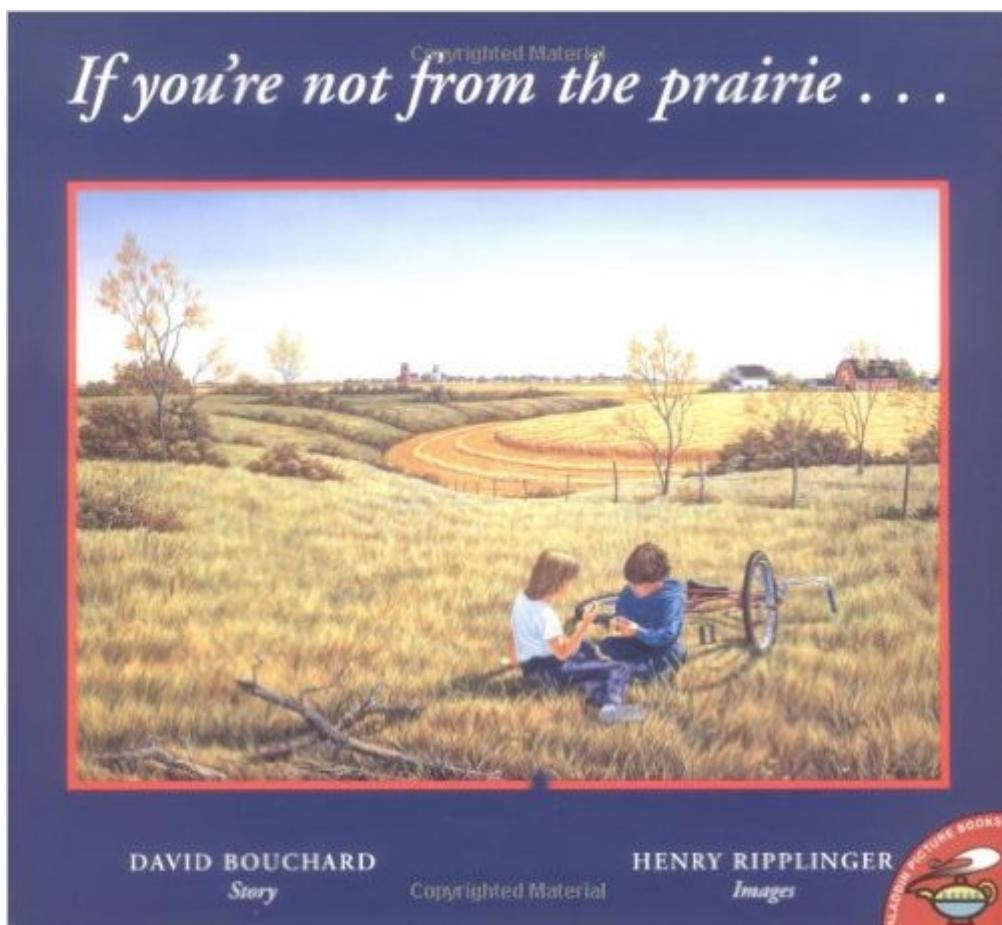


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# If You're Not From The Prairie



DAVID BOUCHARD  
*Story*

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HENRY RIPPLINGER  
*Images*



## Synopsis

This poetic tribute invites readers to experience the blazing light, cutting wind, endless sky, piercing cold, and extraordinary beauty of the prairie. It's a land of extremes, as the lyrical text and illustrations make clear, that inspires extreme devotion from its hardy inhabitants.

## Book Information

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Aladdin (June 1, 1998)

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Product Dimensions: 10 x 0.2 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ (34 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #746,607 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Canada #320 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Country Life #1232 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > United States

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 4 - 6

## Customer Reviews

...I love and understand this book. If you're not from the prairie you don't know, you truly cannot know the particular feel of those winds that constantly course through the fields, the special warmth of the way the sun penetrates your entire being. So is being from the prairie so exclusive winds only blow on the prairie, sun shines only on prairie fields and prairie folks? Not at all! In a similar sense, I could claim if you're not from the coast of southern California (or if you haven't lived there long enough to catch its spirit), you can't know how the sun specially graces those beaches, how the ocean waves energize your imagination. If you're not from the southwestern desert, you may have seen southwest sunset photographs, but without basking in their glow, you don't have actual knowledge of them. Maybe you've lived in a certain large city in a certain section of the world? After a while you'll know the spirit and the sense of that city, but you don't know, you cannot really know the sensibilities of another city of similar size the inhabits a different longitude, latitude, its geography and topography. Most likely you've experienced not only different quality of light during

different seasons and differing times of day, but the sun does shine differently in different parts of the world, on different landscapes and cityscapes. In other words, one place is not every place. Author David Bouchard and illustrator Henry Ripplinger both are native to the Canadian heartland, and capture the prairies with gorgeous full-colour, slightly retro illustrations. The book's layout is wide and open, with stair-stepped text and an image vignette on the left side, a large illustration on each right-hand page.

Like most children, Dr. Seuss played an instrumental role in my learning to read. Often the allure of reading comes not so much from the story itself, but the images that represent it. With elementary dialogue amongst the likes of "I do not like green eggs and ham. I do not like them, Sam-I-Am," most books rely on photos or drawings to move the story along. Illustrations often pick up where words leave off and add another dimension to a book. So it is perhaps surprising that the illustrations in some children's books take away from the story rather than add to it. David Bouchard's "If You're Not from the Prairie" is a striking example of this phenomenon. I was more than halfway through with his poetic story of a boy who skipping rocks in the pond and playing in the snowdrifts after a blizzard before I realized that the book even had illustrations (no offense to Henry Ripplinger). It reads more like Seamus Heaney than Dr. Seuss, and I couldn't help but think that an adult may savor, or at least appreciate this work more than a child would. A review on the back of the book agreed: "The dialogue style works well rhythmically." Adults would also enjoy this nostalgic piece. And that might be its purpose. Filmmakers and children's authors are charged with the same task: making themes and dialogues compelling and even relatable for adults "the people who read the bedtime stories and chaperone at the movie theater. I recently experienced this when watching "The Cat in the Hat" with a nine year old. I was shocked to hear things like "dirty hoe" and "I'm uncomfortable with the "d" word.

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