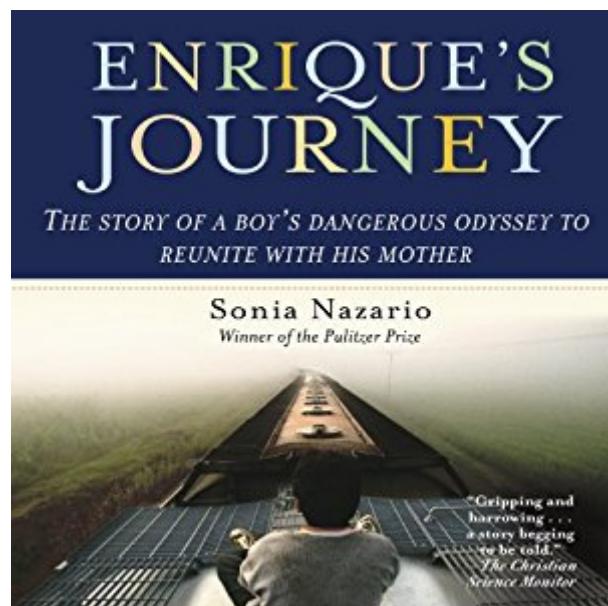


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# Enrique's Journey



## **Synopsis**

Adapted for young people, this edition of "Enrique's Journey" is written by Sonia Nazario and based on the adult book of the same name. It is the true story of Enrique, a teenager from Honduras, who sets out on a journey, braving hardship and peril, to find his mother, who had no choice but to leave him when he was a child and go to the United States in search of work. Enrique's story will bring to light the daily struggles of migrants, legal and otherwise, and the complicated choices they face simply trying to survive and provide for the basic needs of their families. The issues seamlessly interwoven into this gripping nonfiction work for young people are perfect for common core discussion." Includes an 8-page photo insert, as well as an epilogue that describes what has happened to Enrique and his family since the adult edition was published." A heartwrenching account. Provides a human face, both beautiful and scarred, for the undocumented. A must read."--"Kirkus Reviews," Starred "Nazario's straightforward . . . journalistic writing style largely serves the complex, sprawling story effectively. A valuable addition to young adult collections." "School Library Journal""This powerfully written survival story personalizes the complicated, pervasive, and heart-wrenching debates about immigration and immigrants' rights and will certainly spark discussion in the classroom and at home." "Booklist "An NCSS-CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Book for Young People A "Kirkus Reviews" Best Teen Book of the Year A Junior Library Guild Selection" --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is a fascinating book concerning the flood of young Central Americans coming to America and

the treacherous journey they must undertake. But it looks at the influx of illegal aliens into America in a new light. These youths who travel by train up to 1,600 miles north through Mexico are coming to find their Mother's who have left them years ago to have money to support their kids back in Nicaragua, Honduras or Guatemala. Years before these mothers faced raising kids as a single mother as the tight Catholic families in these countries are pulling apart. With limited jobs, these women smuggle to America and send money back. But the emotional toll on these kids is traumatic and many choose to journey to America, many at an age much too young. The Pulitzer Prize winning author rode the trains and researched completely the significant danger in the first state of Chiapas where the risk of being robbed, raped or killed is the greatest. The next state shows the true spirit of the Mexican people as many bring food and clothing to this rag-tag group of refugees. Great detail is spent describing areas to avoid and relationships with smugglers, police and "la migra", the immigration police. The final part of the journey across the river to America is also traumatic and great detail is spent on different ways of crossing, many involving paying "coyotes" significant money to cross with no guarantees they will not be robbed. But this book does not end there as finally Enrique finds his mother in North Carolina. But is she really a "Mother" since she hasn't seen her son in about 10 years? Obviously their relationship is unique and the book delves in to the difficulty. You will be educated on a significant human rights issue effecting America. On so many levels this is a book that needs to be read and whatever your current thoughts on immigration on our southern border, this will "humanize" the issue, give you greater insight and probably change or soften your position. Is there an answer? Probably not. We are blessed in America and these people want just a small piece of this dream and are willing to risk everything to change the future of their family. I do have one complaint about the book. The ending. I would have liked a better or more complete resolution. But this isn't fiction, it's real life. Read this book to learn. It is a fast read as it is so engrossing.

As I continue discussing this book with my freshman composition students, I realize the story needs more context. My freshman are too quick to see ENRIQUE'S journey as THE IMMIGRANT journey--I remind them again and again that this is the story of ONE boy and his family. It's misleading to discuss our US immigration "problem" without putting it into the context of globalization. Nazario is clearly critical of the choices her subjects make, but what are the alternatives? It's fair to open this question for conversation, but if you read this story, realize that this is not the end of the discussion--it's barely the beginning. This should be used as an introduction to a discussion on immigration--not the basis for that discussion. A good teaching tool--but keep the

discussion going and use other sources as well. A colleague in social science plans to use it in class: it's interesting how Nazario's characterization of Enrique is extremely sympathetic UNTIL he reaches the US border--once across it, he becomes, quite simply, a social problem.

I read this story when it was in the LA Times and couldn't wait for the book. I read the story cover to cover in a weekend and thought it was the best non-fiction work I have read in years. Obviously, Ms. Nazario's story shows that our immigration problem isn't as simple as it seems. I was very moved by this story and urge everyone to read it.

In an excellent book based on the famous news feature series by the same journalist, the trials and tribulations of immigrant populations in economic, social, cultural, and emotional contexts is well highlighted. It is sheer coincidence that I happen to read this book the same day the US Senate reached a "compromise" on immigration reform. Lost in political debates of immigration, is the sheer human facets of the people involved. This book (just as the series did a few years ago) provides a human side to relate to when politicians/"experts" debate about immigration. The author is very careful not to condone illegal immigration by focusing on the human tolls of the people trying to get to the U.S. in any form, irrespective how miserably the previous several attempts have failed. Using the story of one teenager's quest for finding his mother as the central theme, the book explores the motivation of those who make such seemingly improbable decisions, the dangers of the travel itself, the role (or lack thereof) of governments, religious/charity organizations, communities along the travel route, and the misery from which these 'optimists' are trying to escape from. Any amount of objective analysis will not take away the immense emotional impact the book will have on a reader - the strains of motherhood and the pensive childhood of those left behind are exposed without any sensationalism. The sheer gravity of the story is compelling enough. Written in a simple, yet powerful, narrative style, the author clearly enables the reader to imagine the journey described in the book. An absolute must-read, and perhaps one of the best non-fiction books. You will never view immigration as a political issue again (whether that's good or bad, is up to you)..guaranteed.

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