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# The Mostly True Adventures Of Homer P. Figg



## Synopsis

The 2010 Newbery Honor Book by highly acclaimed author Rodman Philbrick is now in paperback! In this Newbery Honor-winning page-turner, twelve-year-old orphan Homer runs away from Pine Swamp, Maine, to find his older brother, Harold, who has been sold into the Union Army. With laugh-aloud humor, Homer outwits and outruns a colorful assortment of civil War-era thieves, scallywags, and spies as he makes his way south, following clues that finally lead him to Gettysburg. Even through a hail of gunfire, Homer never loses heart--but will he find his brother? Or will it be too late? With engaging wit and comical repartee reminiscent of Mark Twain, master storyteller Rodman Philbrick introduces us to the unforgettable character of Homer in his latest groundbreaking novel.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 950 (What's this?)

Paperback: 240 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 78 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #29,339 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #38 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s](#) #43 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Military & Wars](#) #68 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Orphans & Foster Homes](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Philbrick (*Freak the Mighty*) offers rip-roaring adventure in this Civil War "era novel featuring a mistreated orphan who doesn't let truth stand in the way of spinning a good yarn. When his guardian, Uncle Squinton "the meanest man in the entire state of Maine" sells off Homer P. Figg's older brother, Harold, to take a rich man's son's place in the Union army, Homer can't just stand around doing nothing. Determined to alert the authorities (and his brother) that Harold is too

young to be a soldier, the plucky narrator traces the path of the regiment. He faces many dangers, including an abduction or two, and being robbed and thrown in with the pigs, and joining the Caravan of Miracles before landing smack in the middle of the Battle of Gettysburg, where he reunites with his brother and more or less drives the Confederates away. The book wouldn't be nearly as much fun without Homer's tall tales, but there are serious moments, too, and the horror of war and injustice of slavery ring clearly above the din of playful exaggerations. Ages 9â "12. (Jan.) Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

Grade 5â "8â "When his older brother gets conscripted into the Union Army, Homer runs away from his uncle, "the meanest man in the entire state of Maine." He sets out after Harold but has multiple misadventures along the way. He survives thanks to courage, luck, and his talent for telling lies when needed, since "old Truth ain't nearly as useful as a fib sometimes." Homer relates his own adventures in colorful language as he crosses paths with con men, rogues, and scoundrels of various types. The comic tone is reflected in character names, such as Stink and Smelt, the cold-blooded slave catchers, and the kind but shifty Professor Fleabottom. Things take a more somber tone when Homer sees the horrors of the battlefield up close. The final reunion of the brothers during the Battle of Gettysburg is bittersweet. Homer's escapades introduce some interesting features of the year 1863, including the Underground Railroad, a traveling medicine show, Civil War spies, and an early version of the hydrogen balloon. Homer runs into plenty of danger, but there's more comedy than suspense in most episodes. He also deals with some moral dilemmas as he tries to make sense of the wide world and find people and ideas to believe in. The engaging protagonist and mixture of humor and adventure make this a strong choice for fans of Sid Fleischman's tales.â "Steven Engelfried, Multnomah County Library, OR Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg is reminiscent of Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn but unlike Twain, Rodman Philbrick is writing for a middle grade and YA audience. Rodman Philbrick, best known for the classic *Freak the Mighty*, created a wonderful protagonist in Homer P. Figg. He is loyal, smart, scrappy and laugh-out-loud funny. When Homer's evil uncle sells Homer's little brother into the union army, Homer runs away to save him. To complete his quest, Homer must: rescue a free black man from slave traders, escape from abductors, survive being

robbed, and join a traveling circus, to name a few of his adventures and misadventures. The clever, humorous names of the characters Homer encounters (Uncle Squinton, Smelt, Professor Fleabottom) are entertaining enough to hold a reluctant reader's attention, but Homer's number one survival skill, telling whopper fibs, will keep readers anxiously awaiting the next adventure which usually comes in the next chapter. Reader's will admire Homer's determination, quick wit and very original problem solving skills, learn a little about the Civil War and probably go looking for a sequel which sadly does not exist - yet.

My grandson's class read this book in 5th grade and he told me how much he enjoyed it. We discussed it several times while they slowly read through the chapters over a couple of weeks. I very much enjoyed the time together discussing the subject matter. He suggested I get the book and read it myself , so I did. Great book for the appropriate age bracket , as this has some fairly graphic content about the civil war and slavery. I wouldn't suggest for under 5 grade , and would read along with an adult. Great discussion material.

Daughter needed a non-fiction book to read about the civil war. There are plenty of better reviews out there than I could write. This provides a storyline the touches on notable events during the war, culminating with the War at Gettysburg, which they took a field trip to. It was right on the mark.

I liked it the whole book there was nothing bad about it just a few things I did not understand but, hey that's just me right!

My daughter rented this book from the Library and then it got water damage. We had to purchase a new copy for the library and they let us keep the water damaged book. Now I want a new copy to keep in our home library. It is a fun story that reminds me of Huck Finn. I think kids of all ages will enjoy this story. It is the current nightly reading for myself and my 9 year old daughter. I have had to explain some events as we are reading because it is written in the same tone or language as Huck Finn as well so it can be a little complicated at times for a younger reader.

I needed a great story and found it here. So well written and exciting, in fact, that I stayed up late reading it and woke early the next morning to finish it. A Huck Finn in the Civil War kind of story, with hints of greatness like the original Huck.

This book has engaging characters that keep you reading. This is a great book for a novel study. I recommend this book to all!

I am pleased to introduce a guest blogger/reviewer today. Neal, my ten year old son, is willingly writing this review to earn a later bedtime (because I'm cruel like that). My mom read *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg* by Rodman Philbrick to us in the car while we were going on trips this summer. It is a book about a twelve-year-old boy trying to save his brother who was recruited to fight for the Union in the Civil War when he was underage. Homer has many adventures. At one point he's trapped in a pen of pigs and becomes part of a small traveling circus as the "Amazing Pig Boy". Homer likes Professor Fleabottom, who runs the circus, but he might not be who he says he is. He escapes in a silk reconnaissance balloon only to discover that he's landed on the wrong side of the war. This is a very interesting and funny book. I learned a lot about the Civil War. Homer is a daring and brave kid. He and his brother are orphans so his brother is the only family he's got. He is very good about getting out of scary situations. He thinks quickly on his feet and he can sure tell a whopper. Homer is also very smart. I recommend this book to anyone from 10 to 95 years old. Actually my five-year-old brother liked it too.

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