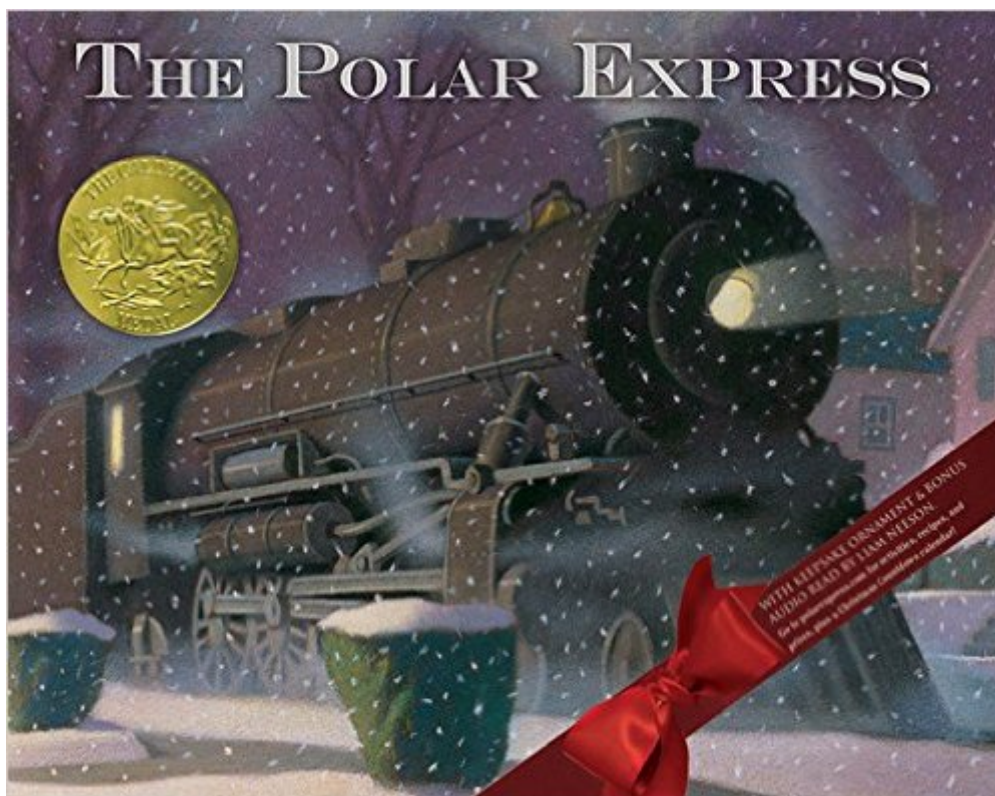


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# Polar Express 30th Anniversary Edition



## Synopsis

1986 Caldecott Medal Winner A young boy, lying awake one Christmas Eve, is welcomed aboard a magical trip to the North Pole . . . Through dark forests, over tall mountains, and across a desert of ice, the Polar Express makes its way to the city atop the world, where the boy will make his Christmas wish. For millions of readers worldwide, this mysterious journey to the North Pole has become a beloved classic. In this 30th anniversary edition, the inimitable artistry of Chris Van Allsburg is revealed in a never-before-seen fashion, with a new jacket design and expanded interior layout. Includes author's note, downloadable audio read by Liam Neeson, and golden "All Aboard" ornament.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Rei/Acc/Ps edition (September 15, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0544580141

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Product Dimensions: 11.8 x 0.5 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (1,376 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,799 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Children's Books >

Holidays & Celebrations > Christmas #5 in Books > Children's Books > Cars, Trains & Things

That Go > Trains #58 in Books > Children's Books > Classics

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

**North Pole Cozy Cocoa Recipe** Gather the ingredients below. Pour hot water, sugar, cocoa powder and salt into a large pot. Whisk over medium heat. When everything is combined, add chocolate chips and whisk mixture until chocolate chips are melted. Add milk and vanilla and whisk again. Serve with marshmallows or whipped cream! **Ingredients:** 1 cup cocoa powder 1 cup chocolate chips 1 tsp salt 1 cup hot water 1 cup sugar 1 gallon milk 1 tsp vanilla

**Fun Facts About The Polar Express** In celebration of the 30th anniversary of The Polar Express, enjoy these fun facts about the book! The setting of the book is based on Van Allsburg's childhood home in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Pere Marquette 1225 train,

now in Owosso, Michigan, was the inspiration for the story. As a child, Chris Van Allsburg played on the engine when it was on display, and to him, the number 1225 meant 12/25, Christmas Day! The real 1225 train inspired the animated train, and they recorded the 1225's different locomotive sounds to use in the movie. Chris Van Allsburg said that *The Polar Express* was the easiest of his picture book manuscripts to write. He created only one draft and had to make only a few changes to the text. *The Polar Express* is done with oil pastels, and to get the night lighting just right, he mixed color complements (reds with greens, oranges with blues) to bring out the hues of colors in low light. Van Allsburg has an artistic connection to another Christmas classic – in 2014 he designed the sets for the Michigan Ballet's performance of *The Nutcracker*.

This book opens the possibility that Santa Claus -- as presented to most of us -- may not physically exist. It does this in a way that will allow children and their parents to ease into that question, a graceful move from the belief in a living St. Nick, to a belief in the spirit of Christmas. It begins like this: "On Christmas Eve, many years ago, I lay quietly in my bed. I did not rustle the sheets. I breathed slowly and silently. I was listening for a sound -- a sound a friend had told me I'd never hear -- the ringing of Santa's sleigh." There is no Santa,' my friend had insisted, but I knew he was wrong. From here, we follow a beautifully illustrated story of this young boy's quiet night ride with other children, on the Polar Express train to the North Pole, a "huge city standing alone at the top of the world, filled with factories where every Christmas toy was made." Our narrator is the fortunate child, picked by Santa, to receive the first gift of that Christmas. He knows exactly what he wants, a simple gift that will help him continue to believe in the magic of Christmas, a silver bell from a reindeer's harness. He gets his wish, but loses it on the train ride home. However, there's a happy ending -- evidently Santa has found the bell, and put it under the tree. The boy and his little sister admire the beauty of the sound it makes, but their parents say, "Oh, that's too bad....It's broken." Many years later, the boy's sister and all of his friends can no longer hear the bell. "Though I've grown old, the bell still rings for me as it does for all who truly believe." My youngest son at ages 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 has chosen to firmly believe with the narrator, but he's moved around in his reaction to the notion that Santa isn't real. From -- "that's ridiculous, isn't it?" to "Mom...it is ridiculous, isn't it?" This book will let him hold onto the Christmas spirit for as long as he wants, and to return to it whenever he needs it. This version comes complete with CD's/tapes with readings. Buy the less expensive edition, add a silver bell, and (if you can), read it with the child yourself to give a really special gift. A wonderful book for those who want to believe in the spirit of Christmas every day of every year.

My kids love the art and the story is enchanting. A wonderful train ride full of children who want to believe churns its way to the North Pole and a meeting with Santa. Keeping with tradition, Santa selects one boy to present the first present of Christmas to before he mounts to the sky to visit all the homes of good boys and girls. Rather than ask for a bike, or Pokemon or any other "big" gift, the boy asks for one of Santa's sleigh bells, proof he can hold onto that yes, Santa does exist. This tale of Christmas belief (in Santa, that is) works well on adults, too. It has a message about belief and wonderment that touch all who want to believe in the magic associated with the gift giving part of Christmas. Warning, The Polar Express is best for children a little older than mine (5 1/2, 4). It introduces the concept that Santa may not exist. I get around this by not reading two paragraphs in the book, but you should be forewarned if that particular discussion in your household is several years away. (My kids also tell me everytime that the boy in the story should not get on the train at the invitation of a stranger.) At the right age, this is a magical and wonderful Christmas tale of belief.

I started reading this book to my children 15 years ago when they were toddlers. I would keep it with my Christmas decorations and bring it out every holiday season. Once they grew too old to be read to, I still brought it out every year and put it on the coffee table. Last year I started reading it to my two-year old son. I still cry with nostalgia each time I read The Polar Express, remembering the magic it held for my older children and how we read it over and over. Well, my second son loved it so much, it never go put away with the Christmas decorations. We read it together constantly, even during the summer! This is a book that never loses its magic -- for children and adults alike. I plan to give this book to my neices and nephews this Christmas.

The Polar Express is a soundtrack that will definitely get you in the Christmas spirit. Everyone in the family will enjoy something on this CD. I loved listening to the old Christmas songs on these album like Bing Crosby's White Christmas and Santa Claus is coming to town by Frank Sinatra. The song Silver Bells is also on this soundtrack. I think that Silver Bells is one of the best Christmas songs ever written. There is a terrific new song entitled Believe by Josh Groban on here. This is a very uplifting song. Josh Groban's voice is so smooth and soothing. Aerosmith lead singer Steven Tyler is even on this CD. His song Rockin on the Top of the World is a bit loud and fast paced, but I liked it anyway. This song will get you moving though. Actor Tom Hanks is accompanied by some talented children on the track Polar Express. This is a very fun song that kids will love. I think kids would also enjoy the song When Christmas Comes To Town. This is a cute song performed by 2 kids with

angelic voices. I enjoyed this song very much. Alan Silvestri contributes on this soundtrack by composing several beautiful instrumental pieces. I especially liked the last track Suite from the Polar Express I also enjoyed the track Spirit of the Season also credited to Alan Silvestri which is performed by an awesome choir of singers. The Polar Express soundtrack is the best Christmas album I've heard in a long time. It has a good mix of old and new songs. I recommend this CD to anyone who enjoys listening to Christmas music.

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