



# Hope Springs

*Eric Walters , Eugenie Fernandes (Illustrations)*

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A drought has settled in the area around the orphanage where Boniface lives. There are long line-ups at the tiny spring where all the local people get their water, and suddenly the orphans are pushed to the back of the line, unwelcome. Boniface's houseparent, Henry, tells him that the people were mean out of fear--they feared there would not be enough water for their families. When the building of the orphanage's well is completed, Boniface has an idea to help the villagers. A lovely story of kindness and heart, this story shows that, through compassion and understanding, true generosity can spring from unexpected places.

## Hope Springs Details

Date : Published September 9th 2014 by Tundra Books

ISBN : 9781770495302

Author : Eric Walters , Eugenie Fernandes (Illustrations)

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Cultural, Canada, Africa

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# From Reader Review Hope Springs for online ebook

## Barbara says

Although he lives in a Kenyan orphanage with several other youngsters, Boniface has a generous heart. He's taken aback when several locals chase him away from the spring where he's waiting to draw some water. When one of his caregivers explains the reasons for their reaction and tells him that they are digging for a well for the orphanage, the young boy is reassured. When the water starts to flow, Boniface has not forgotten how desperate the others were for this life-giving substance. Based on a true series of events, this picture book paints a clear picture of compassion in the face of cruelty born from fear. The text is just as lively and engaging as the acrylic illustrations that show the faces of the children and the search for water. Having photographs and a discussion of the actual events adds even more substance to this wonderful story. I enjoyed the book's gentle reminder about sharing what we have with others.

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## Karen Degroot says

I've read this book to so many classes (K-6) Wonderful.

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## Kate Hastings says

Grades 2-7. Based on a true story that happened in Kenya. Three orphans were turned away from a spring because of a severe water shortage. The orphanage later built a well and had plenty of water-- but on the of the orphans realized the people in town still needed access to water. His kindness and compassion led to another well being built so that everyone could have enough.

Issues: renewable/non-renewable resources, service learning (Ugandan Water Project), problem-solving and compassion.

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## Joy says

Grade Level: Primary and Intermediate

Comments: Hope Springs is a fictional story based on true events about children living at the Rolling Hills Residence in Kenya who were not allowed to collect water from a community spring. Soon after the children were denied access to the spring, the orphanage's well was finished, but the children wanted to help build a well for the rest of the families in the community, the same families who denied the children access to the spring out of fear of running out of water. Hope Springs tells how the children's' inspiration led to a cooperative project to build the well. The book was written by the founders of the orphanage, and children at the orphanage are the characters in the story. Although not all of the events in the book are true, the last few pages tell the real story. The book celebrates an act of kindness, the children in the orphanage, and is respectful of the culture presented.

Curriculum Connection: Hope Springs connects to several units in the McGraw Hill Wonders Curriculum. The book would enhance units about helping others, working together to create change, and natural

resources. The book would also be an excellent book to share with students during the Backpack Walk fundraiser.

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### **Jordan Moore says**

Another inspiring story by Eric Walters based on real events about an orphanage in Kenya and their struggle to get water.

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### **Mary says**

This is a good book for children with longer attention spans about the importance of being kind and caring for others. A young boy makes a difference in the lives of the villagers in his village when he suggests digging a well for water, even after the villagers had been mean to him. The illustrations are intricate and the words are small, but it is a great humanist story to share with children.

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### **Alice says**

This beautifully told story tells about orphans who are excluded from collecting water in a nearby village because the orphans are "not from here." The orphanage is building a well and the eldest boy there has been watching the project and helping. When water is finally struck, the boy learns that they have not just been given water, but life. Now, despite his treatment at the village spring, he wants to help the villagers also have life. Inspiring.

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### **Martha says**

This touching story is based on a true event that occurred in an orphanage in Kenya. During a particularly dry season the orphans had to take their containers to a nearby well to gather water for their orphanage, because theirs had dried up. Told through the gentle voice of a young orphan boy Boniface, when the orphans found a well the villagers gruffly turned all of them away, because they feared there wouldn't be enough water for their own families. Boniface was devastated, but the people of the orphanage persevered continuing to dig the well they had begun. The rewarding ending continues to focus on Boniface, reflecting his generosity of spirit as he worries about the people from the village who turned them away. Wanting to share their water he says, "We are not so desperate.....so perhaps we can be kind. I know that when you give water you give life." The beautiful illustrations painted in vibrant acrylic, capture the lush foliage of their home and the expressive innocent faces of the orphans with a delightful folk art quality. This would be an excellent read aloud for children to learn about, irrigation, a multi-cultural unit, or to enlighten them that in some communities, children are grateful to be alive and help one another to survive. The author's note at the end describes the orphanage and the real event that occurred in the story.

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## **Jennybeast says**

These books are both excellent promotional vehicles for a charitable orphanage in Kenya, and lovely biographical works about the children who live there. Simple stories with a profound kindness and impact, that do a beautiful job of showing how children in this part of Africa live. Neither cloying, nor pitying, and full of hope.

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## **Pam Page says**

Eric Walters and his wife founded an orphanage in Kenya, an area known for little water and long walks and hard work to obtain water for living. This story is based on their experiences and digging a well to avoid long walks and waits for water. The story is full of hope, kindness, and generosity but what is amazing is the story behind the story! This is based on a true story and that is told in the back of the book. This is touching and gives those of us with easy access to water something to ponder!

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## **Mary Prado says**

CBZ Book Review For---

Hope Springs

Written by Eric Walters

Illustrated by Eugenie Fernandez

Boniface is a young African boy who lives in an orphanage. Boniface's life isn't easy. He and his brother went to the spring everyday in search of water. He waited in long lines as the water trickled out of the spring drop by drop. Sometimes the women would treat Boniface and his twin brother Charles mean. One woman told them, "You may live here, but you are not from here" --- "this is our water for our families." It was sad how they were treated.

A well was being dug at the orphanage but it wasn't ready yet. Henry knew they needed to complete the project very soon. Concerned for the children Ruth and Henry paid some women from the village to go get water for the orphanage.

Meanwhile the men continued digging the well and they finally found water. Life sustaining water---water for food, to drink, bath and even wash clothes!! Boniface was happy but he was also sad. When he looked into the valley he could see the people in the village still standing in very long lines for water. Even after all the mean things they said and did to Boniface he wanted to help them. He proposed an idea and the people accepted. Boniface's heart was so full of compassion and love. He did something for these people that would give back to this community for years and years to come. They taught the villagers to build a well too.

Hope Springs is a beautiful story. With colorful and beautiful illustrations. This book is a great opportunity to show that life isn't so simple in other places around the world. At the end of the story Author, Eric Walters

tells about his travels to the African orphanage and meeting Boniface. I really loved this book!!

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### **The Styling Librarian says**

Hope Springs by Eric Walters, illustrated by Eugenie Fernandes – Picture book – beautiful story about a well being dug in a community desperate for water. Appreciated the action and hope portrayed in the book.

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### **Paula Hollohan says**

A luscious picture book by Eric Walters that is based on a true story that is recounted at the end. This is a great book to use in the upper elementary grades to show 1. the importance of water 2. the importance of doing for others 3. the importance of helping not only with money. A teachable book. Grades 2-6.

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### **Alex (not a dude) Baugh says**

In Hope Springs, returns to Kenya to tell the story of Boniface. Boniface live in an orphanage with many other children, and each child has certain chores to do everyday. Boniface's chore to to go down the mountain with other children and collect water in containers at a little spring some distance away.

But there has been a drought in Kenya and the other people at the spring don't want to share the water with the orphanage, tossing their water containers aside.

Luckily, a well was being dug for the orphanage, but sadly, it was taking a long time. Each day after school, Boniface raced over to see how the well was coming along. Finally, one day, the well was deep enough and water starts gushing into it. The orphanage would at last have all the water they needed.

But Boniface wasn't satisfied. He went to the orphanage's houseparents, Henry and Ruth, and asked if it would be possible to dig another well by the little spring with the leftover materials. And so with everyone helping, a second well was dug, providing enough water for the very same people that had refused to share with Boniface.

Both Walters and Fernandes return to the successful format of their book, My Name is Blessing in this wonderful story of kindness, sharing and community. Boniface lives also lives in a Creation of Hope orphanage similar to the one Muthini was taken to by his grandmother. Like Muthini's story, Hope Springs is also based on a true story.

Walters manages to tell the story of the wells in an entertaining way. It is a feat of good writing to be able to tell a story in an entertaining manner while, at the same time, educating the reader about the importance of water where is it scarce and showing how an act of kindness can change a community's life and attitude without sounding preachy or making it didactic.

Fernandes returns to her earth-tone palette of browns, blues, greens and yellows in her lovely acrylic illustrations.

At the back of the Hope Springs, are a number of pages about the real Boniface, the problem of drought and the lack of water in Kenya and the work being done to help alleviate this situation.

Hope Springs and Walter's other book My Name is Blessing are excellent companion books and make thoughtful, inspiring read alouds, though given the subject matter they are really picture books for older readers.

Eric Walters has written over 92 books, including novels for kids of all ages and topics, yet he still finds time to remain active in the Creation of Hope project.

This book is recommended for readers age 7+  
This book was an EARC from Netgalley

This review was originally posted at Randomly Reading

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### **Samantha says**

A look at how drought in Kenya effects an orphanage.

Water is an essential for all humans, but in parts of Africa it can be very hard to come by. The author has first hand experience working in communities for which this is a reality and does a good job of making the reader consider the plight of children half a world away, though the story itself isn't very well written. My biggest problem with the writing was the fact that what was built up to be Boniface's big moment, his struggle to find the right words with which to address a group of people who had previously shown him unkindness, was talked about after the fact, not shown in the present which would've made the story read better.

I was hoping to see some information about ways in which the reader could help the community they just read about, but the back matter covers only the people and place this story was based upon, not resources for aid. With that said, it was nice to see a picture of the real children this book was written about.

PreK-2.

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