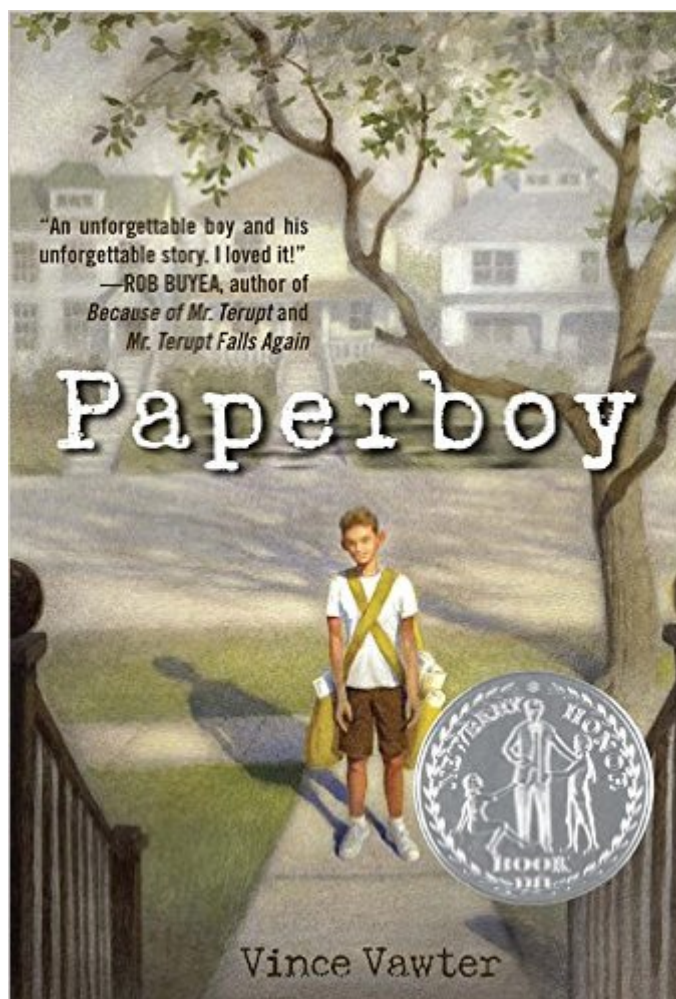


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# Paperboy



## Synopsis

"Reminiscent of *To Kill a Mockingbird*." —Booklist, Starred — "An unforgettable boy and his unforgettable story. I loved it!" —ROB BUYEA, author of *Because of Mr. Terpump and Mr. Terpump Falls Again* — This Newbery Honor winner is perfect for fans of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The King's Speech*, and *The Help*. A boy who stutters comes of age in the segregated South, during the summer that changes his life. — Little Man throws the meanest fastball in town. But talking is a whole different ball game. He can barely say a word without stuttering — not even his own name. So when he takes over his best friend's paper route for the month of July, he's not exactly looking forward to interacting with the customers. But it's the neighborhood junkman, a bully and thief, who stirs up real trouble in Little Man's life. — A Newbery Honor Award Winner An ALA-ALSC Notable Children's Book An IRA Children's and Young Adults' Choice An IRA Teachers' Choice A Bank Street College of Education Best Book of the Year A National Parenting Publications Award Honor Book A BookPage Best Children's Book An ABC News Voices Pick A Junior Library Guild Selection An ALA-ALSC Notable Children's Recording An ALA-YALSA Amazing Audiobook A Mississippi Magnolia State Award List Selection — Vawter's characterization of Little Man feels deeply authentic, with . . . his fierce desire to be somebody instead of just a kid who couldn't talk right. — "The Washington Post — Paperboy offers a penetrating look at both the mystery and the daily frustrations of stuttering. People of all ages will appreciate this positive and universal story. — Jane Fraser, president of the Stuttering Foundation of America — "A tense, memorable story. — Publishers Weekly, Starred — "An engaging and heartfelt presentation that never whitewashes the difficult time and situation as Little Man comes of age. — Kirkus Reviews — "Vawter portrays a protagonist so true to a disability that one cannot help but empathize with the difficult world of a stutterer. — School Library Journal

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 940L (What's this?)

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Yearling; Reprint edition (December 23, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 030793151X

ISBN-13: 978-0307931511

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.6 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (243 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #6,760 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s](#) #56 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Parents](#) #74 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Self-Esteem & Self-Respect](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Paperboy is a coming-of-age novel. It takes place in 1959 and focuses on a young boy with a huge problem. He stutters. And believe me, when you stutter, nothing else much matters. The majority of your being is focused on trying to be "normal." Now, before you start throwing things at a virtual me because of my review title, I've had a stutter since I was in elementary school -- this was back in the late 1970s. One important technique that I used -- just like in Paperboy -- was to place a soft "hiss" before difficult words (I was more a "blocker" than a "stutterer"). Book, because of the hard B sound, would cause my mouth to freeze up (like a "closed fist", says the main character in Paperboy) and putting a soft "s" sound in front of it allowed me to force the word out. If the hiss didn't work, I'd often change the word entirely -- another technique often used by stutterers. For example, using the word "Story" instead of "Book." Story, after all, starts with a soft S sound. Much easier! (And much less panic provoking!) Like Little Man (the main character's nickname in the book -- and nicknames are important because they often take the place of hard-to-pronounce real names), I was in speech therapy and learned many ways to compensate for my stutter, though if I was faced with reading out loud (darned teachers who loved round-Robin reading), giving speeches, or talking to people in general, I would often panic. Freeze up. And my speech problem would be all the more severe. Reading this book was almost reading about my own life. No, I didn't play baseball or deliver papers, but I could relate to every single stuttering-related issue faced by Little Man.

A strong setting takes a run of the mill novel and raises it up. This novel is aptly titled, because in reading it, one truly gets what it's like to be a paperboy. The boy (unnamed throughout most of the novel) is taking over his friend's paper route while he's away for the summer, so as he learns the ropes, so does the reader. However, this paperboy has to struggle with something that others probably do not -- his stutter. So talking to the customers and asking for payment is a

challenge. However, at 11, he's at the time in his life when he's going from being a little boy to entering into adolescence which brings more awkwardness, but also more determination and pride. He already knows that he's one of the best baseball players around, but he wants to overcome the barriers that stuttering has put in his way. The other strong setting is the place -- 1959 Memphis. That means that while his parents go out to dinner parties, he is cared for by his African American housekeeper/nanny Mam (it seems as if 50's housewives did a lot of socializing, but perhaps I'm wrong). Mam gives him confidence. A customer on his route who takes the time to talk, listen, and ask questions also helps him figure out who he wants to be. The novel is great on so many levels -- a great cover, a great premise, lots of heart -- that by the time I got to the end, I forgot the bang that started it all. The first sentence: "I'm typing about the stabbing for a good reason. I can't talk. Without stuttering." What a hook! One can't forget that, but the story diverged from that event immediately, only coming back around to it in the end. CONTENT NOTE: I would say this is a book for older middle grade readers, at least 5th and up. There is some swearing.

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