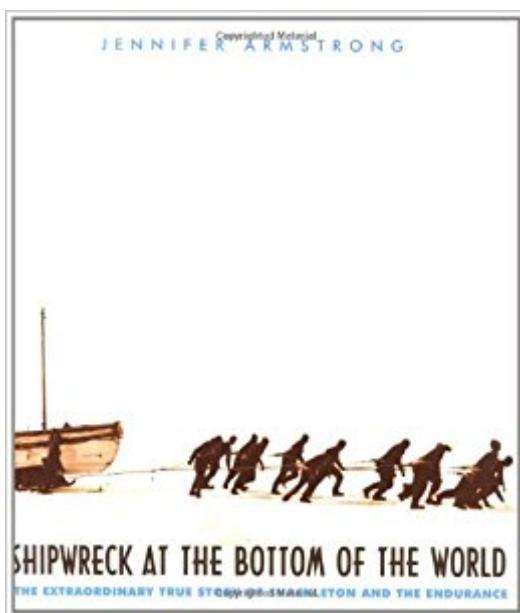


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Shipwreck At The Bottom Of The World: The Extraordinary True Story Of Shackleton And The Endurance



Synopsis

The harrowing story of the ill-fated Endurance, now in paperback. In August 1914, Ernest Shackleton and 27 men sailed from England in an attempt to become the first team of explorers to cross Antarctica from one side to the other. Five months later and still 100 miles from land, their ship, Endurance, became trapped in ice. The expedition survived another five months camping on ice floes, followed by a perilous journey through stormy seas to remote and unvisited Elephant Island. In a dramatic climax to this amazing survival story, Shackleton and five others navigated 800 miles of treacherous open ocean in a 20-foot boat to fetch a rescue ship. *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World* vividly re-creates one of the most extraordinary adventure stories in history. Jennifer Armstrong narrates this unbelievable story with vigor, an eye for detail, and an appreciation of the marvelous leadership of Shackleton, who brought home every one of his men alive.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1090 (What's this?)

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers; 1st Pbk. Ed edition (September 12, 2000)

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 64 customer reviews

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

The harrowing survival story of English explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton and the ill-fated Endurance has intrigued people since the 1914 expedition--spurring astounding books such as *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage* and *The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition*. As Shackleton and 27 sailors attempted to cross the frozen Antarctic continent from one side to the other, they were trapped in an ice pack, lost their ship to the icy depths, survived an Antarctic winter,

escaped attacks from sea lions, and traversed 600 treacherous miles to the uninhabited Elephant Island. Leaving 22 men behind, Shackleton and five others sailed 800 miles across the southern Atlantic Ocean in a 20-foot open boat to tiny South George Island, where they hiked across unmapped mountains to a whaling station. In 1916, 19 months after the Endurance became icebound, Shackleton led a rescue party back to retrieve his men. Remarkably, every crew member survived. Jennifer Armstrong, the award-winning author of *Black-Eyed Susan* and *The Dreams of Mairhe Mehan*, brings the unbelievable journey to life with delicious details: how a handsome young stowaway was discovered too late to cast him off; how the ship itself would become frost-white, looking like "another species of sparkling white iceberg as it nosed its way through the pack;" and how the ice-pack-dwelling Emperor penguins seemed to enjoy the banjo music of crew member Leonard Hussey. The true-to-life story is as thrilling as they come, and Armstrong's lively, crystal-clear writing style is just as compelling. More than 40 photographs of the expedition populate this inspiring nonfiction adventure story that young readers will devour from cover to cover. (Ages 10 to 14) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 6 Up-When their ship, Endurance, became icebound in Antarctica and sank in 1914, Sir Ernest Shackleton and his 27 crewmen were 100 miles from land. Unbelievably, they all survived. At first, the men played on the ice to kill time, but after Endurance sank, they took to their life boats, and spent a year and a half traveling over ice, water, and mountains to reach safety. Taylor Mali's narration of the book by Jennifer Armstrong (Crown, 1998) is riveting, and his shifts from one accent to the next are effective and not at all distracting. The text moves from diary entries to explanations of how to read the sun, and the descriptions of the terrain and weather are superb. This is a very effective presentation of not only how the disaster occurred, but of the toll it took on the crew and how they rose to the challenge. Christine Moesch, Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, NY
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This book is fantastic, even for adults. I worked in Antarctica so this was a pleasant easy read to brush up on some of the history.

My son's book club read this and I ended up reading it, too. What an excellent book. I'm not a huge fan of folks who do crazy things like climb mountains or try to reach the south pole. However, the examples of leadership in this book are not to be missed, including careful preparation at each

stage for (too often-overlooked) care of the men's sanity under harsh conditions. The book has many great photos, and is at a level that is not too tedious nor too simplistic even for a bookworm like me. Added later: I've gone on to read at least three more books about the Endurance over several years, as it is such a great study in human interaction and perseverance, and it is based on so many actual diaries and photos that add perspective to the same events. But this is the version that drew me in; I don't think I otherwise would have taken an interest.

My husband, I, and our 8-year-old read this book to each other over the last two weeks and were captivated. The author describes the incredible story of the entire crew of the Endurance as they survive for a year and a half in one of the harshest environments on earth. We learn about how Captain Shackleton held the crew together through the long boring wait on the ice and later, the grueling treks and voyages. Amazing people who faced unthinkable hazards (to me); freezing rain storms and icy sleeping bags. The challenges occur one after another and will keep the reader riveted to the end. I strongly recommend this for readers ten and older, though. The content is a bit harsh at times, as the dogs, the ship's cat, and several antarctic animals are killed in order for the crew to survive. Also, the language is definitely at a higher level than third grade. The book is well-written and the photographs are amazing as they come from the actual event. A great addition to any school or public library.

Very interesting - what an adventure.

This 1999 winner of the Orbis Pictus Award (given for outstanding nonfiction for children) is a detailed and well-researched account of Sir Ernest Shackleton's incredible 1914-1916 voyage to Antarctica. Jennifer Armstrong does an excellent job of creating interest all through the book, sharing interesting details about what the men ate, and the games and activities they used to pass the time. The book includes many photographs taken by the photographer on the expedition, giving a sense of realism and immediacy. The author follows Shackleton's trip from England to South Georgia Island, then the failed attempt to get to the Antarctic continent. The ship becomes stuck in ice, but the ice migrates, moving the Endurance further north, toward the open ocean. Before they reach the sea the ice crushes the ship, forcing the men to abandon it. It is after the sinking of the Endurance that the narrative gets so exciting that the book is impossible to put down. The reader reads with growing horror of the crew's travail across the ice and out to tiny, barren Elephant Island. When it seems that the men can't possibly have anything worse ahead of them, Shackleton

and five men sail a small lifeboat eight hundred miles back to South Georgia Island. Armstrong's description of the harrowing fifteen days spent in the lifeboat holds the reader in a vise-like grip. She winds down the tension with a very satisfying epilogue relating what the crewmembers did with the rest of their lives. The captioned photograph at the end of the book showing the entire crew shortly after their return to civilization is a perfect touch.

This is a fairly short book, only about 140 pages, but every page packs a wallop. This is a very well written book and the story is clearly told and the photos only add to the pleasure of reading the book. Some nights I start reading and loose track of time and can't put the book down. This book was worth every penny I paid for it.

Armstrong does a superb job of telling this true story. A survival story that rivals any ever made up. The author clearly did her homework, as the bibliography clearly shows. I appreciate that she used as many primary sources as she could get her hands on. I might have wished for more photographs, but the ones that are included make the story that much more real. The photos taken of the destruction of the ship are especially powerful. This version is more appropriate for older students, simply because of the amount of detail.

I picked this book up at my son's school book fair. While it is designated as a young adult book, I was not sure of the reading level, so I decided to read the book myself. The reading level is reasonable for a teenager or possibly younger child, but there is no reason why this shouldn't be an adult book! The book includes many - if not most - of the Frank Hurley photos. It also provides a "real life" perspective, from the diaries of the crew, of the expedition. I have since read several other books of the Endurance expedition, but none as engaging and thrilling as this one. It was impossible to put down!

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