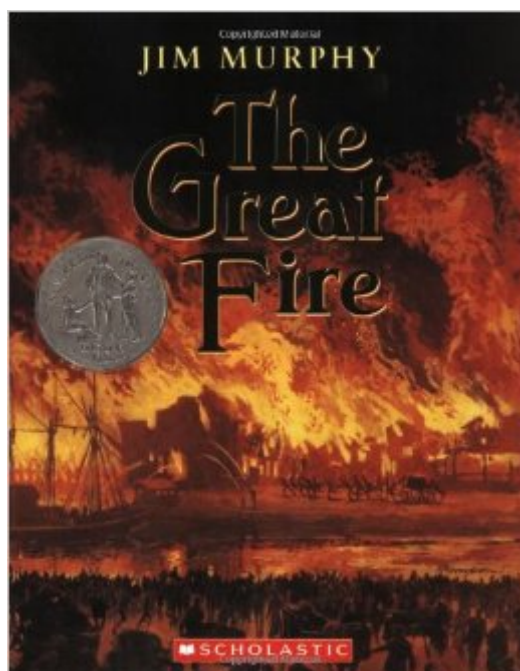


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# The Great Fire



## Synopsis

Jim Murphy's Newbery Honor Book available for the first time in paperback. "Vivid firsthand descriptions by persons who lived through the 1871 Chicago fire are woven into a gripping account... Absorbing and riveting reading." The Horn Book, starred review

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1130 (What's this?)

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Paperbacks; 1 edition (August 18, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0439203074

ISBN-13: 978-0439203074

Product Dimensions: 0.2 x 8 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (43 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #33,179 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > State & Local](#) #21 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > 1800s](#) #209 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Reading & Writing](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 12

## Customer Reviews

This non-fiction historical book for children is the opposite of dry and boring. Murphy brings alive the excitement and terror of Chicago's Great Fire by incorporating dialogue, first-hand accounts, drawings, engravings, and newspaper reports. My ten year old son could not put this book down (and he usually reads only fiction). In the skilled writing of Jim Murphy, *The Great Fire of Chicago* is at once the story of a city and the story of very different people in that city reacting to sudden disaster. Maps and enticing chapter titles ("3. 'The Dogs of Hell Were Upon the Housetops'") lead the reader into the story and I, for one, did not emerge from the book until I reached the end. *The Great Fire* is an excellent introduction to reading history, as well as being a really good read. My only quandary is this: which of Murphy's books shall I order now? My ten year can't wait to consume the next one.

I read this book to my 4th and 5th grade class and they loved it! I was afraid they might be bored but the writing is fantastic and the story really interested them. They remember all of the details and have been talking about the fire with their friends and parents. We were all really disappointed when we came to the final page. I've even become inspired to read more about the fire.

The Great Fire of Chicago happened in 1871 on a dry Sunday. The fire began in a barn and swept throughout the city. Through the author Jim Murphy the book takes you through the lives of many people. Eventually it rains, extinguishing the fire and leaving 98,500 people homeless. The Great Fire was one of those books that starts out boring, but if you continue to read or listen to it you'll notice yourself wanting to know what happens next. This book goes through the lives of the people during the fire and shows their hardships through great detail. The Great Fire was caused by many mistakes including a tired fire department. They did all they could, but were unsuccessful because they were unprepared for such a disaster. I would recommend this book to people searching for a good historical non-fiction book.

"Fire, Fire, Fire," shouts Jim Murphy, reconstructing the events surrounding the Great Fire of Chicago in 1871. Weaving together personal accounts and historical facts, he presents a minute-by-minute portrayal of the Fire's destructive path, peoples' unsuccessful attempts to control it, and their consequent flight and rebuilding. Bibliography and sources demonstrate Murphy's in-depth examination of the Great Fire; through text and illustrations, he recreates the Fire for readers. Objectively, chronologically, and sparked with details from diverse personal experiences, Murphy maintains a dangerous, exciting narrative tone. Developing like a novel, chapters titled by individuals' words about the Fire, Murphy's descriptive, concise text, containing phrases like "tar-saturated wood burned like a torch" and "sturdy brick structures had been transformed into blackened skeletons" ends with an impressive index for student reference (p.72 and p.82). Detailed city maps, drawings of the city before and after the Fire, black and white photographs, all thoroughly explained and related to the text, enhance understanding of the Fire's devastation. Murphy's action-packed narrative, with its occasionally difficult vocabulary such as "flames were driving thither with demon precision," seems perfect for ten through thirteen year old audiences. Younger students can learn it as a read aloud or older students can read it independently and both will feel the Fire's heat turning each page until they escape and the flames flicker out.

5-star rating is for the quick delivery. Book rating would be 4-star based on my 11 year old son's

interest in the book. Good historical information, quick read with pictures throughout. We purchased the book along with an audio version of it to follow along.

On the night of October 8, 1871, a fire broke out in a barn belonging to Patrick and Catherine O'Leary. Before the fire was finally quenched, an area roughly four miles by one mile, comprising the very center of Chicago, was burned out, and some 100,000 people were left homeless. In this fascinating book, award-winning author Jim Murphy traces the events of that fateful night, lavishly using the words of actual eyewitnesses. This is a great book, and an excellent resource on the Great Chicago Fire! The author spins his account out, giving it the feeling of a story, one that sucks you in, and transports you right into the fire. Containing stories that are both heartwarming and terribly distressing, I loved every minute of this read. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the Great Chicago Fire, or in anyone who just likes a great read.

The book was a great way to read about history. It wasn't boring at all. I've already read it about 3 or 4 times it was so good. I wish all of our history books were like that I think it would make school 10 times more fun and not boring.

In the book *The Great Fire* the author gives you a lot of amazing facts, pictures, and he lets you see what is going through four main character's eyes. One of the amazing facts this book gives you is that the people who told the fire engines what place to go, miscalculated it three times, and sent the fire engines in wrong directions. One of the great pictures they give you is a lady on postcard posing as Catherine O'Leary milking the cow that started the fire. This book is a great book for young readers like me. I give *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy two thumbs up.

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