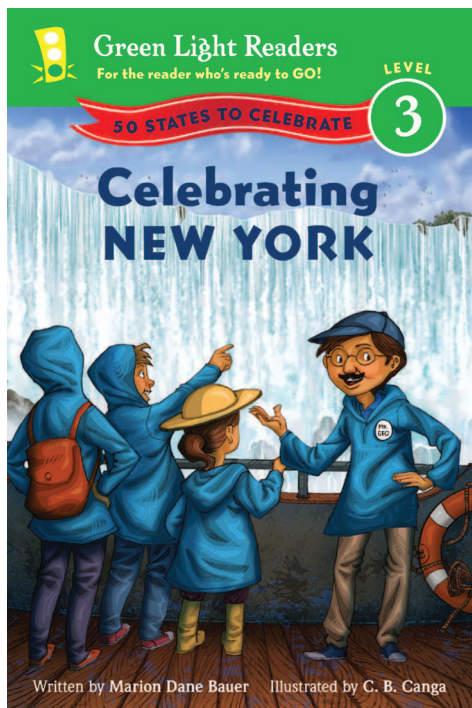


Celebrating New York by MARION DANE BAUER

Illustrated by C. B. Canga



Book Summary:

From the Empire State Building and the Brooklyn Bridge to the quiet moose in the wilds of the Adirondack Mountains, from the Erie Canal to Old Albany, Mr. Geo once again leads readers on an informative and delightful journey across New York State. Incorporating geographical, cultural, and natural landmarks, *Celebrating New York* is a wonderful introduction to the state for children and adults alike.

Discussion Questions for Read-Aloud

- If you were going to visit New York, where would you go first? Why?
- New York State is home to New York City, one of the biggest and most diverse cities in the world. Would you like to live in New York City? Why or why not? Do you prefer country or city living?
- Why do you think New York's motto is "Ever upward"? What does that motto tell you about the goals of the early New York settlers?
- Which is your favorite New York sports team? Why?
- Some people think only of New York City when they think of New York State—but it is home to so much more. Surprisingly, more than half of the state is covered with forests! What kinds of wild-life might you encounter in the forests of New York?
- New York was the first state to create state parks, land set aside to be "forever wild." Do you think this was a good idea? Why or why not?
- Before Europeans settled in New York, the land around it was home to an elaborately organized Native American culture, governed by the League of Five Nations. What might our country's first leaders have learned from the Iroquois when they were forming our government?
- New York was home to many historical heroes—from Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth to Horace Greeley and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Who is your favorite New York hero? Why?
- An immigrant was one of the people chosen to design the new tower on the site of the World Trade Center, destroyed on September 11, 2001. Why is this representative of the spirit of New York?

Teaching Ideas

- **Geography:** Give your students copies of the New York City subway map (easily found online). Ask them to practice giving subway directions from one landmark to another, using this map. You might say, for example, "What trains would you take to get from the American Museum of Natural History to the Brooklyn Bridge?"
- **Native Americans in New York:** The League of Five Nations and the Iroquois tribe have a long and storied history in New York State and the surrounding areas. Ask students to study the ways in which Native American culture has contributed to the development of the state. What did we learn from the Iroquois, for exam-

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ple, about government? What Native American sport do we still play today?

- **Natural Landmarks:** Niagara Falls is a natural landmark that is well known across the world. It has been a tourist destination for many, many years. You might ask your students to research Niagara Falls, and to write a story about visiting. They might imagine themselves getting sprayed with water as they ride on the *Maid of the Mist*, or even tumbling over the falls in a barrel!
- **Cultural Landmarks:** New York City is a city of immigrants—both historically and still today. Ellis Island is emblematic of New York’s melting pot. Many families in the United States can trace family history back to Ellis Island. With your class, learn more about Ellis Island and the time period during which it was active. Ask students to imagine the journey to New York City through Ellis Island, and then compare that journey with the journey of contemporary immigrants.
- **Fun Facts:** Mr. Geo presents many facts throughout the book. Ask students to research and collect even more fun facts together, and then collect them into your class’s own “fun fact” book about New York.
- **Mapmaking:** New York City is home to the biggest subway system in the country. You might ask students to study the way the New York City subway map works, and to create their own imaginary subway system map for your town.

A Lesson: Historical Fiction in New York State!

Materials Needed:

- At least one copy of *Celebrating New York*
- Writing material and paper
- Chart paper and a marker (or your preferred method of recording notes)
- You may want to have on hand some other resources for researching the history of New York.

Background Knowledge: This lesson fits well within the context of both a study of historical fiction and a

social studies unit on the history of New York, though it stands alone as well. Your students will need to be familiar with the book *Celebrating New York*. It will be helpful if you have discussed various aspects of New York history described in *Celebrating New York* with your students as well, from the history of the Iroquois Nation to the battles of the Revolutionary War, from the ships of immigrants docking at Ellis Island to the Seneca Falls Convention for women’s rights.

Set up: Gather your students together in your class meeting area.

Introduction: You might begin this lesson by telling students that today they will begin to write historical fiction stories set in the time period of their choice in New York State. It will be helpful to ask students to help you as you list on chart paper several options for when and where students might choose to set their stories. Ask students to either imagine a character of their own age or to imagine themselves as an historical character in a story set in an important period in New York history. Students might imagine being a child on board one of the ocean liners that brought immigrants through Ellis Island, for example. They might imagine being a passenger along the Underground Railroad with Harriet Tubman, or a young attendee of the Seneca Falls Convention. As they write, you’ll want to encourage them to add as many historically accurate details as they can into their stories. This may require a bit of research!

Work Time: As students write and research, you’ll circulate and give support where it is needed. Some students may benefit from support by adding in historically accurate details. Some may benefit from support with planning their story before they begin to write. It is likely that students will need more than one class period to finish.

Share: You might ask students to share their drafts with partners, and to help each other add even more historically accurate details to their stories.