

My Brothers' Flying Machine

by Jane Yolen

Little, Brown and Co. (an AOL Time Warner company)

A Reading and Discussion Guide

Prepared by Sandra Leifeld
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SUMMARY:

On December 17, 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright made their first flight. It all started when their father brought home a flying toy. This is the story of the brothers told by their younger sister, Katharine. She tells of their jobs and how they worked so hard to prove what they believed – that man could fly. The reader also comes to know Katharine's belief in her brothers and her support of their activities. Burke's full page paintings take the text one step further with their detail of the Wright brothers' attempts and achievements.

Recommended for ages 6-9.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever flown in an airplane? How did it feel? Did you like it?
2. Have you ever flown a kite, paper airplane, or model airplane? How did you control it?
3. What does it mean "to invent?" Can you think of something you might invent?
4. What were some of the jobs Orville and Wilbur had? Which one would you like to do?
5. Do you have any brothers or sisters? Are they older or younger? What are some of the things you do together?
6. Can you find Dayton, Ohio and Kitty Hawk, North Carolina on the map?
7. Who was the Italian that dreamed of flying over four hundred years before the Wright Brothers' flight at Kitty Hawk?

ACTIVITIES:

1. Make a paper airplane and see how far you can fly it. Try some flights with friends. If someone makes a different style plane, which one flies farthest?
2. Make a timeline of the Wright Brothers attempts at flight.
3. For more activities see the book: *Wright Brothers for Kids –21 activities for science & flight* by Mary Kay Carson.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Jane Yolen was born in New York City in 1939. The family moved to Virginia and California, but later returned to New York where young Jane went to grade school. Here she wrote scripts, music and lyrics for school plays. Her writing and musical skills were further developed while she attended high school and Smith College. After graduation Jane Yolen worked in publishing before settling with her family in Massachusetts to pursue a career in writing. Her fiction books for children number in the hundreds – and include *Owl Moon* and *How do Dinosaurs Say Good Night?* She also writes poetry, non-fiction, and novels for young adults. In her free time Yolen is also a song writer and storyteller. Today Jane Yolen and her husband spend their time between a farm in Massachusetts and a home in Scotland.

HELPFUL LINKS:

To learn more about the author visit: <http://www.janeyolen.com>

Wright Brothers Aeroplane Company and Museum of Pioneer Aviation:
<http://www.first-to-fly.com>

Plane Math: <http://www.planemath.com/activities/pmenterprises/training.html>

Re-Living The Wright Way: <http://wright.grc.nasa.gov/>

Aeronautics Kidspage: <http://www.ueet.nasa.gov/StudentSite>

SUGGESTED READINGS:

Nonfiction:

Daredevils of the Air by Karen Bledsoe

Touching the Sky by Louise Borden

Wright Brothers for Kids –21 activities for science & flight by Mary Kay Carson

Airborne – photobiography of Wilbur and Orville Wright by Mary Collins
Wright Brothers – how they invented the airplane by Russell Freedman
Into the Air – an illustrated timeline of flight by Ryan Ann Hunter
Wright Sister - Katharine Wright and her famous brothers by Richard Maurer
One Fine Day – a radio play by Elizabeth Van Steenwyk

Picture Books:

The Flyers by Allan Drummond
Wee and the Wright Brothers by Timothy R Gaffney
The Wondrous Whirligig by Andrew Glass



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