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Comment Summary

Below are just a few examples of inaccurate information about this book. We understand that this is a children's book; but the amount of inaccurate information in this book is a great example of how much is misunderstood about this part of Cherokee history.

This book is a very poor choice for a classroom. It belittles the epic failure of humanity in the United States at this time. It undermines the racial bias and lack of understanding of the culture and Cherokee people themselves. I would not recommend this book for any child, it is a great example of the overall misunderstanding of dominant culture of these events.

The following are points of how almost every sentence written is inaccurate or insulting.

Cover page – The clothing and hair styles are totally non Cherokee. Cherokee are not known and have never been known for wearing headbands like the picture seems to suggest. The houses pictured do not fit the 1839 timeline.

Page one talks about Cherokee being upset in Oklahoma, Oklahoma did not become a state until 1907. This was Indian Territory and the place they were at was known as Cherokee Nation. Referencing Oklahoma again as a place on the second and third pages.

Also, the authors write many Cherokee lived in a fort. It is unlikely that over 11,000 Cherokees would have lived in a fort. This is historically incorrect.

Girls did not use stickball sticks when playing stickball. (Culturally incorrect)

The book talks about being cold and being fenced in. This is untrue. Cherokees were rounded up in the spring. Most of the places they were held were not fenced, some small places were, but they were moved from those places pretty quickly and camped in large fields. These places were patrolled. If someone attempted to leave, they were shot. There is documentation on all of this.

This book portrays the European as kind and sympathetic toward the Cherokee prisoners. This totally contradicts the whites' views on Cherokee and other Native Americans at the time.

Cherokees were originally moved out of their homes by soldiers into small internment camps, and then forced into a few very large Internment camps that held the majority of the Cherokees.

Cherokee Nation's leaders wanted to conduct the removal themselves. The people selected leaders who lead groups of Cherokee to the lands in the west.

Soldiers for the most part did not escort the Cherokee during the Removal. This book often references the soldiers on the journey. This is historically inaccurate.

Page 12 references the whites watching them pass in silence. Although there were some homes and small settlements during the removal period the lands they walked through were not a part of the United States.

Most white settlers did not want to come out to watch the Cherokees pass by. A combination of racism and fear of disease kept whites away for the most part. Cherokee were stuck in the internment camps where diseases broke out.

As for the whites feeding the Cherokees, Cherokee leaders were in charge of their own removal at this time, they would go to farmers and small stores and buy provisions for the groups, the whites selling these items were also raising the prices very high for the Cherokees to buy these needed supplies.

Page 18, Cherokee Nation won in the Supreme Court case Worcester v. Georgia.(1832), which contradicts the statement about Cherokee losing in the court. False statement. Andrew Jackson refused to follow the ruling the Supreme Court issued.

Joseph and I understand the category of the book is Historical fiction. In our opinion the book is entirely fiction. None of the historical information was correct. We would not recommend this book for classroom use.

These comments are respectively submitted by

Joseph Erb and

Gloria Sly