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A Voyage in the Clouds: The (Mostly) True Story of the First International Flight by Balloon in 1785

Nicole Clark

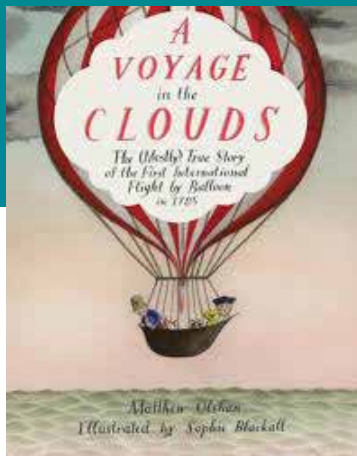
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Book Review

A Voyage in the Clouds: The (Mostly) True Story of the First International Flight by Balloon in 1785

In 1753, no one had ever traveled from one country to another via hot air balloon— until British Dr. John Jeffries and Frenchman Jean-Pierre Blanchard determine to be the first. Their aerial adventure is filled with hangups, however, not the least of which is that the two men are rivals who try to thwart each other before the balloon even leaves the ground. More problems await them in the air, forcing them to set aside their differences and find a creative solution that will land them safely on French soil.

With witty banter and downright humorous writing, Matthew Olshan manages to make this historical event come to life in book that will captivate readers as young as age five. Readers will be surprised to learn in the author's note that very few of the details in the book are artistic liberties; the author based the majority of the story on John Jeffries' own account of the voyage. Comic strip panels and frequent use of speech bubbles make Blanchard and Jeffries' personalities come to life. A muted color palette and wise choice of typeset throughout the book sets it distinctly in the past, while lightheartedly animated characters bring a modern feel.

*Blanchard and Jeffries urinate off of the hot air balloon to lighten its load. An illustration shows them from behind, clad in bloomers.

Author

Matthew Olshan

Illustrator

Sophie Blackall

Reviewer

Nicole Clark

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Primary, Intermediate

Pages

40

Year

2016

Publisher

Margaret Ferguson

ISBN

9780374329549