

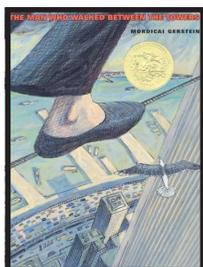


# CRUCHLEY'S COLLECTION

Diana Cruchley is an award-winning educator and author, who has taught at elementary and secondary levels. Her workshops are practical, include detailed handouts, and are always enthusiastically received.

H. Diana Cruchley©2012, dianacruchley.com

## THE MAN WHO WALKED BETWEEN THE TOWERS



Philippe Petit, without permission, rigged a tightrope between the twin towers in New York as they were being completed. Then he walked, danced, ran, and knelt on the rope. His sentence when

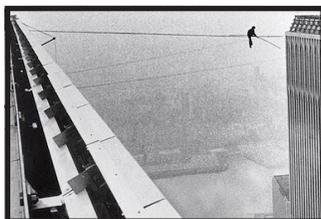
arrested was to perform for students in Central Park. The book ends poignantly with the shadows of the towers after the 2001 attack on September 11, 2001.

Mordicai Gerstein, MacMillan, ©2003, 978-0-7613-1791-3

## WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE

The Wikipedia article on Philippe Petit does a very readable job of describing the actual walk. Apparently it was set up to be filmed, but the man who was to run the cameras was so tired from helping to string the rigging that he didn't do it. Still, there was so much footage from other sources that a cinema verite version of the walk, *Man on Wire*, was released.

Before the walk, the towers were considered ugly and utilitarian, and hard to rent. After the walk, the towers were regarded with affection by New Yorkers.



## FILM OF THE BOOK

I'm not sure where you would find it, but I found a film version of the book at the site *Look Out! Storytime's Blog* <http://lookoutstorytime.wordpress.com/2012/03/17/the-man-who-walked-between-the-towers/>

## THE ATTACK ON THE TWIN TOWERS

This attack happened in 2001. Since these ideas are designed for grades 4 to 9, students in grades 4 and 5 were not born when it happened, and students in grades 6-9 were still preschoolers. So, although it is very heartrending, it might be good "cultural literacy" for them to quickly research the attack.

## PERSONAL WRITING (EXTREME WRITING)

Some possible topics for personal writing might be:

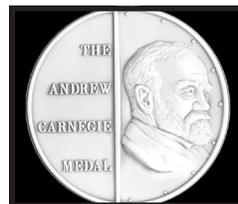
- "Balancing" I do. (Bicycle, train tracks, unicycle, rollerblade skis, etc.)
- Things I do, or have done, at night. (Camping, movies, sleeping out in the yard, hunting for night crawlies with a flashlight, fireworks, etc.)
- Philippe Petit had a dream and spent six years, and countless hours of time getting ready to make his dream come true. What dreams do you have in which you would be willing to invest a lot of time?

## TIGHTROPE WALKING

Stretch several very long ropes across the floor and ask students to walk them while keeping their balance. How many seconds can they stay on the rope? Ask them to time each other. with their arms at their sides and their arms out. Then give them a balancing pole to hold while they walk...they should see that it is a great deal easier to stay balanced.

## CALDECOTT MEDAL

This may be an interesting time to explore the Caldecott Medal, as this book is a winner. Others big awards include the Newberry and the Carnegie (a British award). What are the big Canadian awards?



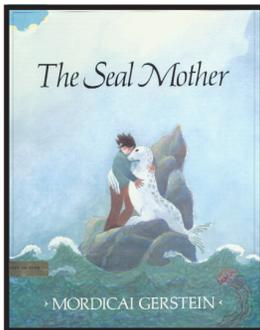
# THE MAN WHO WALKED BETWEEN THE TOWERS, P. 2

## THE CHARACTER OF PHILIPPE PETIT

This is a terrific source book for student sto write a character study of Philippe Petit, using inferences. Create a chart so that they can list the characteristic, and then why they inferred it. Some examples might be: charismatic (he persuaded friends to help), physically well trained (he can actually do it), logical (thought through the problems), systematic (step-by-step), visionary (had a dream), humorous (did tricks on the wire and danced away), confident (street

## MORDECAI GERSTEIN

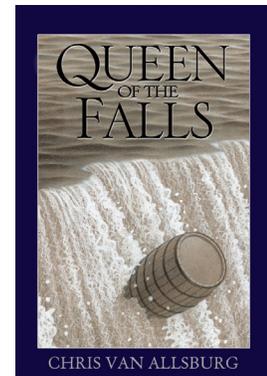
Mordecai Gerstein is a prolific author. His Caldecott acceptance speech is on his site, and reveals a lot about why he chose this particular story. One of his other books is *The Seal Mother*, a retelling of this Scots folk tale.



## QUEEN OF THE FALLS

Last year I did a set of lesson ideas to go with Chris Van Allsburg's book, *Queen of the Falls*, the story of another daredevil stunt, this time a woman going over Niagara Falls in a barrel. Annie Hudson Taylor was the first person, the first woman, the oldest at 62, and her feat was not matched by anyone, of any sex, or any age for over 10 years after.

There is a youtube of Chris Van Allsburg talking about his creation of the book - Queen of the Falls by Chris Van Allsburg.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMCRavWvsDo>



## AN ART IDEA

Much of the art illustrating this book is something like a foot on the wire, a hand holding a rope, a hat on the head. This is a simple illustration strategy students may be able to use in illustrating a story that they have written. They could select a background from the Internet. Then they could draw, colour, and cut out and objet symbolic of the story and paste it onto the scene.

## NICK WALLEDA CROSSES NIAGARA

The most recent walk over Niagara Falls, was by Nick Wallenda (of the Flying Wallenda family) on June 15, 2012. He was the first to walk directly over the falls. In the last century, several people had walked over on the narrowest portion of the approach to the falls. (Students could be asked to compare the strategies, preparation, and difficulty of the two walks.)



You should be able to find a YouTube of the walk across Niagara Falls, but I found one at CBC News:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/story/2012/06/15/wallenda-setup-friday.html>