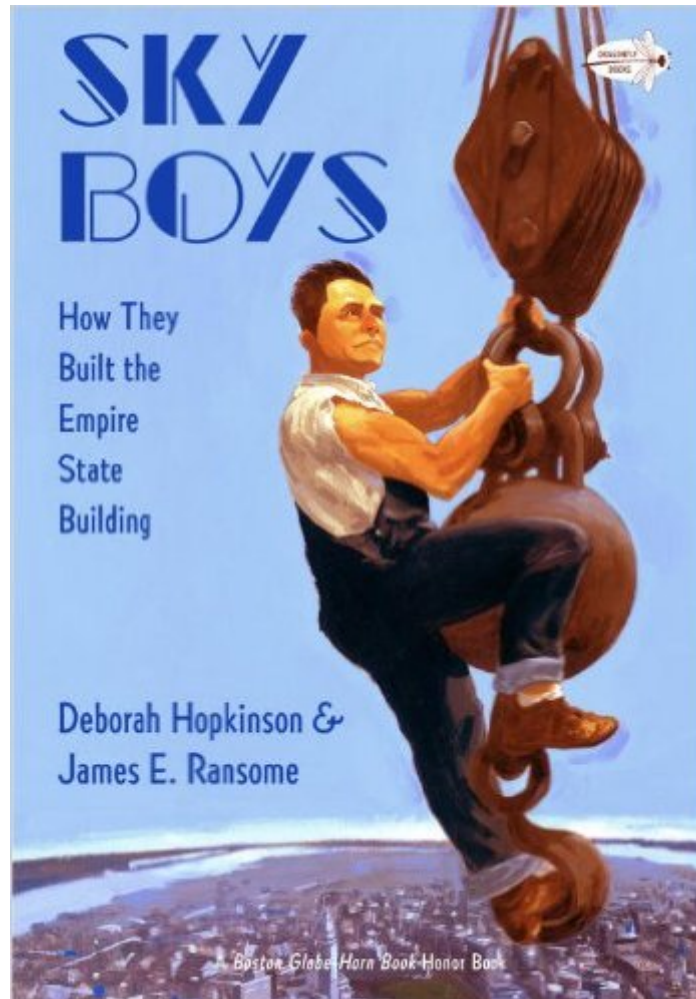


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# Sky Boys: How They Built The Empire State Building



## Synopsis

The unbeatable team of Deborah Hopkinson and James E. Ransome present a riveting brick-by-brick account of how one of the most amazing accomplishments in American architecture came to be. Join a young boy as he watches the Empire State Building being constructed from scratch, then travels to the top to look down on all of New York City in 1931. Hopkinson, a master of historical fiction, and Ransome, an award-winning illustrator, dazzle us with this ALA Notable and a Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor Book.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 950L (What's this?)

Paperback: 48 pages

Publisher: Dragonfly Books (January 10, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375865411

ISBN-13: 978-0375865411

Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 0.2 x 11.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (14 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #87,368 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #143 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s](#) #382 in [Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Art](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

In Depression-era New York City, dreams collide with reality. Our unnamed young narrator's father has just lost his job, and so the boy must wander the harsh, cold streets of Manhattan, looking for firewood. However, one day near 34th and 5th streets, he sees a dream unfold, as 3,000 men construct a symbol of triumph and tenacity: the 102-story Empire State Building. The book is magnificent: Powerful images, poetic language, and construction scenes and details merge into a dramatic tale that's both historic and personal. The boy (and sometimes his father) joins other New Yorkers who look in awe at the evolving building. Ms. Hopkinson uses facts and simple, strong words in her descriptions: We see men sinking "210 massive steel columns" 55-feet into the ground, building "a steel forest" that "can bear the full weight of this giant-to-be: 365,000 tons." Flatbeds

carry steel beams "from the fiery furnaces of Pittsburgh" through the streets, looking "river surging through the concrete canyons of Manhattan." While strong and almost terse, the writing is somehow concomitantly lyrical. The story teems with action ("hoisting, swinging, spinning") and facts that will fascinate any young reader (and most adults as well). Two-page action sequences set within the story slow down time so that one can appreciate the danger, the men's skill, and the scope of the project. We see four men (there are no female workers--accurate as far as I know), working as a team to rivet steel girders together: The "Heater Man" tosses hot metal to "the Catcher," who fits it into the girder hole steadied by the "Bucker-up," finally hammered into place by "the Gunman.

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