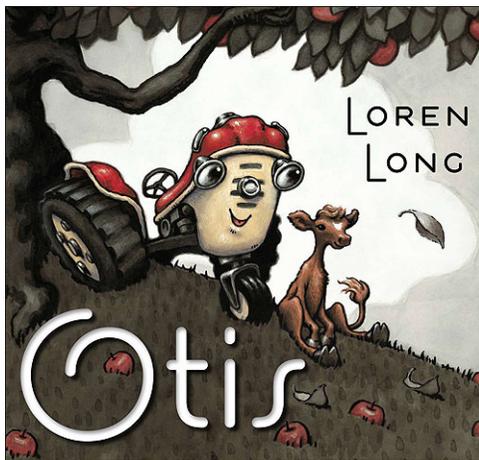


Otis

by Loren Long

A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit



About the Book

Otis is a lovable tractor. He loves his farm and farmer. He particularly loves the little calf in the next stall, whom he purrs to sleep with his soft motor. The two become great friends, romping in the fields, leaping bales of hay and playing ring-around-the-rosy by Mud Pond.

But when the big yellow tractor comes to the farm and replaces Otis, he is cast away to rust behind the barn — until the little calf gets stuck in Mud Pond. Then there is only one tractor

(and it's not big or yellow) who saves the day. It's little Otis!

Otis by Loren Long. Copyright © 2009. Used with permission of Philomel Books, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group. Book description from Loren Long's website (<http://www.lorenlong.com/>); used with permission.

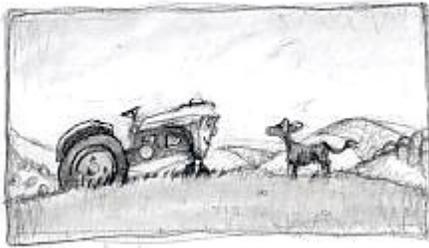
Book details

Otis by Loren Long

Philomel Books, 2009, ISBN: 978-0-399-25248-8. Ages 4-8.

Other formats: Audiocassette 2010, ISBN 978-1-4407-8586-2; Audio CD, 2010, ISBN 978-1-4407-8600-6; Board book to be released January 6, 2011, ISBN 978-0-399-25600-4.

http://us.penguin.com/nf/Book/BookDisplay/0,,9780399252488,00.html?Otis_Loren_Long



Don't miss the **Otis** section of Loren Long's website, where you can see Loren Long's original sketches for the book, then mouse over them to see the finished paintings! You can also enjoy sketches that were developed for Otis but not used in the final book.

<http://www.lorenlong.com/otis/otis.html>

Unused sketch for Otis courtesy Loren Long; used with permission.

About the Author

Two-time Golden Kite award winner and New York Times #1 bestselling illustrator Loren Long is an artist straight from the heart of America. Born in Joplin, Missouri, and raised in Lexington, Kentucky, Long is a storyteller in pictures who draws on his roots to depict a soulful American landscape peopled with imaginative characters who take on mythic, even heroic, dimensions.



Long graduated from the University of Kentucky with a BA in Graphic Design/Art Studio and went on to do graduate studies at the American Academy of Art in Chicago. For a time he was an illustrator at the Gibson Greeting Card Company in Cincinnati. He gained recognition as an editorial illustrator for numerous magazines and newspapers in the 1990s, most notably *Forbes*, *Time*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and *Sports Illustrated*. He began illustrating book covers for Harper Collins, Penguin, Houghton Mifflin, and the National Geographic Society. In 1999 Long was commissioned to paint a grand-scale mural for a restaurant in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Long believes his calling as a storyteller lies in illustrating children's books, often coupling his art with iconic American literary works. His challenge, met with flying colors if the critics are to be believed, is to match the soaring poetry of Walt Whitman or the timeless lesson of "the little engine that could" with images as lasting and resonant. Loren can be found drawing each and every day at his house near Cincinnati, Ohio, where he lives with his family and a Weimaraner, Stella.

Author biography courtesy Loren Long and excerpted from <http://www.lorenlong.com/bio.html>; used with permission. Photograph used with permission from Philomel Books, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group.



<http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>

Author Resources:

Loren Long's official website

<http://www.lorenlong.com/>

Author page on Penguin Group USA website

<http://us.penguin.com/nf/Author/AuthorPage/0,,1000038926,00.html>

Q & A with Loren Long from *Publishers Weekly*

<http://bit.ly/duEbSW> (opens *Publishers Weekly* site)

Interview with Loren Long from Classroom Book of the Week

<http://katenarita.blogspot.com/2010/01/interview-with-loren-long.html>

Interview with Loren Long from Mackin

<http://www.mackin.com/library/Author%20Interviews-Long.aspx>

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:

Jean Dayton
DAYTON BOOKINGS
Literary Tours and Promotions
2753 E. Pedigo Bay Drive
Bloomington IN 47401
812-824-5017

<http://www.daytonbookings.com>

See also: *Arrange an Author Appearance with Penguin Young Readers Group*

<http://www.penguin.com/authorappearances>

A select list of other books by Loren Long:

Angela and the Baby Jesus by Frank McCourt, illustrated by Loren Long

Drummer Boy by Loren Long

The Little Engine that Could by Watty Piper, illustrated by Loren Long

Mr. Peabody's Apples by Madonna, illustrated by Loren Long

Toy Boat by Randall DeSeve, illustrated by Loren Long

Truckery Rhymes (*Jon Scieszka's Trucktown*) by Jon Scieszka, illustrated by David Shannon, Loren Long and David Gordon

Wind Flyers by Angela Johnson, illustrated by Loren Long

Loren has also illustrated and co-written (with Phil Bildner) **Sluggers**, a series of six books following the adventures of three children, an 1899 baseball team, and a magic baseball. (This series was formerly titled **Barnstormers**.)

Booklist compiled by Licking County Library.



<http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>

Talk About it!

Topics to share when discussing this book with children

- Otis is a little red tractor. What is a tractor, and what are tractors used for? Talk about farm machines and the different kinds of work they do.
- This story takes place on a farm. Talk about farms and what happens on them. What do people use that comes from farms? How are farms different now than they were in the past?
- Many kinds of animals live on a typical American farm. List the animals you might find on a farm. In what ways are those animals useful to people? Contrast wild and domesticated animals.
- Farmers are people who live and work on farms. What tasks do farmers do? Do they get paid for their work? How?
- Otis and the little calf were friends and liked to do many things together, like play leap frog, ring-around-the-rosy and sit quietly under the apple tree. What kinds of things do you like to do with your friends? What are your favorite games to play?
- When the little calf is stuck in the mud, many try to get her out: people, the big yellow tractor and even the fire truck. Who is finally able to get the calf out of the mud? Does being smaller than others mean you can't do the same things? Does being bigger and stronger mean you can do more?

Discussion questions developed by the State Library of Ohio.

Learn & have fun!

Here are some fun ideas for extending the story

- **Otis** activity sheets from Loren Long include a maze, coloring sheet, counting sheet and more:
http://www.lorenlong.com/otis/otis_activities.html
- Tractor Crafts & Activities for preschool:
<http://www.first-school.ws/activities/crafts/transportation/tractor.htm>
- Play "Farmer in the Dell"
- Play "Tug-Of-War"
- Make farm animal puppets
- Organize a tractor parade, or use your school or library parking lot to host a "touch-a-tractor" event.
- Visit a local farm, farmers market, or the produce section of a grocery store. Talk about where the food comes from.



<http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>

Fun storytimes to associate with *Otis* might include:

- Farms and farmers
- Farm animals
- Tractors/farm machinery
- Transportation
- Plants/crops/growing
- The Letter "O"

BLAST Early Learning: Trucks and Tractors theme

<http://bit.ly/c4CgBJ> (opens Carnegie Library site)

The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's resources for *Otis* include a "Trucks and Tractors" storytime outline, math, art, and science activities, and recommended books.

"The Best Kids Book Site" Storytime Topics: Transportation

<http://www.thebestkidsbooksite.com/storydetails.cfm?TopicID=197>

Transportation Storytime Ideas including books, fingerplays, songs, and crafts.

Get Ready To Read!

Encouraging early literacy skill-building in young children

Many of the ideas listed in this toolkit incorporate the **six early literacy skills** that help children get ready to read. Recognizing letters (Letter Knowledge) and understanding that they make sounds that form words (Phonological Awareness). Knowing that things have names and being able to name them (Vocabulary). Telling a story or describing events that happened in a story (Narrative Skills). Noticing and recognizing text (Print Awareness), and the interest in and enjoyment of books (Print Motivation). All of these things lead to children being ready to learn how to read when they begin school.

For more information:

Ohio Ready to Read

<http://ohreadytoread.org/>

The early literacy initiative developed by the Ohio Library Council's Children's Services Division and the State Library of Ohio has many great resources for librarians, educators and parents on teaching early literacy skills.

National Association for the Education of Young Children

<http://www.naeyc.org/>

Association for Library Service to Children

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/index.cfm>



<http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>

Tie It In!

Using this book with the Ohio Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards

The Ohio Department of Education adopted revised Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards in 2011. These standards describe what young learners should know and be able to do in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies before entering kindergarten. Early childhood educators are implementing these standards in their schools and centers. For more information, including the complete set of standards, follow this link to the Ohio Department of Education site: <http://bit.ly/tBOIOP>.

Every Choose to Read Ohio book for young children may be used to support the English and Language Arts Reading Standards for Literature and Reading Standards: Foundational Skills. Here are examples of activities using **Otis** that align with Pre-K standards.

English Language Arts

- Key ideas and details – with prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. Use the pictures in the story to ask the audience what is happening? What event do you think will happen next?

Mathematics

- Measurement and data - Describe and compare measurable attributes. Otis is **smaller** than the big yellow tractor, the calf is **little**, etc.
- Geometry - Identify and describe shapes. The wheels, eyes, and apples can represent circles, the bales of hay in the story are rectangular.

Science

- Life Science – Observations of living things – discuss what types of animals would most likely be found on a farm and describe what these animals would look like. Use pictures or felt pieces as examples of the animals.

Social Studies

- Geography strand – (places and regions) – discuss the characteristics of farms. What identifying factors distinguish a farm from other locations?
- Government Strand - relationships in families, schools and communities benefit from cooperative behaviors and problem-solving skills. How was the issue of the little goats misadventure solved? What did the community do to work together to save the little goat?

Other PreK Content Standards may also apply. See the Ohio Department of Education website (<http://education.ohio.gov>) for further information.



<http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>

Explore more!

Classroom Book of the Week: *Otis*

<http://katenarita.blogspot.com/2010/01/otis.html>

Activity ideas and recommended companion books from curriculum guide consultant Kate Narita. The activities are mapped to multiple intelligences and intended for use in the primary classroom, but are also fun for groups of children in other environments.

***Otis* Lesson Plan**

<http://www.roundrockisd.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=26743>

This detailed ***Otis*** classroom resource from the Round Rock (TX) Independent School District includes standards-aligned activities and thematic lists of companion books.

Penguin Storytime with Liz Shanks: *Otis*

<http://bit.ly/9iJfsL> (opens Penguin.com site)

Video of Penguin Storytime host Liz Shanks reading ***Otis*** to a group of students.

Ohio Farm Bureau: For Teachers

<http://ofbf.org/education-and-reference/for-teachers/>

The OFB's Agriculture in the Classroom program offers activities, workshops, tours, and curricular materials.

Our Ohio

<http://ouohio.org/teachers/>

Student and teacher resources from the Ohio Farm Bureau's consumer agriculture site.

United States Department of Agriculture Youth Resources page

<http://bit.ly/9dPTO3> (opens USDA site)

The USDA provides students, parents, and teachers with youth-gearred information and resources related to agriculture.

About Choose to Read Ohio

Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) spotlights Ohio authors and promotes reading across Ohio. The State Library of Ohio, in partnership with Ohioana Library Association, developed this initiative to encourage Ohioans of all ages to share literature by authors native to, residing in, or associated with Ohio. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits: <http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>.

This toolkit revised January 2012.