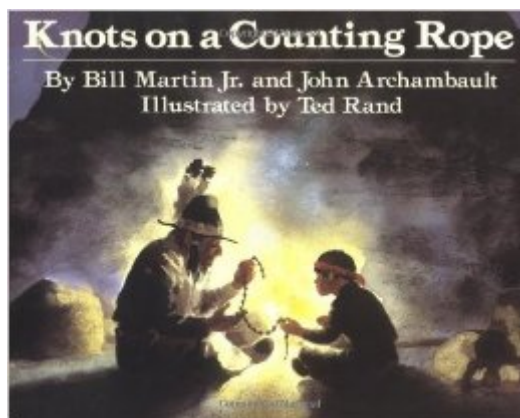


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# Knots On A Counting Rope (Reading Rainbow Books)



## Synopsis

In this poignant story, the counting rope is a metaphor for the passage of time and for a boy's emerging confidence in facing his blindness.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 480L (What's this?)

Series: Reading Rainbow Books

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (September 15, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0805054790

ISBN-13: 978-0805054798

Product Dimensions: 10 x 0.2 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 0.3 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (33 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #32,702 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans](#) #71 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Special Needs](#) #112 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Multigenerational](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

this is a book that has more intensity and insight with each new reading. it is the story of a physically handicapped child who with the support of his grandfather takes on a difficult challenge and competes to his highest potential. the story integrates overcoming challenges, unconditional parental love, hard work, and aging while finishing with a realistic outcome. the reader will be moved with pride and hope.

This book explains the passing of the generations in a child's terms. The grandfather explains that he will die, and the grandson does not want to hear it. But the grandfather shows that the powerful love of the family will support and strengthen the child as he faces the challenges of life and growth. This is the only book I've encountered that makes me cry when I read it to my kids.

Boy-Strength-of-Blue-Horses and his grandfather sit around the fire telling the stories of Boy's birth, his first horse and a horse race. Boy was born during a great storm and his parents feared the weak and sickly blind child would die. The next morning two blue horses galloped by and stopped to look at him, giving him his name. As Boy grows, he teaches his horse to run the trails until he enters a horse race. Neither the authors nor the illustrator are Native American. Consequently, there are multiple inaccuracies throughout the book. First, the dialogue is unrealistic. The language used is poetic, yet primitive, which depicts the stereotypical view of Native Americans. Also, a child would not be allowed to constantly interrupt his elder. Rather than being named after his first smile, a sick child would be named immediately. Additionally, a Native American would not say that "this boy child will not die." Such a statement would be considered both an insult and a challenge to the spirits. The illustrations do not accurately reflect the Navajo culture. The costumes worn by the Native Americans are a mixture of Navajo and Hopi celebration garb. The hairstyles are certainly not Navajo. The Navajo wear their hair clubbed and wrapped. However, throughout the book the women are depicted wearing braids while the men have their front hair braided and the rest hanging loose down their backs. Stereotypically, the grandfather and Boy wear eagle feathers sticking straight up from their hats.

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"Knots on a Counting Rope" is a miracle of children's literature. The main character is a young American Indian boy who is blind, and the story is told via a conversation between the Boy and his Grandfather about Boy's birth, growth, strength, learning and empowerment, preparing him to become an independent young man who will not always have his Grandfather around. If it isn't clear by that description, the story depicts the type of issues that are pertinent to a child with a handicap, who lives a minority lifestyle - "on the Rez", and close to nature. It respectfully depicts a flavor of Native culture, weaving teachings about the continuity of birth, life and death, with teachings about how we develop important skills for living, and the value of how we tell our story. The illustrations are nothing short of remarkable, each page a beautiful painting saturated with light and dark and a

muted palette that conjures mystery, imagination and reverence to match the dialogue. The dialogue, is honest, slow, filled with emptiness, and echoes of poetry. Based upon its length, this book is for elementary age children. I am going to try it with my preschoolers and will report if it holds their attention.

I generally do not read a summary of a book until after I have actually read the book. I am glad I did not do that with this particular book because it gave me the element of surprise. This book features two Native American Indians, an elder, and his grandson, sitting around a campfire. The elder begins telling the story of the young boy's birth and growth, a story that the grandson has heard many times but wishes it to be told again. As the story progresses, the tale gets more fantastic. The boy grows strong and faces obstacles of "the darkness" but overcomes them through the strength of his name and tenacity. The young boy has great reliance on his grandfather but his grandfather knows that his young grandson will make it on his own. This story was simply beautiful and told how someone that may be born with a disability can still live a strong life and still do many things, just differently. I loved the meaning behind the counting rope! The illustrations were done boldly and in darker muted colors to represent the blindness of the boy but also the telling of the story at night. The illustrations took up the majority of the pages with the telling of the story off to one side. Great addition! I would encourage anyone to have this book for their own collections and to be in all classrooms. To make this even more fantastic, this book was also selected as a Reading Rainbow book and featured on that show. 5 stars and another knot on the rope! Disclosure: I purchased a copy of this book for my own collections. The views expressed here are 100% my own and may differ from yours. ~Naila Moon

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