detail and the human nuances he gives every illustration. The crew of the expedition range one page, looking out at us,

with captions ranging from Able Seaman through to Stowaway. (A quick sidebar: more stories on stowaways please, I am intrigued so much by them).

Grill follows this journey from start to end and details every step of it with such graceful and poetic illustrations, that this book starts to ache with perfection. I hope that Shackleton's Journey endures for a long while and becomes considered as a classic alongside some of the great canonical titles of children's literature. It's already stating its case for classic status with ease; spreads of the ice-floe breaking up swallow the page with their magnitude, dwarfing the expedition with their immense, jaw-dropping scale, whilst other spreads speak of a warmth and humour that pays tribute to the bravery of these men. This in particular is a vital touch. (Google: Frank Hurley and Endurance to see some of the photographs from the expedition - they're almost unreal).

Shackleton's Journey is perfect, really, and it is one of those books that feels a little bit like a landmark point for the sector. I am in love.

Marysya Rudskaya says

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Allie says

Beautiful and clear book about Ernest Shackleton's ill-fated attempt to cross Antarctica. Yikes. I will stick to dry land, thank you very much.

I am totally unfamiliar with William Grill, but the cover and spine caught my eye. The art throughout is so so great, it reminds me a bit of The Hundred Dresses. I think it's colored pencil, but I couldn't find that information anywhere in the book so I don't know! There is quite a bit of text, but it occurs on the page in such a way that it's never overwhelming.

This book is up there with World Without Fish as a kid's non-fiction book I would recommend. It's not for kid-research, but more for fun reading. Also I'm going to check out Nick Bertozi's Shackleton: Antarctic Odyssey and the PBS documentary Chasing Shackleton.
