

**CYRM Resource Book**  
**Picture Books for Older Readers**  
**(Grade 4 and up)**  
**Nominees 2008-2009**

***Brothers***

by Yin

paintings by Chris Soentpiet

Philomel, 2006

***Mystery at the Club Sandwich***

by Doug Cushman

Clarion Books, 2005

***Pop's Bridge***

by Eve Bunting

illustrated by C.F. Payne

Harcourt, Inc., 2006



California Young Reader Medal  
**Picture Books for Older  
Readers Ballot**  
2008-2009

\_\_\_\_\_ *Brothers*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Mystery at the Club  
Sandwich*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Pop's Bridge*

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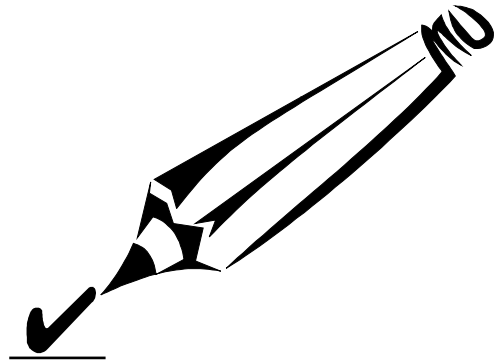
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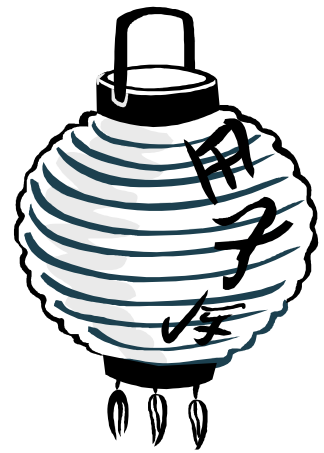
\_\_\_\_\_ *Pop's Bridge*



# ***Brothers***

by Yin

paintings by Chris Soentpiet



## **Synopsis**

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This is the story of Ming, who travels from China to join his brothers who are building the railroads in San Francisco. He meets Patrick, a young Irish boy, and they overcome differences in language to become close friends. This is a beautiful portrait of immigrants and their struggles for acceptance in America. The story emphasizes the common problems shared by those whose desire for freedom brought them to the United States, and how friendship eased many of their burdens.



## **Hooks**

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- Have you ever tried to learn a foreign language? Have you ever been someplace where you didn't speak the language? Can you see how difficult it would be if you could not understand what someone was trying to tell you?
- The Chinese and Irish were just some of the immigrants who came to the San Francisco area. The United States prides itself on being a 'Melting Pot' where all kinds of people can live together peacefully and prosper. What nationalities settled in the area where you live?
- Ming's brothers opened a store in San Francisco. What other occupations do you think might have been successful? What kinds of jobs do you see immigrants in your city doing? How important is knowing English in these jobs?

### **Meet the Author—Yin**

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Yin was born and grew up in New York City. She graduated from college with a degree in finance. For a brief time, she wrote financial reports for Wall Street before deciding to manage her husband's career. Her books are inspired by her experiences as a Chinese-American. "I didn't always love reading when I was in elementary school because I struggled with English." Yin started writing in a diary daily and read everyday. "As I became confident in English, I learned to love reading and embrace books!" Today, Yin travels with some kind of reading material, be it a book, newspaper, or even a wrapper.

Contact Yin Soentpiet:

[http://www.soentpiet.com/yins\\_corner.html](http://www.soentpiet.com/yins_corner.html)



### **Meet the Illustrator—Chris Soentpiet**

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Chris Soentpiet was born in South Korea and was adopted by the Soentpiet family. He grew up in Hawaii. Mr. Soentpiet studied fine arts and education at Pratt Institute in New York City. He is married to Yin and she manages his busy schedule. Mr. Soentpiet is very thorough in doing his research before illustrating any book. If possible, he travels to the location and sketches pictures.

Contact Chris Soentpiet:

<http://www.soentpiet.com/>



### Chinatown (San Francisco, CA)

- Goldin, Barbara Diamond. *Red Means Good Fortune: A Story of San Francisco's Chinatown*. (Once Upon America). Viking, 1994.
- Isaacs, Sally Senzell. *Life in San Francisco's Chinatown*. (Picture the Past). Heinemann, 2002.
- Stepanchuk, Carol. *Exploring Chinatown: A Children's Guide to Chinese Culture*. Illustrated by Leland Wong. Pacific View, 2002.
- Thong, Roseanne. *Gai See: What You Can See in Chinatown*. Illustrated by Yangsook Choi. Abrams, 2007.

### Chinese and Irish Immigrants

- Behnke, Alison. *Chinese in America*. (In America). Lerner, 2005.
- Goldstein, Margaret J. *Irish in America*. (In America). Lerner, 2005.
- Hoobler, Dorothy & Thomas. *The Chinese American Family Album*. (American Family Albums). Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Partridge, Elizabeth. *Oranges on Golden Mountain*. Illustrated by Aki Sogabe. Dutton, 2001.
- Yee, Paul. *A Song for Ba*. Illustrated by Jan Peng Wang. Groundwood, 2004.
- Yee, Paul. *Dead Man's Gold and Other Stories*. Illustrated by Harvey Chang. Groundwood, 2002.
- Yee, Paul. *Tales from Gold Mountain: Stories of the Chinese in the New World*. Illustrated by Simon Ng. Macmillan, 1989.
- Yep, Laurence. *Dragon's Gate*. HarperCollins, 1993.
- Yin. *Coolies*. Illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet. Philomel, 2001.

### Transcontinental Railroad

- Blumberg, Rhoda. *Full Steam Ahead: The Race to Build a Transcontinental Railroad*. National Geographic Society, 1996.
- Fraser, Mary Ann. *Ten Mile Day: And the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad*. Holt, 1993.
- Sinnott, Susan. *Chinese Railroad Workers*. Franklin Watts, 1994.
- Yin. *Coolies*. Illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet. Philomel, 2001.

## Writing Prompts / Discussion Questions for *Brothers*

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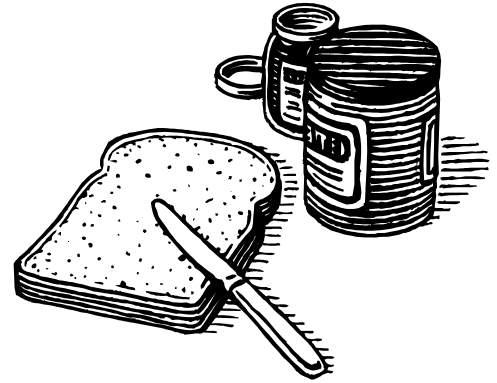


- Illustrator Chris Soenpiet's favorite artist is Norman Rockwell. Look up some famous Rockwell paintings and compare his style and outlook to the paintings in *Brothers*.
- Closely examine the merchandise for sale in Ming's general store. What items would be of interest to Chinese customers? To Irish customers? To both?
- Hardships in China and Ireland in the 19<sup>th</sup> century spurred waves of immigrants to the United States. Research in the library or on the Internet reasons why Chinese and Irish left their homelands, and what attracted them to the United States, and particularly to California.
- Shek warns Ming to "not go past Stockton Street. Chinese should not go outside Chinatown." Read "Development of Chinatown" on the last page. Why would Shek give his younger brother such a warning? Did any of his worries come true?
- Patrick teaches Ming English and Ming teaches Patrick how to write in Chinese. Discuss how the title *Brothers* reflects the American immigrant experience.



# ***Mystery At the Club Sandwich***

by Doug Cushman



## **Synopsis**

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Lola, a famous singer at the Club Sandwich, loses her marbles and hires Nick Trunk, detective, to find them. Nick has a fondness for peanut butter, which proves a delightful advantage while in pursuit of the thief. Can Nick uncover who took Lola's lucky marbles before they disappear forever?

## **Hooks**

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- Do you think you would like to be a detective? What do you think would be interesting about the job?
- Many of the dishes served at the club include peanut butter. Do you like peanut butter and what is your favorite way to eat it? What are some strange ways to use peanut butter in other dishes? What is the strangest sandwich you've heard of that uses peanut butter?

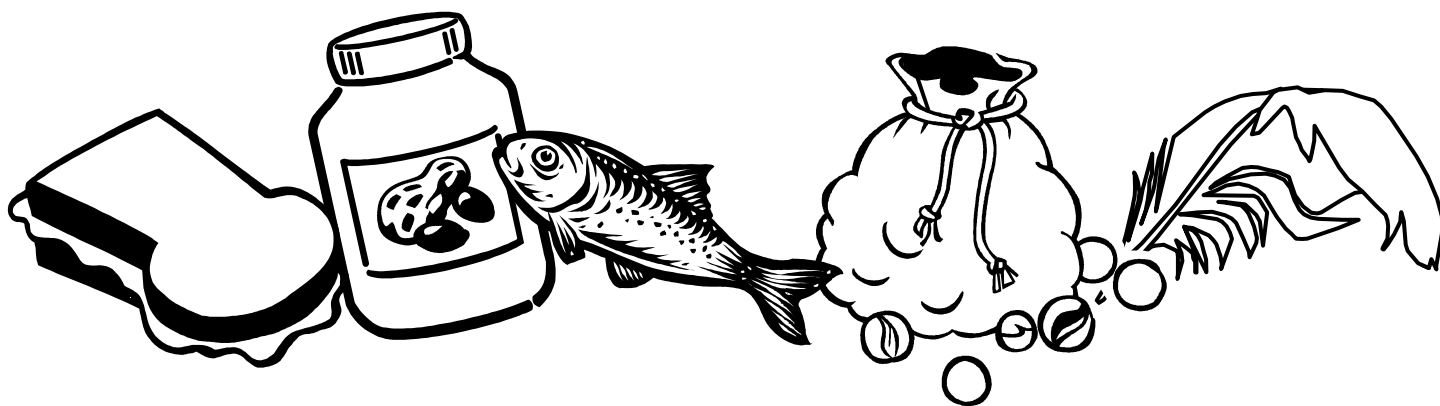


**Meet the Author/Illustrator  
Doug Cushman**

Doug Cushman was born in Ohio. He began writing and drawing comics in high school and selling them to classmates. Mr. Cushman has written and illustrated over 100 books in his career. He enjoys hiking, kayaking, and cooking. He divides his time between Northern California and Paris, France.

Contact Doug Cushman:

<http://www.doug-cushman.com/>





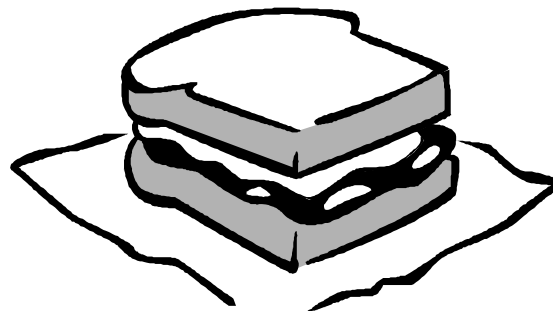


### Animal Detectives

- Biedrzycki, David. *Ace Lacewing: Bug Detective*. Charlesbridge, 2005.
- Brooks, Walter R. *Freddy the Detective*. (A Freddy Adventure). Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Knopf, 1986.
- Clifford, Eth. *Flatfoot Fox and the Case of the Missing Eye*. (Flatfoot Fox Series). Illustrated by Brian Lies. Houghton Mifflin, 1990. Also others in the series.
- Cushman, Doug. *The Mystery of the Monkey's Maze*. (From the Casebook of Seymour Sleuth). HarperCollins, 1999. Also others in the series.
- Hale, Bruce. *The Chameleon Wore Chartreuse*. (A Chet Gecko Mystery). Harcourt, 2000. Also others in the series.
- Kirk, Daniel. *Rex Tabby, Cat Detective*. Orchard/Scholastic, 2004.
- Odgers, Darrel & Sally. *The Buried Biscuits*. (Jack Russell: Dog Detective). Kane/Miller, 2008. Also others in the series.
- Pinkwater, Daniel. *Bad Bear Detectives: An Irving & Muktuk Story*. Illustrated by Jill Pinkwater. Houghton Mifflin, 2006.
- Teague, Mark. *Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation*. Scholastic, 2004.
- Yee, Wong Herbert. *Detective Small in the Amazing Banana Caper*. Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

### Peanuts and Peanut Butter

- Charlip, Remy. *Peanut Butter Party: Including the History, Uses, and Future of Peanut Butter*. Tricycle, 1999.
- Erlbach, Arlene. *Peanut Butter*. (How It's Made). Lerner, 1994.
- Micucci, Charles. *The Life and Times of the Peanut*. Houghton Mifflin, 1997.
- Nelson, Robin. *From Peanut to Peanut Butter*. (Start to Finish). Lerner, 2003.

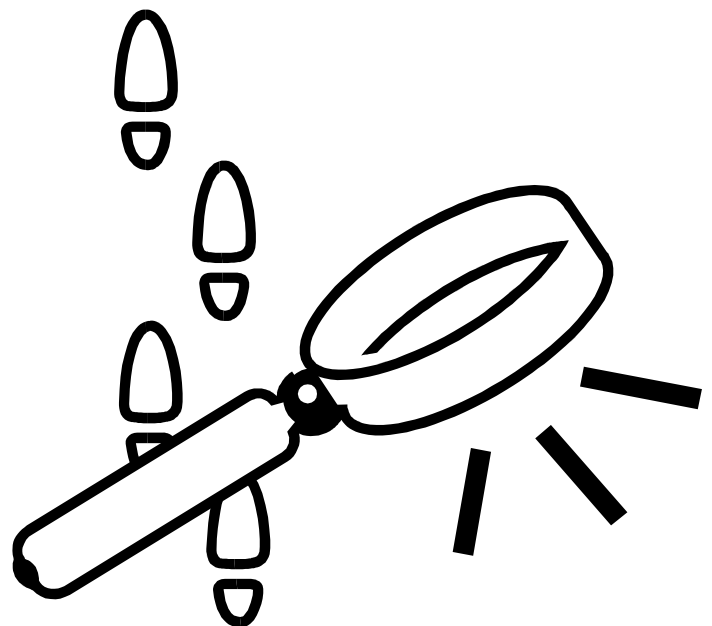


## Writing Prompts / Discussion Questions for *Mystery at the Club Sandwich*

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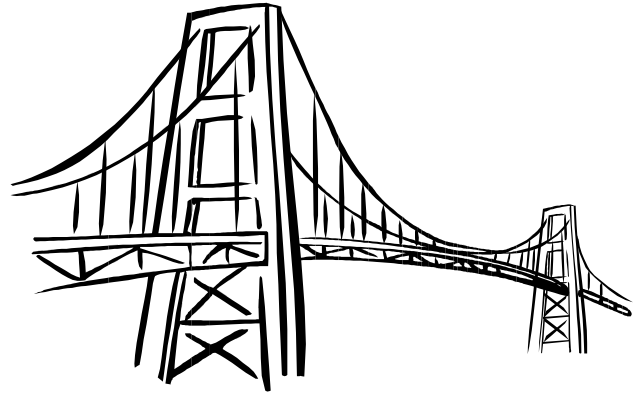
- A pun is a type of joke in which words are used that have a similar sound but a different meaning, such as, “a cardboard belt would be a waist of paper.” An idiom is a traditional way of saying something that does not make sense if taken literally. Saying someone is “under the weather” is an idiom for being sick or ill. Make a list of each pun you find in this book and explain the joke.
- Mr. Cushman dedicates his book to Sam, Phil, and Dashiell. Research on the Internet the fictional characters Sam Spade, Philip Marlowe, and the author Dashiell Hammett. Explain why the book is dedicated to them.
- Early in the story, it is fairly obvious who stole Lola’s marbles, yet the story continues to play itself out. Does this lessen your enjoyment of the mystery? Why or why not?
- What is ‘film noir?’ What are some of its identifying characteristics? Hint: Character types, costumes, clues, tone, setting, visual elements. Which of these do you see in the book?
- Watch the movie *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Big Sleep* or *The Long Goodbye*. What similarities do you see with *Mystery at the Club Sandwich*?



# ***Pop's Bridge***

by Eve Bunting

illustrated by C.F. Payne



## **Synopsis**

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The story centers around the building of the Golden Gate Bridge, completed in 1937, and connecting San Francisco to the Marin County coast. The principal characters are Robert, whose father is an ironworker, and Charlie, whose father is a painter, both working to assist in the building of this icon. Robert feels his father's job is the more important until a frightening event makes him see that it takes an entire team to accomplish what some people see as impossible.

## **HOOKS**

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- What do you know about the Golden Gate Bridge?
- The completion of the bridge was considered impossible. Have you accomplished something that you at one time felt was impossible?
- Robert and Charlie work on a jigsaw puzzle of the bridge. Have you ever tried to put together a jigsaw puzzle with a friend? Have you ever lost a piece but only found out when it was close to completion?
- The Golden Gate Bridge is a suspension type bridge. Do you know of any other types of bridges?

## **Meet the Author—Eve Bunting**



Born in Ireland, Eve Bunting has written more than 200 books for children. She grew up in Ireland and after marrying, lived in Scotland. Ms. Bunting, her husband and their three children immigrated to the United States and settled in San Francisco, California. One day, she saw a brochure advertising a class in writing for publication at a local community college. Soon after taking the class, she began publishing. The family moved to Pasadena, California and Ms. Bunting has taught classes at UCLA.

Contact Eve Bunting:  
[www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com](http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com)



## **Meet the Illustrator—C.F. Payne**

C.F. Payne graduated from Miami University in Ohio and worked in illustration studios in Ohio and Illinois before branching out as a freelance illustrator. He has done work for the U.S. Postal Service, Rolling Stone, and many other publications. Mr. Payne currently lives in Cincinnati, Ohio with his wife and sons.

Contact C.F. Payne:  
[cfoxpayne@yahoo.com](mailto:cfoxpayne@yahoo.com)



## Connections for *Pop's Bridge*

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### Golden Gate Bridge

- Arnold, Caroline. *Golden Gate Bridge*. (First Books). Franklin Watts, 1986.
- Barter, James. *The Golden Gate Bridge*. (Building History). Lucent, 2001.
- Britton, Tamara L. *Golden Gate Bridge*. (Symbols, Landmarks and Monuments). Checkerboard, 2005.
- Doherty, Craig A. & Katherine M. *The Golden Gate Bridge*. (Building America). Blackbirch Press, 2007.
- Fandel, Jennifer. *Golden Gate Bridge*. (Modern Wonders of the World). Creative, 2006.
- Nelson, Sharlene P. & Ted P. *The Golden Gate Bridge*. (Cornerstones of Freedom). Children's Press, 2002.
- Pelta, Kathy. *Bridging the Golden Gate*. (American's Landmarks). Lerner, 1987.

### Bridges and Bridge Builders

- Sullivan, George. *Built to Last: Building America's Amazing Bridges, Dams, Tunnels, and Skyscrapers*. Scholastic Nonfiction, 2005.
- Johnson, Angela. *Those Building Men*. Illustrated by Barry Moser. Blue Sky/Scholastic, 2001.

### San Francisco

- Brown, Tricia. *The City by the Bay: A Magical Journey around San Francisco*. Illustrated by Elisa Kleven. Chronicle Books, 1993.
- Kent, Deborah. *San Francisco*. (Cities of the World). Children's Press, 1997.

### Noteworthy Books by Eve Bunting:

- A Day's Work*. Clarion, 1994.
- Fly Away Home*. Clarion, 1991.
- Gleam and Glow*. Harcourt, 2001.
- One Green Apple*. Clarion, 2006.
- Riding the Tiger*. Clarion, 2001.
- Smoky Night*. Harcourt Brace, 1994.
- So Far from the Sea*. Clarion, 1998.
- The Wall*. Clarion, 1990.



## Writing Prompts / Discussion Questions for *Pop's Bridge*

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- The Golden Gate Bridge was built from 1933-1937, when the nation was suffering through the economic hardship of the Great Depression. Discuss how the 'impossible bridge' served as a symbol of hope for the people of San Francisco.
- Research in the library or on the Internet the dangerous kind of work that Chinese 'coolies' did in building the transcontinental railroad in the 1800's and compare that to the kind of work they did on the Golden Gate Bridge. Do you think there were Chinese 'skywalkers' on the Golden Gate construction? Why or why not?
- Other bridges span the waters of San Francisco Bay. Compare them to the Golden Gate: when they were built, engineering design, etc. Why does the Golden Gate remain the most beloved?
- It could be said that the Golden Gate Bridge is the 'main character' of *Pop's Bridge*. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- Why is the Golden Gate Bridge painted orange and not gold?
- Research on the Internet current facts about the Golden Gate Bridge: how many cars have crossed it, what is the toll, what is the speed limit, rules for pedestrians and bicycles, where the Strauss statue is located, etc. Gather as many interesting facts as you can, and explain why these facts are interesting to you.

