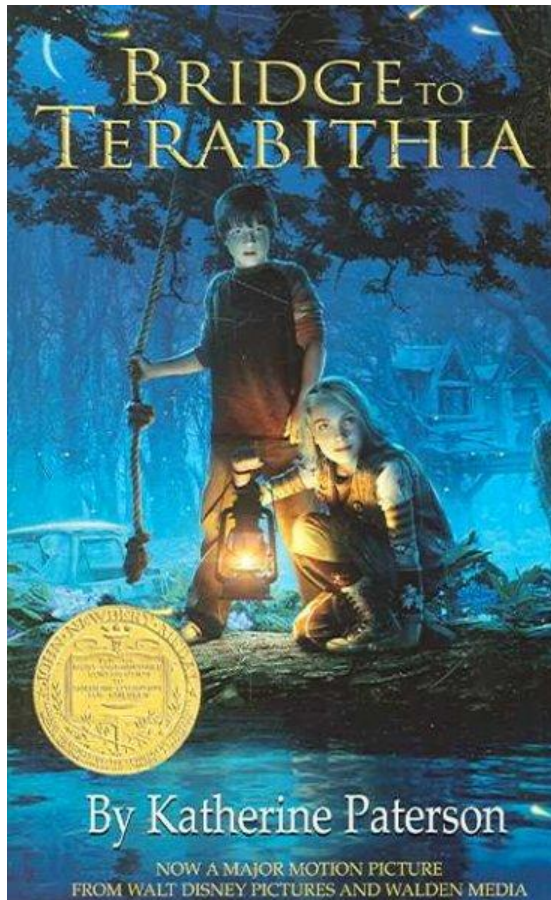


## About the book...



*Jess has practiced all summer to be the fastest runner in the fifth grade and is shocked when Leslie, a new student and a girl, beats him. Despite the competition, they become good friends and create a secret place they name Terabithia. Jess's friendship with Leslie, who comes from a much different background, opens up new worlds of imagination to him and changes his outlook greatly. Then he must struggle to accept her unexpected death.*

**-Books & Authors**

## About the Author...



Katherine Paterson is the author of more than 30 books including 16 novels for children and young people. She has twice won the Newbery Medal, for "Bridge to Terabithia" in 1978 and "Jacob Have I Loved" in 1981. "The Master Puppeteer" won the National Book Award in 1977 and "The Great Gilly Hopkins" won the National Book Award in 1979 and was also a Newbery Honor Book. For the body of her work she received the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1998, the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award in 2006, and in 2000 was named a Living Legend by the Library of Congress.

She is a vice-president of the National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance and is a member of the board of trustees for the Vermont College of Fine Arts. She is also a honorary lifetime member of the US section of

the United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY). She was the 2010-2011 National Ambassador for Young People's Literature.

She and her husband live in Vermont. They have four grown children, seven grandchildren and a wonderful Golden Retriever named Annie.

For more about the author visit: [www.terabithia.com](http://www.terabithia.com)

## Writings

- [\*Angels & Other Strangers: Family Christmas\*](#) Stories Crowell (New York), 1979
- [\*Come Sing, Jimmy Jo\*](#) Dutton (New York) 1985
- [\*Jacob Have I Loved\*](#) Crowell (New York), 1980
- [\*Lyddie\*](#) LoDESTAR Books (New York), 1991
- [\*Of Nightingales That Weep\*](#) Crowell (New York) 1974
- [\*The Day of the Pelican\*](#) Clarion Books (Boston) 2009
- [\*The Flint Heart\*](#), Candlewick Press (Somerville, Mass.), 2011.
- [\*The Great Gilly Hopkins\*](#) Crowell (New York), 1978
- [\*The Master Puppeteer\*](#) Crowell (New York), 1975
- [\*The Same Stuff As Stars\*](#) Clarion Books (New York) 2002

## Awards

The Newbery Medal for [\*Bridge to Terabithia\*](#) (1978) and *Jacob Have I Loved* (1981); the National Book Award for *The Master Puppeteer* (1977) and *The Great Gilly Hopkins* (1979); the Phoenix Award for *Of Nightingales that Weep* (1994). Also the Hans Christian Andersen Medal for Writing (1998); the Astrid Lindgren Award for Lifetime Achievement (2006); and the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award (2013).

## Reviews

### *Publisher Marketing*

All summer, Jess pushed himself to be the fastest boy in the fifth grade, so when the year's first school-yard race was run, he was going to win. But his victory was stolen by a newcomer, by a girl, one who didn't even know enough to stay on the girls' side of the playground. Then, unexpectedly, Jess finds himself sticking up for Leslie, for the girl who breaks rules and wins races. The friendship between the two grows as Jess guides the city girl through the pitfalls of life in their small, rural town, and Leslie draws him into the world of imagination, magic and ceremony called Terabithia. Here, Leslie and Jess rule supreme among the oaks and evergreens, safe from the bullies and ridicule of the mundane world. Safe until an unforeseen tragedy forces Jess to reign in Terabithia alone, and both worlds are forever changed.

### *School Library Journal*

Jesse's colorless rural world expands when he becomes fast friends with Leslie, the new girl in school. But when Leslie drowns trying to reach their special hideaway, Terabithia, Jesse struggles to accept the loss of his friend.

### *BookHive*

This year, Jesse Oliver Aarons, Jr. is determined to be the fastest kid in third, fourth, and fifth grade at school. He practices every morning, all summer long. But on the first day back, Leslie Burke, (a new girl who moves in next door to him) decides to race...and she wins. Even so, Jesse decides that he likes Leslie. Together, they build an imaginary magic kingdom called Terabithia, where anything can happen. Leslie tells incredible stories, and Jesse draws pictures. Until spring, when it rains, and rains. And something terrible happens. This is a bittersweet story of friendship, loss, and hope.

### **Discussion Questions** (<https://multcolib.org/bridge-terabithia>)

1. Why is running so important to Jess?
2. Jesse's mother appears to treat him differently than she treats his four sisters. How does that make Jesse feel about himself?
3. How does Miss Edmunds respond to Jesse's art? Why is that important to him?
4. Why is Leslie unhappy? Does she feel comfortable with the other kids at school, besides Jess? Why or why not?
5. Why do Jesse and Leslie create Terabithia? What does Terabithia represent for them?
6. Jesse feels that, "Leslie was more than his friend. She was his other, more exciting self - his way to Terabithia and all the worlds beyond." What does this mean?
7. At first, Jesse's sister Brenda thinks he doesn't care that Leslie has died. Why does she think that?
8. What did Leslie's friendship teach Jess?
9. Why does Jess throw Leslie's present into the gully? How does he feel about her dying?
10. How do you think Jesse will live his life differently because of his friendship with Leslie? What do you think Jesse will do with his life?

## Activity

Try snacks like the ones Jess and Leslie shared at their secret spot: dried fruit, crackers, and peanut butter.

## Read-Alikes

Lisa Graff, [\*Umbrella Summer\*](#) (2009)

For 10-year old Annie Richards, life has always been simple and worry free--that is, until her older brother, Jared, suddenly dies and leaves the Richards family in a world of grief. As Annie's parents cope with the tragedy in their own ways, Annie suddenly grows very fearful and anxious. Desperate to prevent anything bad from ever happening again, Annie avoids almost everything and everyone in an effort to keep herself safe. It takes the arrival of a new elderly neighbor, who is dealing with grief of her own, to help Annie find the healing and hope that she so desperately needs.

Gill Lewis, [\*Wild Wings\*](#) (2011)

An endangered bird connects a small town in Scotland to a West African village. Iona McNair, an eccentric 11-year-old, moves in with her grandfather on his Scottish farm. At first she has trouble making new friends. One day she finds an osprey nest on the farm. She names the endangered bird Iris and keeps it a secret. After Iona develops a friendship with a classmate, Callum, she tells him about the bird. He helps Iona keep the osprey safe until it injures its wing on a fishing wire. They enlist the help of a bird expert, who bandages Iris's wing and puts a tracking device on the bird. When the bird flies south for the winter, Iona and Callum track Iris until they lose the signal. Determined to find Iris, Callum connects with a girl living in Gambia through e-mail. She helps him track down the location of the osprey.

Susan Patron, [\*The Higher Power of Lucky\*](#) (2006)

Ten-year-old Lucky Trimble's job is to clean up the cigarettes, candy bars, and beer cans left from the attendees of the "anonymous" meetings in her small town--alcoholics, gamblers, smokers, and overeaters. Through eavesdropping on these meetings while she works, Lucky has heard a lot about higher powers, and hopes she can find one for herself. Suspecting that her guardian (and her father's first wife), Brigitte, is planning to abandon her and return to France, Lucky decides to run away from home. Although it means leaving her dog, HMS Beagle, and her quirky friends Miles, the cookie addict, and Lincoln Clinton Carter Kennedy, whose hobby is knot tying, Lucky feels she has no choice but to take control of her life and find her higher power. She heads into the desert with her survival kit backpack and is soon struggling through a dangerous sandstorm. Will she make it through the desert? Will Brigitte decide to stay?

Sally Nichols, [Ways to Live Forever](#) (2008)

Eleven-year-old Sam has leukemia and he is going to die. Sam has lots of questions, questions about his health, the things he will miss in life, how he will face his own death, and how his family will face it. Encouraged by his teacher, Sam writes his feelings, thoughts, and questions in a diary, that is neither maudlin nor sentimental. It's an honest look at life through the eyes of a young boy who will be robbed of his life all too quickly. Sam has a friend at the hospital, Felix, who is two years older than he, and the two experience many of Sam's "things to do before he dies," such as smoking. But no one can help him with other wishes, such as to become a teenager. Here's an honest look at death or at least how one young boy faces it.



Ann Arbor District Library