



Skye Above

Eric Walters

illustrated by David Parkins

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About the Book

Skye is a young girl who dreams about flying—which seems only natural since both her parents are pilots. In her case, however, she wants to fly like a bird. Her parents decide to arrange for her to experience three ways to “fly” in this playful look at a young girl, her dream, and her parents arranging a series of adventures to fulfill that dream.

About the Author

Eric Walters began writing in 1993 as a way to entice his students into becoming more interested in reading and writing. Each day he would read to his students the story he was writing that was set in their school and had some of the students as characters. At the end of the year—and the end of the novel—one student suggested that he try to have this story published. This book, *Stand Your Ground*, became Eric’s first published novel.

Since that first creation Eric has published 85 novels and picture books. His novels have all become best-sellers, have won over a hundred awards, and have been translated into 13 languages.

Eric is a tireless presenter, speaking to over 125,000 students per year in schools across the country. He lives in Mississauga with his wife, Anita, and has three grown children, Christina, Nicholas and Julia. When not writing, or playing and watching sports, he enjoys listening to jazz and eating in fine restaurants featuring drive-through service.

Over the past few years he has been the driving force behind **The Creation of Hope** (www.creationofhope.com)—an organization that serves orphans and needy children in Kenya.

About the Writing

Eric often experiences the things that his characters experience—he calls himself a “method writer.” In the winter of 2012 he travelled to Costa Rica—as did Skye in the story—to experience, witness and research the story. He reports that Costa Rica is a place of stunning beauty, abundant and appreciated nature, and wonderful, friendly people.

Teaching Ideas—Curriculum Connections*Prereading Ideas*

- The main character, Skye, wishes she could fly like a bird. What traits do animals have that you admire? If you could choose one animal to become, what would it be and why?
- Since Skye can't fly for real, her parents surprise her with experiences that feel like flying. Have you ever felt like you were flying? What were you doing? Make a list of all the activities you could do to feel like a bird.
- Skye's parents are both airline pilots, but Skye isn't sure that's what she wants to be when she grows up. Should you follow in your parents footsteps, or choose your own path? Do you know what you want to be when you grow up?

Classroom Discussion Questions

1. On her flight, Skye is happy to stare out the window rather than watch a movie like most of the passengers. If/when you go on a flight, how do you pass the time? Why do you think Skye would want to look out the window instead? What are some things you could do on a plane besides using a tablet or watching TV?
2. Have you ever travelled to Costa Rica, or do you know someone who has? What are some of the animals that Skye and her parents see when they are there? Have you seen any of those animals before, either in the wild or in a zoo?
3. Skye gets to try out a lot of different activities in Costa Rica. Would you try parasailing, snorkeling or ziplining? Have you ever gone on a holiday where you tried a new sport or activity?
4. Skye gets three butterfly wishes, which she gives to her parents. If you could have three wishes, what would they be? Would you give any to others? Why do you think Skye decided to give her wishes to her parents?
5. In the book, Skye thanks her parents for the trip by making them a drawing. What else could Skye have done to say thank you? Why is it important to give thanks? How do you say thank you when someone does something kind for you?

Suggested Activities

1. Skye's dream of flying comes true in many interesting ways. Think of one way you might experience a feeling of flying. Draw a picture or make a collage using your ideas.
2. Pick one animal in the story and learn more about it. What is the animal's natural habitat? What does it eat? When does it sleep? Is it a predator or prey? Share your findings with the class or in groups.

3. In chapter 5, Skye greets the birds with a morning song. In pairs or groups, come up with a song for the birds. It could be a song about birds that you already know, or a new song that you make up. Sing it together or teach the class.
4. How do you give thanks? Think of something you are thankful for, or someone you wish to thank for a kind deed. Make them a card, poster or other token to say thank you.

Other Books by the Author from Orca Book Publishers

The Matatu (Picturebook)

Prince for a Princess (Echoes)

Saving Sammy (Echoes)

Three on Three (1st in the Young Readers basketball series)

Review Quotes

“The story moves along at a fast pace and manages to pack in a great deal of unobtrusive background detail about outdoor activities and rain forest flora and fauna. Full-page black-and-white line drawings align closely with the text and effectively convey Skye’s continuing delight and wonder. Emerging and newly independent readers will enjoy the unfolding story and appreciate the accessible vocabulary and logical sequencing. This should be equally popular with boys and girls, and it definitely deserves a spot in school and public library high/low collection.” —*Booklist*

“[Offers] an age-appropriate plot and realistic characters while appealing to a wide audience of readers gaining confidence in independent reading. This particular story also includes aspects of character development. Skye’s parents are both airline pilots, touching on gender equality. Skye hopes that when she grows up she’ll have a different profession than her parents, reinforcing the idea of individuality...Skye’s love and experience of animals throughout the book will appeal to readers who enjoy an animal story, as well as readers who enjoy adventure.” —*CM Magazine*