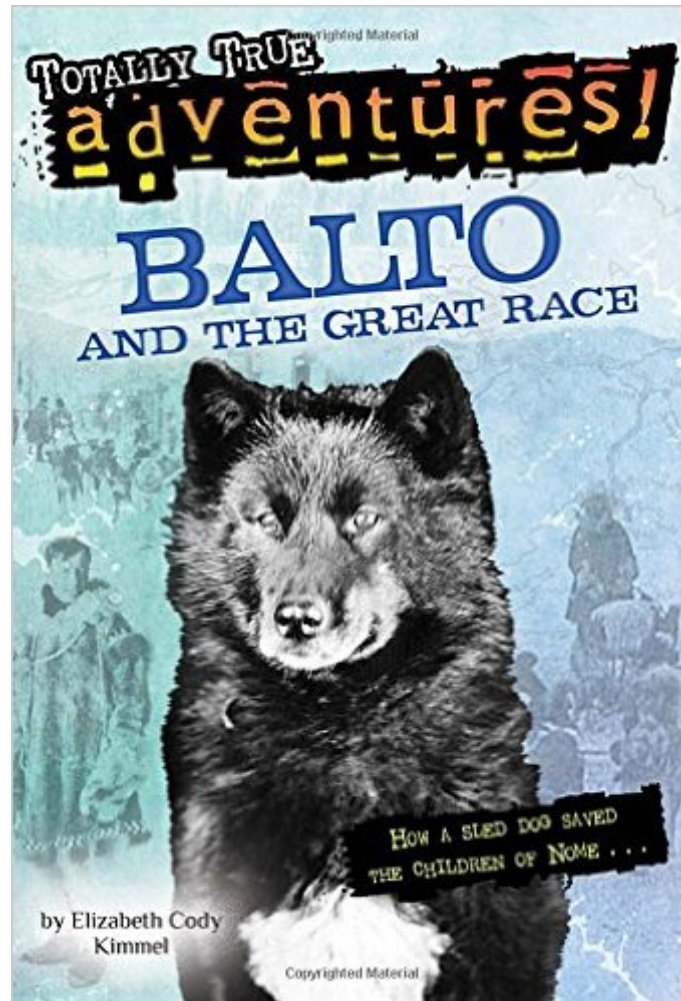


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# Balto And The Great Race (Stepping Stone)



## Synopsis

Balto has a quiet life as a sled dog "until tragedy strikes. Dozens of children in Nome become sick with diphtheria. Without antitoxin serum, they will perish" and the closest supply is 650 miles away! The only way to get the serum to Nome is by sled, but can the dogs deliver it in time? Heading bravely into a brutal blizzard, Balto leads the race for life. A Kansas City Children's Book Award for Grades 1-3

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 870L (What's this?)

Series: A Stepping Stone Book(TM)

Paperback: 112 pages

Publisher: Random House Books for Young Readers; 1st Printing edition (December 21, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0679891986

ISBN-13: 978-0679891987

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.2 x 7.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (39 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #126,340 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #22 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Polar Regions #46 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > State & Local #787 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Dogs

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

## Customer Reviews

This is an excellent book if you are interested in the Iditarod race in Alaska. The book helps young children understand the importance of perseverance and is a great introduction to history for the very young (6-8). A true story that inspires people to understand the bond between animals and people.

We purchased this book after seeing the real Balto (courtesy of the art of taxidermy) at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Our quest in Northeast Ohio, where Balto enjoyed his senior years, was prompted by my seven year-old daughter's love-affair with the animated film about this

dog, who navigated a lost sled team carrying life-saving medicine through Alaska in 1925. I hereby confess publicly that, after myself reading the book, which is aimed at the 9 year-old set, I cried, much as I had done 35 years before after reading "Lassie Come Home." This account, however, is much more compelling than "Lassie" or "Old Yeller," because it entirely factual (possibly excepting the subjective thoughts imputed to the protagonist). The author did her homework researching this story about a sled dog who was just one of the pack facing poor odds against daunting weather and unrequiting expanses of blinding snow and ice. When the alpha dog loses the trail, and another refuses to lead, the team turns to Balto to bring them and their cargo safely to rest in Nome. Perhaps Balto deserves an authentic, grown-up biography, but this one will serve in the meantime. It appears to be the definitive account.

If you love the Iditarod and you want your children (or children you're fond of) to be introduced to this great race, the story of Balto and the Great Race by Elizabeth Cody Kimmel is a good place to start, beginning with the cover illustration by Nora Kræmer. This book is a Stepping Stones chapter book with black and white illustrations throughout. At the beginning of the book is a map of Alaska showing the Iditarod railroad and dogsled trail, along with some illustrations depicting the basic story of this great race against time to get much-needed diphtheria serum to Nome in 1925. Balto is a Siberian husky born to run, and to lead. He guided his musher, Gunnar Kaasen, into Nome on the final leg of the journey, when only this magnificent dog could sense the way through a terrible, deadly blizzard with no trail to follow and wind at such strength it tossed Kaasen and dogsled into the air, almost losing their precious cargo. A short time before this near disaster, Balto saved the team from going through the ice to certain death. His instincts were in the realm of the supernatural and his devotion to the task at hand human in awareness. It states on the back cover that this book is for children in grades 1-3. As the Cleveland Museum of Natural History states on the same back cover, "Balto's story is one of courage, cooperation and inspiration, and personal sacrifice for the greater good." Carolyn Rowe Hill

Just so you'd know, this book is not denouncing Togo. It is merely telling Balto's side of the story. And it is a courageous one that deserves to be well-known. There. One day, a serious diphtheria epidemic breaks out in Nome. Sled dogs are selected to deliver serum to the town before time runs out. Will they succeed? This compelling book tells the story of Balto's brave and great contribution to this race (he never tried to claim all the credit!), and I would recommend it even to Leonhard Seppala, so he would stop despising Balto, but sadly, he is now dead.

This is a really interesting book. I am currently reading it with a group of my fourth graders. The vocabulary is difficult for them, but it is well-written. It is an exciting read. The chapters are short, which is good for my squirrely readers. Teachers would benefit from checking out "Teachers Pay Teachers" for some of the units our fellow colleagues have put together to coincide with the reading of this book.

This book was read by a third grade reading group. It was a good introduction to the Iditarod sled race held annually in Alaska. However, after doing more research and reading, the Balto story is more of a folk tale.....since other dogs also played a part in the historical race to deliver diphtheria serum so many years ago.

I take my Therapy dog "Brandy" to Puppy Pals at a local school. Kindergarten through 2nd or 3rd grade children read to all our dogs one on one. This encourages them to read more. Purchased "Balto and the Great Race" several years ago to read to a 2nd grade class with our dog "Brandy" on Dr. Seuss Birthday & all the children loved it.. Then I read the same book to our 6 yr old Granddaughter, who also loved it. She took it home with her when we last saw her..

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