



How I Spent My Summer Vacation (Dragonfly Books)

By Mark Teague

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Some kids spend their summer vacation at camp. Some kids spend it at Grandma's house. Wallace Bleff spent his out west...on a ride, a rope, and a roundup he'll never forget.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Her spectacles perched on her nose and her hair coiffed in a Father Knows Best pompadour, Wallace Bleff's teacher looks on as the boy delivers an oral report on that classic topic, *How I Spent My Summer Vacation*. The classroom setting gives way to an expanse of Western plains, across which a locomotive train rumbles, bringing Wallace to visit his aunt. His parents have sent him there for a reason: "'Your imagination,' they said, 'is getting too wild./ It will do you some good to relax for a while.'" It won't take kids long to realize that Wallace's imagination is as fertile as ever, as he tells of being captured by cowboys, who outfit him in spiffy Western garb and teach him all their "cowboy tricks." When "Kid Bleff" finally calls his aunt (from a phone booth comically plunked down in the middle of nowhere), she invites him to bring his pals to her house for a barbecue-Teague's (The Field Beyond the Outfield) boy buckaroo, however, still has a few tricks up his sleeve. Told in rollicking rhymed verse, this is one rootin' tootin' tall tale. Playful period illustrations brim with droll detail, including some laugh-out-loud funny expressions on animal faces. Ages 3-7.

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From School Library Journal

PreSchool-Grade 2?An original fantasy told in rhyme. Wallace Bleff, who is reporting to his class about his summer vacation, tells of his travels west at the bidding of his parents, who felt his overactive imagination needed a rest. He relates how en route to his Aunt Fern's house, he is kidnapped by cowboys and?voila, Kid Bleff is born. He joins the rawhide crowd; learns to rope, ride, and build fires; and becomes a "first-rate cowhand." In celebration of the end of the roundup, Aunt Fern invites Wallace and new friends to a barbecue. When a cattle stampede nearly ruins the party, the young hero saves the day as he displays hidden talent as a matador and reverses the direction of the herd. The art is done in warm acrylics throughout, first to portray the classroom setting where Wallace's yarn begins against the backdrop of the chalkboard, then segues into the sandy scenes of the Wild West, and back again. Teague strikes again with a unique idea, one teachers would do well to use. An excellent read-aloud choice for back-to-school reading in the classroom or the public library.?Marsha McGrath, Clearwater Public Library, FL

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From [Booklist](#)

Ages 5^-7. A great back-to-school picture book elevates the traditional "How I Spent My Summer Vacation" school report to new and dazzling heights. Wallace Bleff's unsuspecting teacher gets more than she bargained for when the quiet student erupts in glee as he reads his essay on his summer vacation--a wild and woolly, Old West adventure that bursts from his paper into full-color, action-packed double-spread paintings filled with cowboys, horses, and stampeding steers. Now Wallace "can hardly wait for show-and-tell!" As usual, Teague's imagination springs lively, as does his rhyming text, and his illustrations have that slightly old-fashioned look that never seems outdated. Children will love Wallace's buckaroo heroism and love his great revenge. *Stephanie Zvirin*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Norman Williams:

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