

Book Backdrops: Connecting Literature and Primary Sources

Cover Image

LOOK INSIDE! TO SOMEWHERE

Title: Train To Somewhere

Author: Eve Bunting

Grade Level(s): 2-4

Topic/Theme: From the mid 1850s till the late 1920s an estimated 100.000 homeless children in New York City were sent on 'Orphan Trains" to the New West to be adopted. This is the fictional tale of one young girl named Marianne looking at each stop along the way for the mother who left her at the orphanage and eventually for the parents that would adopt her.

Book Type: historical fiction

Setting and Time Period: Train Traveling west from New York City in the late 1800s

Subjects:

Orphan trains Migration

19th Century

Primary	Source	Thumbi	aail
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Burlington Route

Caption **Publication Information Book Notes**

URL



Title: Burlington Route

Created/Published: Chicago, 1892.

Summary: Map of the United States showing relief by hachures, drainage, cities and towns, state and county boundaries, time zones, and the railroad network with main lines emphasized.

Book Connection: This would show the students possible train routes the orphans at this time would have traveled.

http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3701p.rr00 3570



Title: The late Charles L. Brace of New York http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/20027

Date Created/Published: 1890.

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Book Connection: Who takes care of children that are orphaned? This man founded the Children's Aide Society, which is like our Children and Youth Services today. Charles Loring Brace of the Children's Aid Society in New York hoped to place the orphans in caring homes when he had them sent West on trains.



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This ad appeared in the Tecumseh Chieftain, July 8, 1893. Many different child-sites/mnh/orphans/ welfare organizations placed out children in foster homes across the Midwest. An estimated six to seven thousand youngsters rode orphan trains to Nebraska.

http://www.nebraskahistory.org/

Book Connection: Journal Entry: How do you think the orphan children at this time felt about being placed-out far from the home they knew?



Title: "The conductor's delight" Date Created/Published: c1909. **Summary:** Railroad conductor, seated in passenger car, surrounded by small children.

http://www.loc.gov/picture s/item/95512709/

Book Connection: After viewing the picture students will do a journal entry comparing and contrasting what children of the late 1800s early 1900s did while traveling vs what children do today when traveling.



Title: "The child at your door" 400,000 orphans starving, no state aid available-Campaign for \$30,000,000.

Date Created/Published: N[ew] Y[ork]: American Lithographic Co., [1917] **Summary:** Poster showing a child wearing a scarf on her head.

http://www.loc.gov/pictures/ite m/2002719422/

Book Connection: Build background knowledge by viewing the picture and predicting who is caring for these children. This could set the scene for why children were placed on "orphan trains".



Title: The trains that come, and the trains that go

Date Created/Published: 1919.

Summary: Pennsylvania Railroad Station,

Philadelphia, Pa.

Book Connection: This is how orphans traveled in the story from New York to the West. Discuss with a partner how these children might feel and what they might say to themselves to help with the anxiety of facing new people and places. Would you like to travel somewhere by train? Where? http://www.loc.gov/pictures/ite m/2003665395/



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Title: Great Northern Railway locomotive, New York World's Fair, New York City Date Created/Published: [1939] **Summary:** Photograph shows the refurbished locomotive "William Crooks" (manufactured 1861) with tender and cars. now in the St. Louis County Historical Society. (Source: J. Wickre, 2002)

Book Connection: The orphans traveled by train. Compare and contrast how traveling today would be different for orphans.

http://www.loc.gov/pictures/ite m/93500606/

Title: Penn. Station, New York City Date Created/Published: c1920. Summary: Penn Station, NYC

http://www.loc.gov/pictures/ite m/2003677433/

Book Connection: This train station is similar to one the children in the story departed from. What do you think they could hear, feel, and smell as they sat waiting for the train to depart? How would these senses be different for a child today when traveling?

Title: NY Foundling asylum-sister Irene and www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002

Date created/published: 1880

Summary: orphans placed in orphanages in New York in the 1880's

Book connection: Growing up in an orphanage would be very different for a child. Write about some of these differences and how they might effect the child as an adult.

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Title: St. Mary's Orphanage/ Washington,

Created/Published: between 1910 and 1935 **Summary:** Orphanages of the 1900's

Book Connection: Imagine living in an orphanage. Work with a group of three or four classmates to create a timeline or daily schedule that the children living here might follow each day.

www.loc.gov/pictures/item/npc2 008011751/

Created by: Deborah L. Lubich Last Updated: September 2011