

LEVELED BOOK • K

Sled Dogs to the Rescue



MULTI
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Written by M. Aboff • Illustrated by Jani Orban

Sled Dogs to the Rescue



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Focus Question

What lessons do the sled dog teams teach us?

Words to Know

blizzard
disease
medicine

musher
relay
teams

Page 3: The press photographs one of the sled dog teams, including Balto in the front, for a reenactment of their arrival in Nome.

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BALTO OF NOME.

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A Terrible Disease

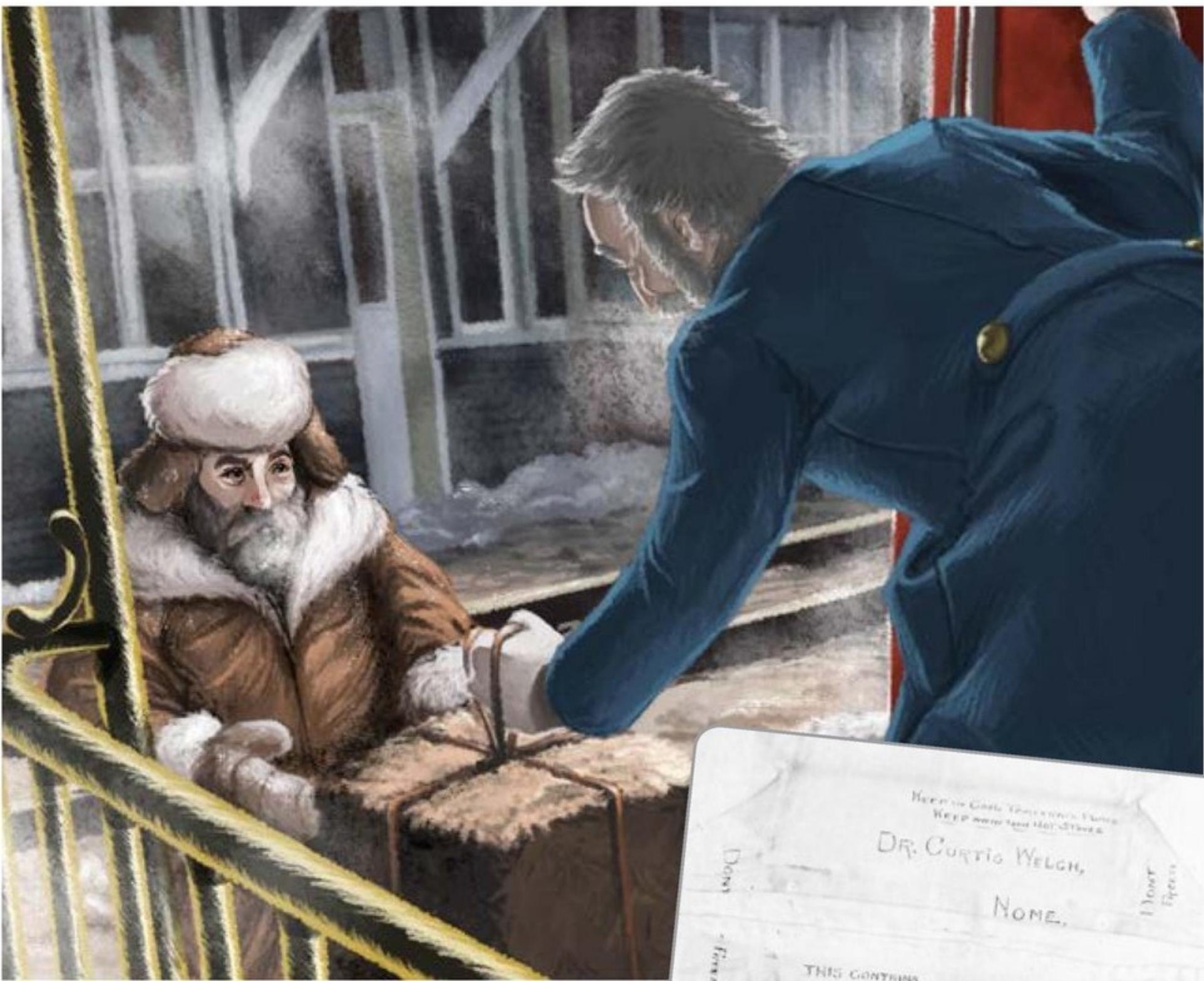
In January 1925, sled dog teams raced through Alaska in a blizzard to save children's lives.



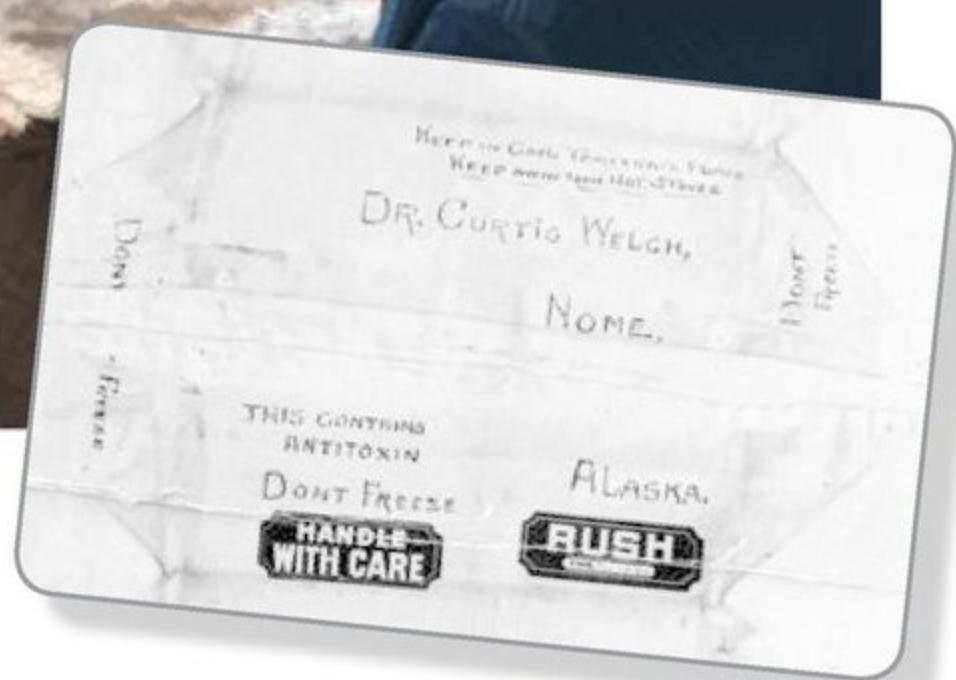
When the disease struck Nome, the town's only doctor worked to save lives in this hospital.

It started when a **disease** spread through a small town in Alaska called Nome. The children needed **medicine** right away.

The medicine that could save the children was a great distance away.



The package containing the medicine for Nome's children (inset)



The medicine could be delivered part of the way by train. Even so, it was 674 miles (1,085 km) from the last train stop to Nome.

Sled dogs were the best way to deliver the medicine through the snow. However, the distance was too far for one team. A sled dog **relay** was the only hope.

The Great Sled Dog Relay

More than 20 teams and 150 dogs were to take part in the relay. Each musher would give the medicine to the next team along the way.

When the medicine arrived by train, it was handed to the first team, and the race was on.



A journey from the last train stop in Nenana to Nome would normally take twenty-five days by sled. The teams raced against time to deliver the medicine.



The dogs battled through rough wilderness in the bitter cold. Often, the medicine had to be warmed by a fire to keep it from freezing. Some of the dogs did not survive the journey.

A famous musher and his lead dog, Togo, covered the most dangerous part of the run.



Togo and his musher had won many dog sled races in the past.



To save time, they raced over an area of frozen sea. The next day, they raced up snow-packed mountains. They covered 91 miles (146 km)—more than any other team.

The Dogs Deliver

The sled dog teams continued their difficult journey. Another musher and his lead dog, Balto, left on the second to last leg in a terrible blizzard.



Balto and his musher





Balto led the team through the storm. At one point, a gust of wind flipped the sled over. The medicine fell in a snowbank. Balto's musher dug it out with frozen hands.

When Balto's team arrived at the hand-off point, the next team was not ready to leave. Balto's team continued on to Nome instead.

Five and a half days after the relay began, Balto's team delivered the medicine. The children were saved.





Togo's musher loved his dogs. He started a husky kennel in Maine.

After the Race

After the race, Togo, his musher, and their team went all over the United States. They drew large crowds.

A statue of Balto was built in a city park. Balto and some of his teammates were in a dog show. They were not treated well and were kept in small cages. People gave money to bring the dogs to Cleveland, Ohio. They stayed in a zoo for the rest of their lives.

Balto is famous for his bravery. However, every sled dog on that journey helped save the sick children when there was little hope left.



Balto and his musher visit the new statue that was built in honor of the sled dogs.

Glossary

blizzard <i>(n.)</i>	a severe snowstorm with cold temperatures, heavy snows, and strong, steady winds (p. 4)
disease <i>(n.)</i>	a condition, other than one caused by injury, that changes the way a body normally functions; an illness (p. 5)
medicine <i>(n.)</i>	a drug or remedy used for treating an illness or condition (p. 5)
musher <i>(n.)</i>	a person who drives a sled pulled by dogs (p. 7)
relay (<i>n.</i>)	the process of moving or delivering something in stages by passing it from one person to another (p. 6)
teams (<i>n.</i>)	groups of animals harnessed together to pull vehicles (p. 4)

Sled Dogs to the Rescue

A *Reading A-Z Level K Leveled Book*

Word Count: 424

Connections

Writing

Do you think the sled dogs and their drivers are heroes? Write a paragraph that explains why or why not. Use details from the book in your answer.

Social Studies

Draw the state of Alaska. Label at least five important landmarks.

The logo for Reading A-Z features the word "Reading" in a large, bold, red sans-serif font. Above the letter "R", there is a stylized sun icon with rays. To the right of "Reading", the letters "A-Z" are written in a smaller, bold, black sans-serif font.

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