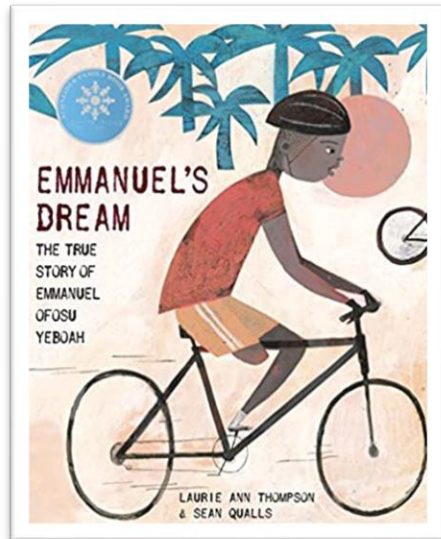


# Read for Pleasure

## Emmanuel's Dream

By Laurie Ann Thompson and Sean Qualls



In Ghana, West Africa, a baby was born: two bright eyes blinked in the light, two tiny fists opened and closed, but only one strong leg kicked.

Here is the inspiring true story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah, who cycled an incredible four hundred miles across Ghana to spread his powerful message: disability does not mean inability.

### Cover Chat

First let's look at the cover of this picture book.

- Before we read about Emmanuel, what do you think he loves doing?
- Where might he be cycling and why?
- Look closer at Emmanuel. Do you notice anything that would make cycling more difficult for him? Why would this be?
- Do you think he was born this way, or might his situation have been caused by an accident? Does it matter?
- Why do you think he would want to cycle if he only had one leg?
- What might this tell us about his character?

### Title Talk

Now let's consider the title of this story: *Emmanuel's Dream*.

- What do you think Emmanuel's dream might be?
- We are also told that this is a true story. Do you think this is important? Discuss.

### **Page 1-2**

- A baby boy is born. Is this baby strong and healthy?
- Who do you think is cradling him on page 1?
- Does she look happy? Why might this be?
- She looks over towards someone on page 2. Who might this be?
- What might she be thinking at this time?
- Why might the man have closed his eyes?
- What might he be thinking and feeling at this time?
- Would he be right to be thinking and feeling this way? Discuss.

### **Page 3-4**

- What does Emmanuel's father decide to do?
- Why do you think he leaves?
- What did Mama Comfort name her first child?
- What does the name Emmanuel mean?
- Why might she have chosen this name?

### **Page 5-6**

- As Emmanuel grew, what did his Mama say to him?
- Why do you think she said this?
- Do you think this was the right thing to say? Discuss.
- Can you spot three things that this taught Emmanuel on page 6?

### **Page 7-8**

- Did Mama Comfort view Emmanuel's education as being important?
- Why might this be?
- What did she do that shows us that she wanted Emmanuel to learn?
- How did this impact Emmanuel's view of school and education?
- What did he do when he was older (and too heavy to be carried) in order to go to school? Would you have done this?

### **Page 9-10**

- Why might the other children not have wanted to play with Emmanuel?
- What did he do to encourage his classmates to play with him?
- Think back to page 6. How do you think he raised the money to buy a new football?
- What does this tell us about Emmanuel's strength of character and resourcefulness?
- In time, he was playing football just like everyone else, albeit with the aid of crutches. What might this teach us about including others (no matter who they are) in the games that we play? Discuss.

### **Page 11-12**

- How did Emmanuel's friend Godwin help him to ride a bike?
- Why might some consider this to have been a silly endeavour? Discuss.
- Why might some have said it was too dangerous for him to learn to ride?
- Each time Emmanuel fell, what would he do next?
- What does this tell us about Emmanuel's spirit of determination?
- What does his determination to succeed result in?
- Have we seen such determination within Emmanuel before? Where?

### **Page 13-14**

- Why did Emmanuel leave Mama Comfort and his siblings when he was thirteen years old?
- Where did he go? How did he get there?
- Why do you think he did this in secret, sneaking out to board a midnight train?
- What might this tell us about A] Emmanuel and B] Mama Comfort?

### **Page 15-16**

- Why might so many shopkeepers and restaurant owners have refused to give Emmanuel a job and told him to go away and beg instead?
- Why do you think Emmanuel refused to do this? Discuss.

- Did everyone in Accra think Emmanuel should beg for money rather than earn it by working hard?
- How important was this door of opportunity? Discuss.

### **Page 17-18**

- What does Emmanuel do to earn money?
- Where does he send this money? What does this tell us about Emmanuel?
- Why do you think Emmanuel felt insulted by the shopkeeper when he was trying to buy supplies for his shoe shining business? Discuss.

### **Page 19-20**

- Why did Emmanuel eventually return home?
- What were Mama Comfort's final words? Why do you think she spoke them? Discuss.
- Why do you think Emmanuel treasured these words like a GIFT?
- How does he decide to honour his Mama and her words?
- What do you think he wanted to prove?
- Do you think Emmanuel is right to think that being DISABLED does not mean being UNABLE? Discuss.
- What do you think his big dream might be?

### **Page 21-22**

- Here we find out what Emmanuel's plan is. What does he plan to do?
- Find Ghana on a map. What would it take to cycle around this country? Discuss.
- What did people initially think of Emmanuel's plan? Why might this be?
- How did Emmanuel react to this negativity? Did it deter him from letting go of his dream?
- What does he do to keep his dream alive?
- Who do you think he was thinking of at this time? Why might this be?
- Have we seen Emmanuel's strength and determination before? When?

- Interestingly, if Mama Comfort hadn't been determined to carry him to school or Emmanuel determined to carry on his education when he was older, he wouldn't have been able to write to the Challenged Athletes Foundation. Why is this significant? Discuss.
- Does his effort pay off? What does Emmanuel eventually receive?
- Notice that the **Challenged Athletes Foundation** is not based in Ghana and, as its name suggests, it focuses on athletes rising up and facing their CHALLENGE and not their disability. How important is this? Discuss.

Look at their website.

What positive impact do they continue to have today?

[www.challengedathletes.org](http://www.challengedathletes.org)

### **Page 23-24**

- Emmanuel is ready to face his challenge and fulfil his dream. Why do you think he seeks and finds the following before he sets off?
  - \* A blessing of his regional king?
  - \* Financial support from his community?
  - \* A taxi to follow him that carries plenty of drinking water?
  - \* A camera?
  - \* Support from his best friends so they can be with him on his journey?

### **Page 25-26**

- Through which terrains did Emmanuel cycle on his journey around Ghana?
- We are told he cycled from Accra to Kumsai and onwards to Tamale (to name but a few). Where are these places in Ghana? Find them on a map. What distance would Emmanuel have covered during this time?
- What did he wear during his journey around Ghana?



THE POZO (THE DISABLED PERSON)

- Why do you think this was so important to Emmanuel? What message was he trying to give to those who saw him? Discuss.

### **Page 27-28**

- Why do you think Emmanuel stopped and talked to others with physical challenges rather than just continue on his cycling journey?
- How important would this have been for A] Emmanuel, B] those he spoke to and C] others who saw him speaking to them?
- Who else did Emmanuel speak to? Why is this important?
- What do you think he spoke to them about? What was his message? Discuss.

### **Page 29-30**

- As he cycled around Ghana with one leg, Emmanuel was cheered along by children and others who had kept themselves hidden from their community. Indeed, able-bodied adults joined Emmanuel on his ride. Why is this significant?
- Did it surprise you to learn that Emmanuel became a national hero? Why not?

### **Page 31**

- How many miles did Emmanuel ride?
- How long did it take him to cover this distance?
- Read the final sentence of this book. What did Emmanuel prove?

**He proved that one leg is enough to do great things and one person is enough to change the world.**

Discuss what this means to you?

Think about Emmanuel's story as a whole:

*"In this world, we are not perfect. We can only do our best."*

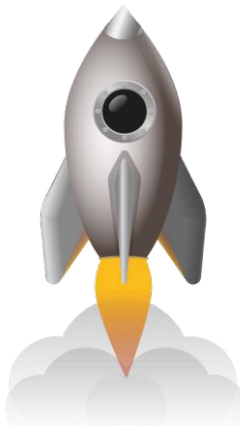
*Emmanuel Ofofu Yeboah*

How true are these words?

How inspirational is Emmanuel's story?

What does it teach us about how we should view someone with a disability?

What does it teach us about how we should view ourselves?



The perfect companion to  
Reading Rocketeers: **Unit 3.15**

## **John Murray**

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John is a recognised specialist in developing children's reading and comprehension.

The creator of Reading Explorers, Top Class Comprehension and Reading Rocketeers, his seminars and CPD training focus on the teaching, learning and enjoyment of reading.

An independent Literacy consultant, he aims to support schools to improve their performance and secure best practice. Above all, it is to ignite within us a passion for books and a genuine love for the written word.

His enthusiasm and expertise can be seen throughout his work and his resources and training are used in classrooms worldwide.

“A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies... The man who never reads lives only one.”

George R.R. Martin