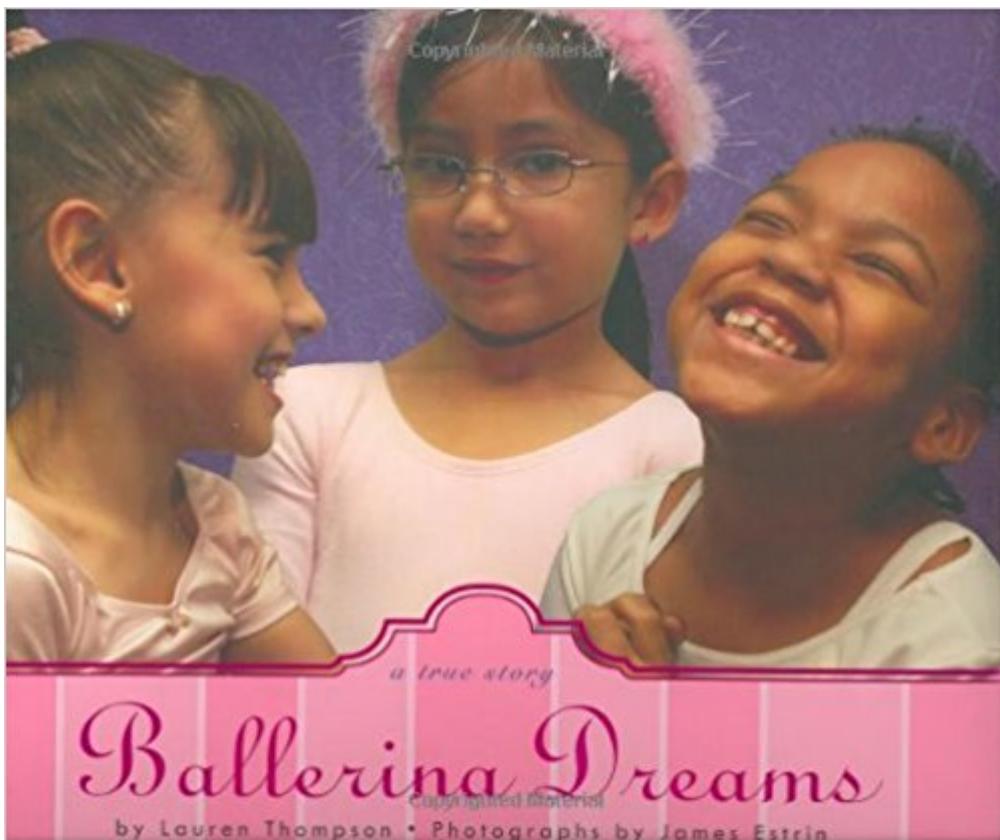


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# Ballerina Dreams: A True Story



## **Synopsis**

Once upon a time there were five little girls who shared a dream. They wanted to be ballerinas and dance on stage like their sisters and cousins and friends. But it would be hard for these girls to make their dream come true. They had cerebral palsy or other physical disabilities, which meant their muscles didn't move the way they wanted them to. Some wore leg braces. Some used wheelchairs and walkers to get around. But these girls were determined. They had a dedicated teacher. Every week they practiced. They worked hard. And one day they were ready. *Ballerina Dreams* is an inspiring true story of love, hope and courage for everyone and anyone who has ever wished (and worked) hard enough to make their dreams come true. *Ballerina Dreams* is the winner of the 2008 Bank Street - Flora Stieglitz Award.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: AD860L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

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Language: English

ISBN-10: 0312370296

ISBN-13: 978-0312370299

Product Dimensions: 10.6 x 0.4 x 0.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,526,002 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #99 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Health > Physical Disabilities #724 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts > Dance #1101 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Special Needs

Age Range: 5 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 3

## **Customer Reviews**

Starred Review. PreSchool-Grade 2  
•Five adorable little girls are given the opportunity to learn to dance like ballerinas and eventually perform on stage. This is no small accomplishment since the girls have cerebral palsy and other muscle disorders and several wear leg braces. To inspire them, their teacher, who is a dancer and physical therapist, gives each of them a glittery tiara

and a wand. Assistance is provided to them, as needed, by helpers between the ages of 11 and 16 who work with them during each class and at the recital. As the children learn the steps, their confidence improves and their muscles grow stronger. Finally on the day of the recital, the excitement of makeup and lovely costumes combines with the magic of performing to the beautiful music from *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake* as they realize their dreams. This is an inspiring portrayal of determination and love that will foster empathy among young readers. The colorful photographs of this dancing community working toward a common goal accurately and sensitively capture the struggles and joyful enthusiasm of all of the participants. Carol Schene,  
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Thompson frames (the girls') story as one of a dream come true . . . and in describing the girls' work with their teacher . . . the author stresses what these girls might have in common with the audience--their excitement, their delight in their tutus and tiaras, their last-minute jitters, their unmistakable pleasure in dancing . . . The insightful presentation encourages readers not only to identify with the dancers, but to draw inspiration from them as well. Publishers Weekly, starred review "This is an inspiring portrayal of determination and love that will foster empathy among young readers. The colorful photographs of this dancing community working toward a common goal accurately and sensitively capture the struggles and joyful enthusiasm of all of the participants." School Library Journal, starred review "Ballerina Dreams is a beautifully photographed book . . . what comes across most strongly is the matching joy on all of (the girls') faces as they demonstrate the skills they have honed . . . a lovely gift to aspiring young dancers of all abilities." National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD) "Inspiring." The Washington Post "This lovely book focuses on five little girls who long desperately to be ballerinas on stage . . . the overwhelming theme is simply joy. An example of a small idea making things better for a small group of children, this program is truly noteworthy, as is its loving founder." Kirkus Reviews "The images of openly thrilled performers, all supported from behind by teen helpers, are affecting in the extreme. With adult guidance, this will support character education units about perseverance, and young dancers drawn by the pink jacket (which doesn't hint at the girls' physical challenges) will emerge with a new empathy for those whose outward differences tend to set them apart." Booklist "[Ballerina Dreams] could go a long way to teach tolerance to today's youth, and remind adults that no dream is out of reach." •

Ã¢ ª ¢Oklahoma GazetteÃ¢ ª “Get out the Kleenex! Ballerina Dreams by Lauren Thompson is such a charming, heartwarming, bittersweet book that you cannot fail to be moved.Ã¢ ª•  
Ã¢ ª ¢Readia: Children’s Book Reviews (blog)Ã¢ ª “Five little girls with cerebral palsy and other physical disabilities share the dream of becoming ballerinas. With their powerful determination and the help of several committed teachers, these little girls get the chance to realize their dreams.Ã¢ ª|This touching story would be a useful resource in an early childhood educational setting as an example of individuals with different abilities or disabilities, and its message of determination in the face of adversity is one that parents and educators of children of all ages would find useful.Ã¢ ª•Ã¢ ª ¢Children’s Literature

Ballerina Dreams is an absolutely beautiful book for both children and adults. It illustrates the human spirit to best insurmountable challenges through determination, hardwork, dedication and love. The pictures and text capture the wonderful spirit of these beautiful dancers as well as their tenacious teacher, Joann Ferrara. Read this book, keep it near and when you are having a bad day and think life is tough, pull it out and get inspired!

Story is about three girls getting ready for a recital. One of the girls normally uses crutches, another has a wheel chair. Their mothers help support them as they are doing their dance.

This is a beautiful book and the pictures are lovely. It has a great message about including everyone. We all have worth and we all have dreams.

What a stunning book in so many ways. It’s touching and moving and beautifully put together. These little girls should be inspiration for everyone. When you’re faced with a seemingly impossible task, you should take note of these little ones with physical disabilities and what they can do and nothing will seem impossible again. It’s a book for people of all ages, and it really focuses on your abilities rather than inabilities and these girls look like they are having the time of their young lives. Joann Ferrara started teaching them ballet four years ago with only five students. She was a physical therapist and wanted to make childrens dreams of becoming ballerinas come true. She’s done a terrific job and with the help of handlers for these girls, they perform to standing ovations. With the holidays coming up, this book will make an excellent gift. It’s heartwarming and beautiful and I highly recommend it to everyone.

This is a book that I had heard about in one of my master's level classes. I am a therapist who works with very young children and this is a demonstration of how therapy should be done right--with highly motivated children! It brought tears of happiness to all who have read it. (I'd love to see a boys' version!!) The seller advertised it as being almost new and it arrived very quickly. When I opened the package it contained a library book with the plastic protective cover. I don't know why any library would discard this!!! It is sturdy enough for me to share for years.

Featuring gorgeous photography by Pulitzer Prize-winning team member James Estrin, Ballerina Dreams: A True Story is a picturebook following five little girls who wanted to become ballerinas and dance on stage. Each girl had cerebral palsy or other physical difficulties, which affect their control over their leg muscles; some use leg braces, wheelchairs, or walkers to get around. Yet with practice, hard work, and the aid of a committed teacher, they were able to realize their dream. A truly inspirational picturebook especially recommended for young girls of all backgrounds.

This is the story of 5 special girls who dream of being ballerinas. They all have some sort of physical ability that they have to try and work around. This is the story of their amazing class and how they work so hard to put on a great show! This gave me a chance to talk with my daughter who takes dance classes about how blessed that she is with good health.

This astonishing book tells the story, through pictures and a straight-forward narrative, of five little girls who work hard to fulfill their dreams. The determination of these beautiful children, their teenage helpers, and their low-key, high-voltage teacher is an important -- and most assuredly delightful -- lesson for everyone.

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