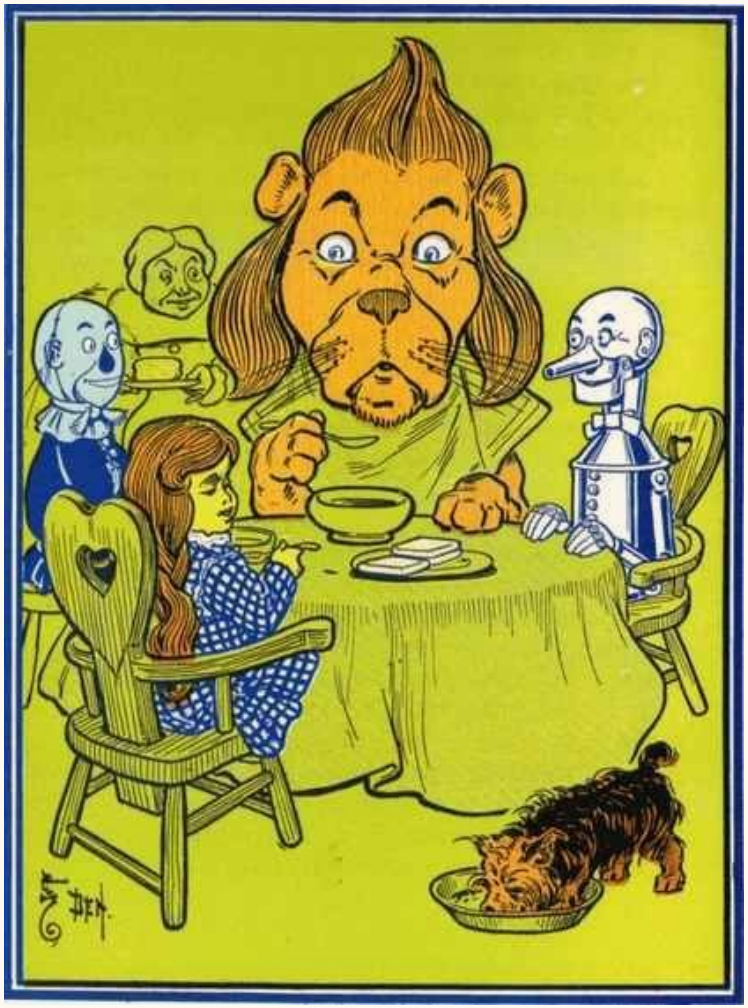
FIRST CLASSICS · NO. 1



The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

From the book by L. Frank Baum

Pictures by W. W. Denslow, from the 1900 first edition

Y Young Reader Guide

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The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

Retold for little listeners from L. Frank Baum's book

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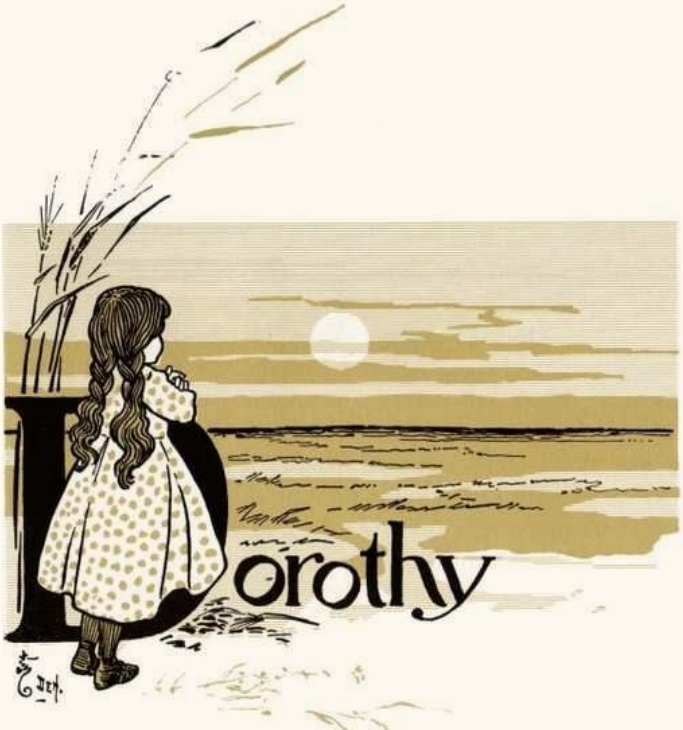
Young Reader Guide





Dorothy lived on the wide, flat, gray Kansas prairie with Uncle Henry, Aunt Em, and her little black dog, Toto. The grass was gray. The house was gray. But Toto was not gray at all. He barked and played, and Dorothy laughed with him.



The wind began to howl. “A cyclone! Run for the cellar, Dorothy!” called Aunt Em, and down she hurried. But Toto hid under the bed. Dorothy stopped to catch him. Whoosh! Up went the house into the sky, with Dorothy and Toto inside!



Bump! The house landed in a bright, sunny land. Little Munchkins came running, with the Good Witch of the North. “Thank you!” the Munchkins cheered. “Your house fell on the Wicked Witch of the East,” said the Good Witch. “She is gone, and we are free!” Dorothy had not meant to do that!



The Good Witch gave Dorothy the Wicked Witch's silver shoes. "They are magic," she said. "How can I get home?" asked Dorothy. "Follow the road of yellow brick to the Emerald City," said the Good Witch, "and ask the Wizard of Oz." She kissed Dorothy's forehead, leaving a round, shining mark to keep her safe.



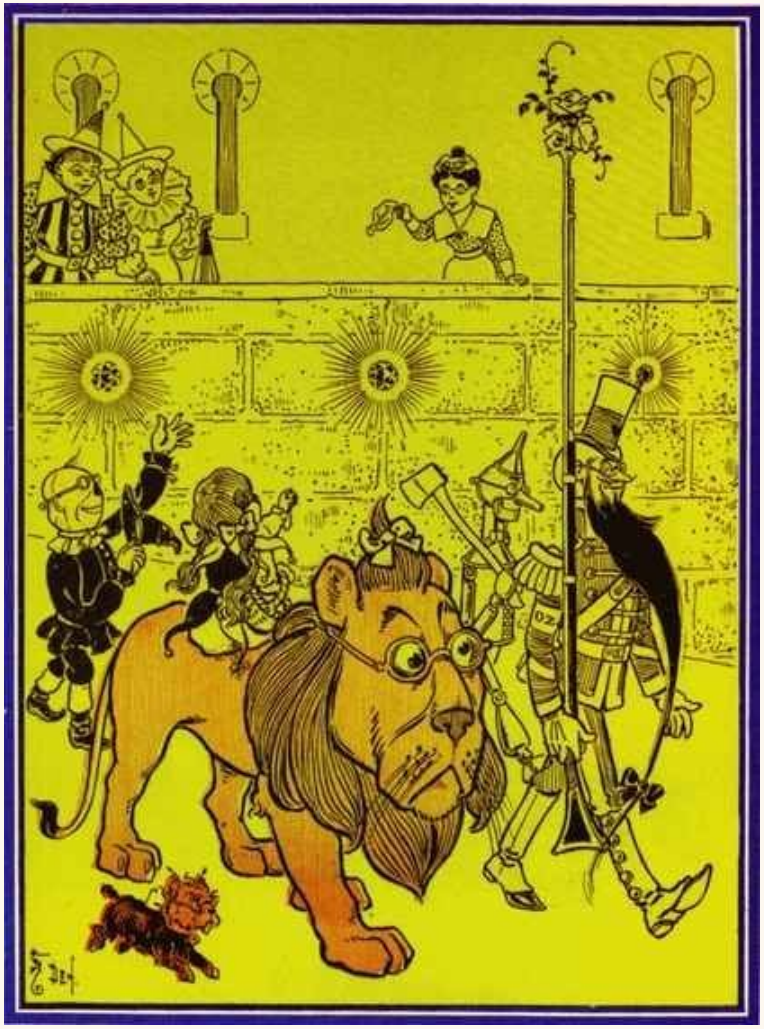
Along the road, a Scarecrow winked at Dorothy from a cornfield! She lifted him down. The Scarecrow sighed. “I have only straw in my head.” Dorothy said, “Come with me to Oz! He can give you brains, and send me back to Kansas. There is no place like home.”



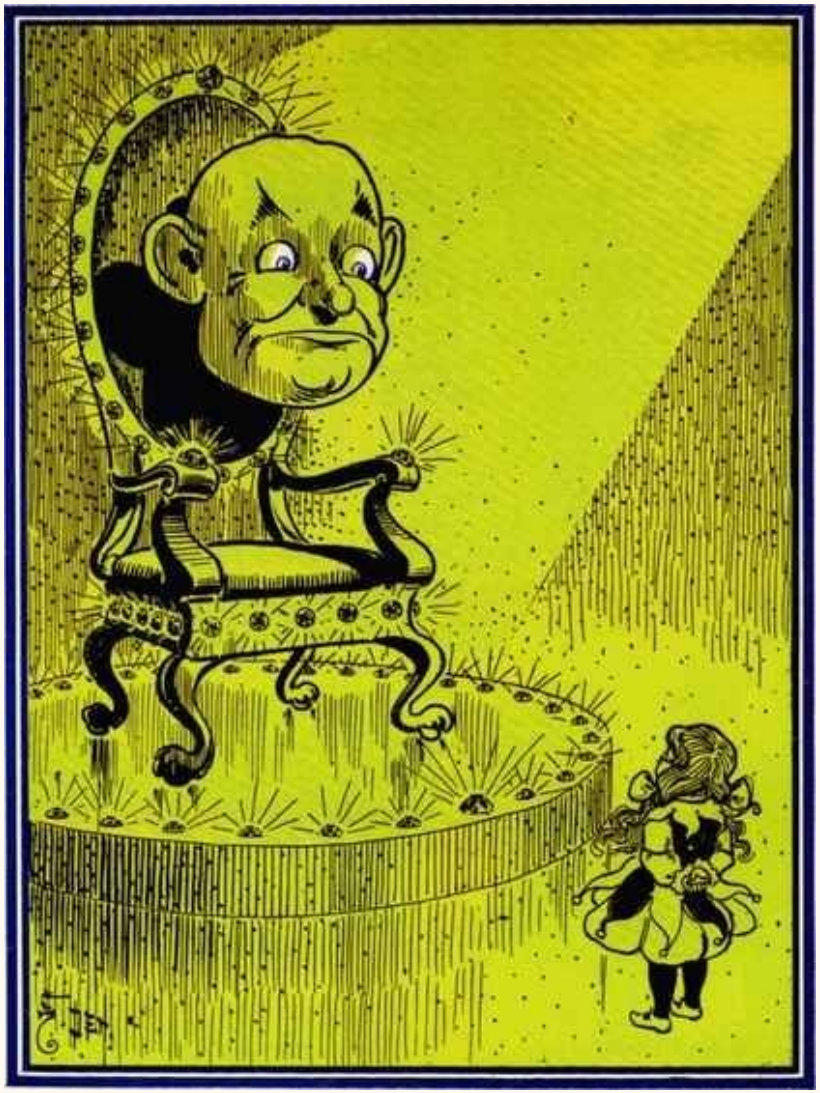
In a forest, they found a Tin Woodman, rusted so stiff he could not move. “Oil my neck first,” he creaked. Dorothy oiled him all over. “I can move!” he cried. “But I have no heart.” The Scarecrow said, “Come with us. Oz can give you one!”



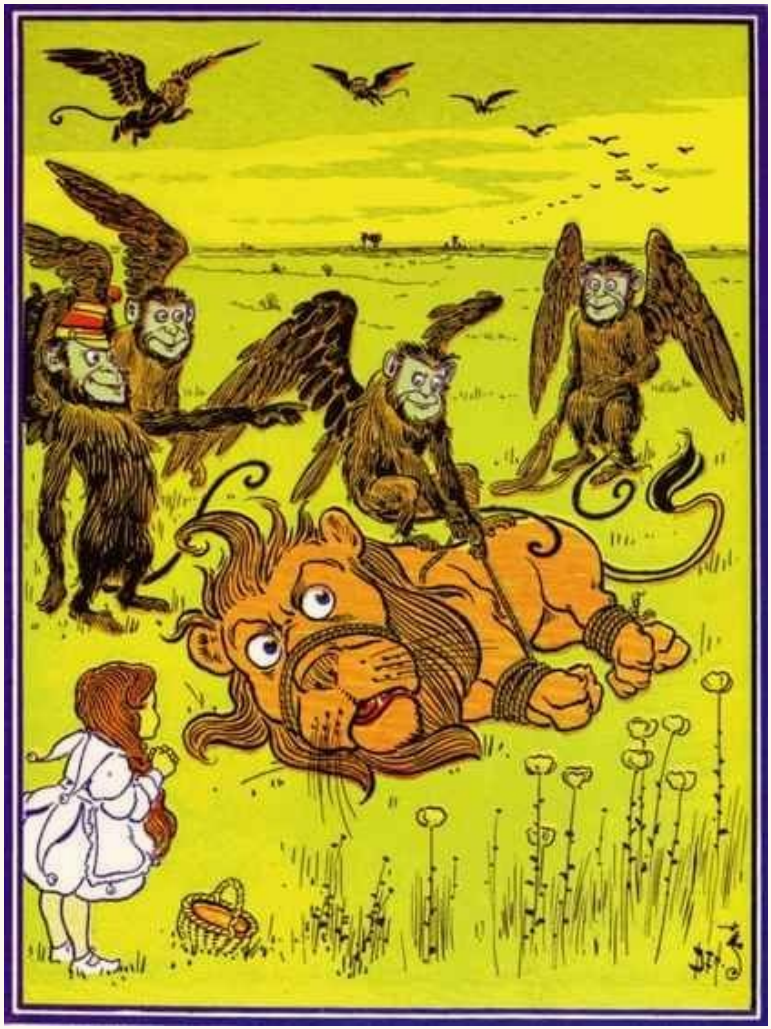
Roar! Out leaped a Lion! He knocked over the Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman. He opened his mouth to bite Toto. Dorothy slapped him on the nose. “Don’t you dare to bite Toto!” The Lion began to cry. “I’m a coward,” he sniffed. Dorothy said, “Oz can give you courage!”



At last they came to the Emerald City. At the gate, everyone had to put on green spectacles. Dorothy giggled. Her friends looked so funny! A soldier with green whiskers led them through the shining streets. Everything sparkled green, all the way to the Wizard's palace.



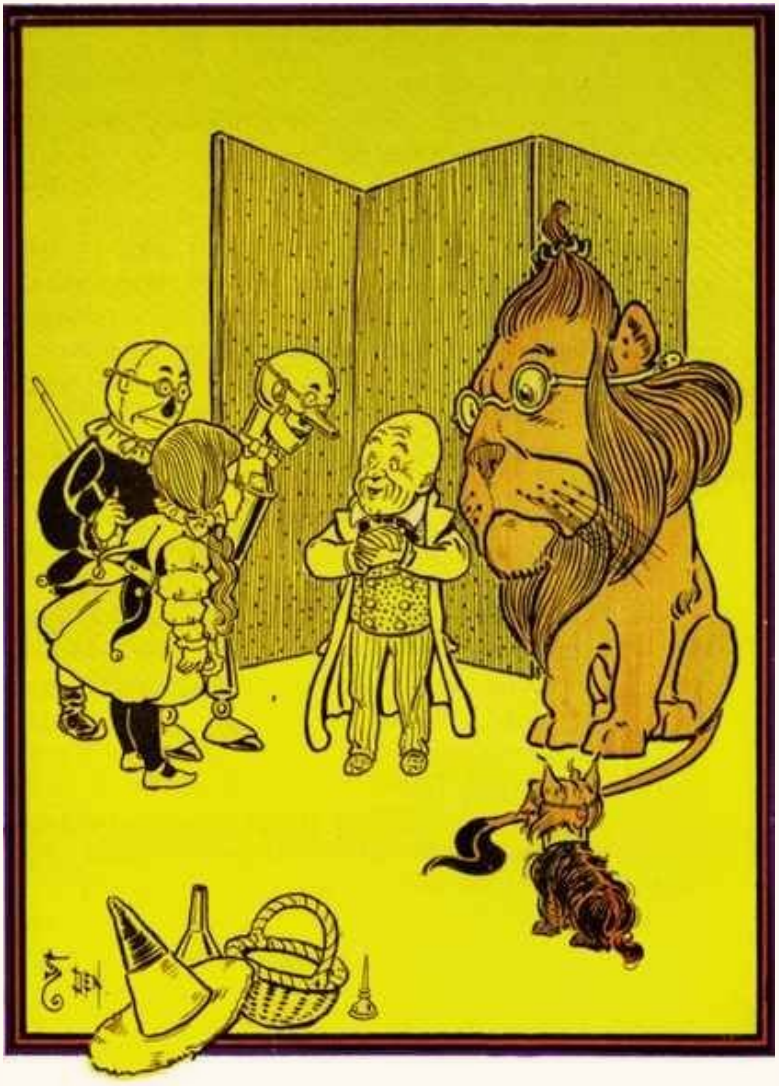
Dorothy went in alone. On a big throne sat a giant Head! “I am Oz, the Great and Terrible,” it boomed. “I will send you home when you have killed the Wicked Witch of the West.” Dorothy began to cry. “But I have never hurt anything on purpose!”



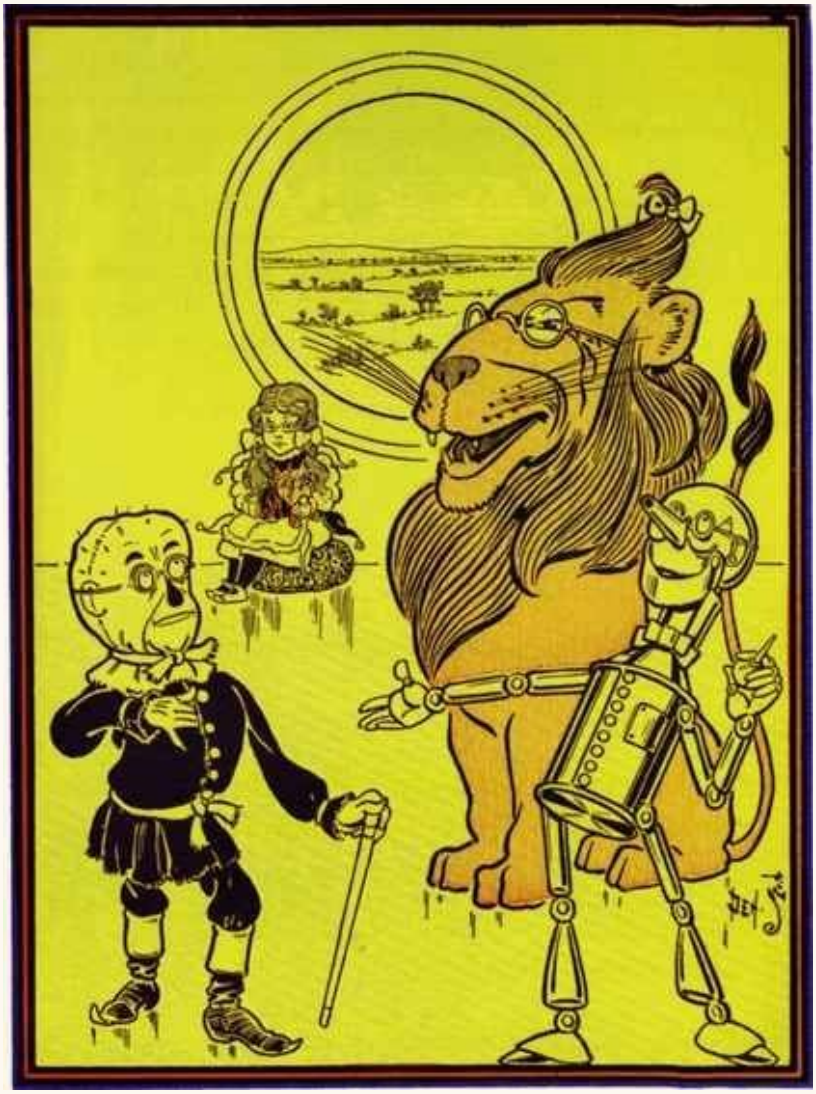
So the friends went west, to the Wicked Witch. She sent her Winged Monkeys! They pulled the straw out of the Scarecrow and dropped the Tin Woodman on the rocks. They reached for Dorothy, then saw her shining mark and did not dare hurt her. They carried her and the Lion off to the castle.



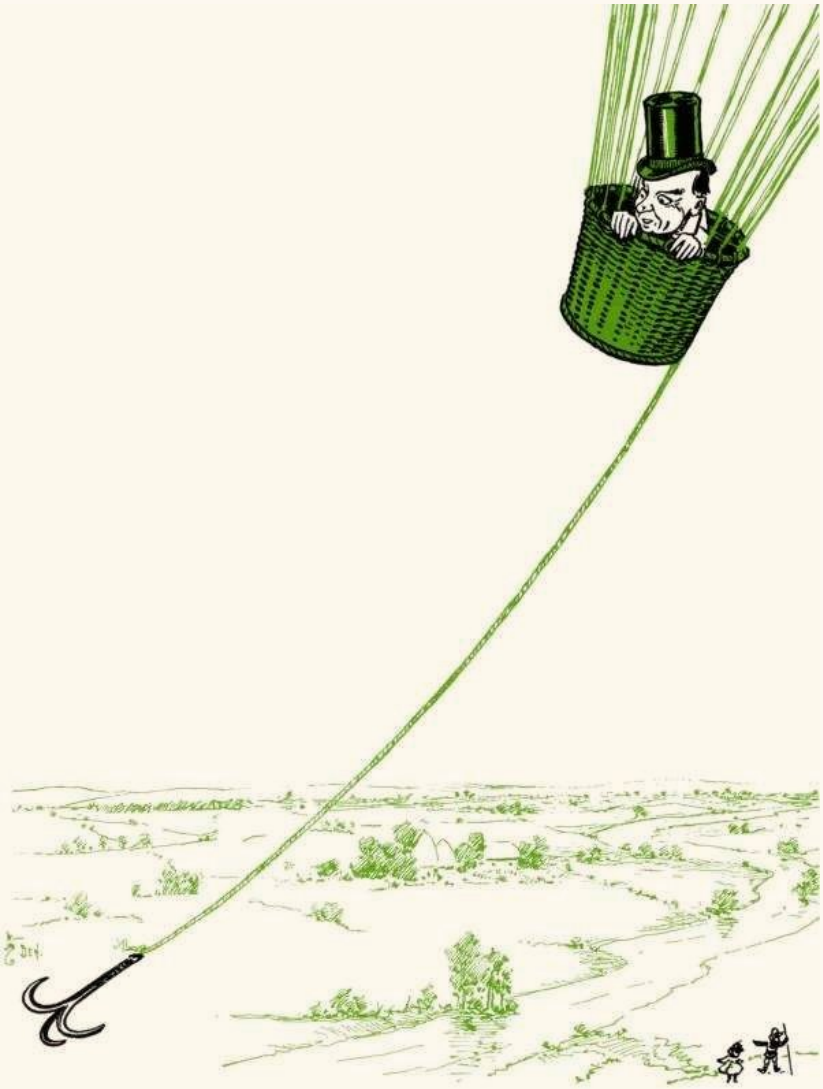
The Witch made Dorothy scrub, and one day she snatched one of Dorothy's silver shoes. Dorothy got so mad, she threw a bucket of water over the Witch, and the Witch melted away! Dorothy slipped her shoe back on and let the Lion out. Then they mended the Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman.



Back in the Emerald City, Toto knocked over a screen in the throne room. Behind it stood a little old man. “Who are you?” asked Dorothy. “I am Oz,” he said in a small voice. “I’ve only been pretending. I’m really a very good man; but I’m a very bad Wizard.”



Oz gave each friend a gift. He gave the Scarecrow brains of bran and pins. He gave the Tin Woodman a silk heart, and the Lion a drink of courage. “I feel so clever!” said the Scarecrow. “I can feel my heart!” said the Tin Woodman. “I’m brave!” roared the Lion.



Oz made a big balloon. “Climb in, Dorothy! We will fly home together.” Just then Toto ran off after a kitten. Dorothy chased him and caught him. Snap! went the ropes. Up floated the balloon, with only Oz inside. “Come back!” cried Dorothy. But it was too late.



So the friends traveled south to Glinda, the Good Witch of the South. “Can you help me get home?” asked Dorothy. Glinda smiled. “Your silver shoes could have taken you home the very first day. Just knock your heels together three times, and tell the shoes where to go.”



The Scarecrow smiled. “I’m glad you didn’t know sooner. We would never have got our brains, our heart, and our courage!” Dorothy hugged her friends goodbye and held Toto tight. She knocked her heels together. One, two, three! “Take me home to Aunt Em!”



The shoes carried her through the air, and on the way they slipped off her feet and were lost. Dorothy and Toto landed on the Kansas prairie, by a new farmhouse. And there was Aunt Em! Dorothy ran into her arms. “I’m home!”

The End

Retold for little listeners by Young Reader Guide, from L. Frank Baum's book.

Pictures by W. W. Denslow, from the 1900 first edition.

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youngreaderguide.org/books/wizard-of-oz/

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A cyclone carries Dorothy and her little dog Toto far from Kansas, to the Land of Oz. To get home, she follows the road of yellow brick with a Scarecrow, a Tin Woodman and a Lion, all the way to the Emerald City. L. Frank Baum's story, with W. W. Denslow's pictures from 1900, retold to read aloud in about seven minutes.

Read the whole book free at youngreaderguide.org

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