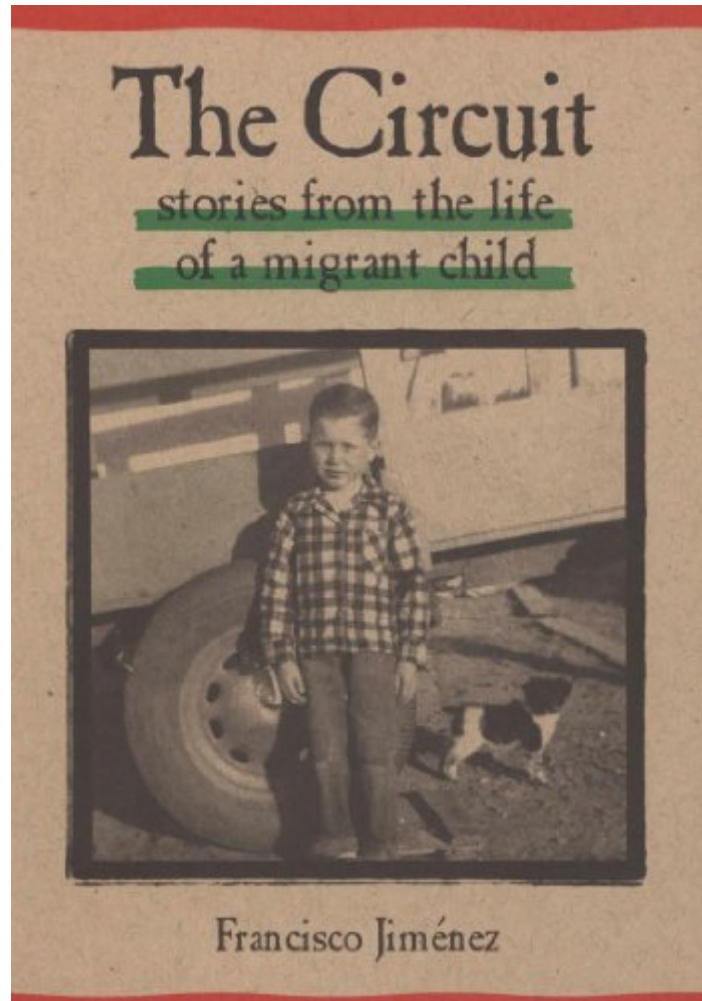




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# The Circuit



## Synopsis

"'La frontera'...I heard it for the first time back in the late 1940s when Papa and Mama told me and Roberto, my older brother, that someday we would take a long trip north, cross la frontera, enter California, and leave our poverty behind." So begins this honest and powerful account of a family's journey to the fields of California -- to a life of constant moving, from strawberry fields to cotton fields, from tent cities to one-room shacks, from picking grapes to topping carrots and thinning lettuce. Seen through the eyes of a boy who longs for an education and the right to call one place home, this is a story of survival, faith, and hope. It is a journey that will open readers' hearts and minds.

## Book Information

File Size: 741 KB

Print Length: 133 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (October 25, 1999)

Publication Date: October 25, 1999

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B003K16PB4

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #57,813 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #5

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## Customer Reviews

I was asked to read this book for school. I wasn't feeling terribly excited to do so. I just have a hard time reading books for school, especially when they are not what I would normally read. However, I started reading this book and I finished half of it in one sitting, going well over and above what was

assigned reading. I finished the book in two goes. It was engaging and interesting. This book was powerful and insightful and really helped me to understand the plight of the migrant worker and his family, especially the children of migrant workers. I am planning to buy the other books in the series even though they are not assigned to me, just to understand how this remarkable man came from nothing to a college professor in his life. I was very happy with this book.

This is a collection of short stories based on real life. Mr. Jimenez was born in Mexico, and came to California as a young boy with his parents. They were undocumented workers. Eventually he became not only a citizen, but a professor at Santa Clara University in California. These stories, based on his own life, and the lives of his friends and relatives, give an immediate entrance into the world of the migrant worker. How hard it was to make a living, how difficult to attend school, to make friends, to become educated. How impossible to keep promises made. This is a collection of compelling stories, that will make you laugh, and make you cry. It tells about the people who pick the lettuce in the salad you just ate, the cotton in that tee-shirt you're wearing, the oranges in your juicer. If you've never thought about who picks those cherries you're eating right now, this book will give you those thoughts. It is a delightful book, filled with love, tenderness, compassion, and passion. This book will introduce you to the people who work the fields, cook our meals, wait our tables, who go unnoticed unless it is politically expedient to see them. O. Henry wrote "Gift of the Magi" which is marvelous; Dr. Jimenez wrote "Christmas Gift" which will be the Star in your night! It is now August, and Christmas is a few days down the calendar, but now is the time to start buying those stocking stuffers, and this is certainly one you want get as many copies as you need for all those stockings you need to stuff!

I have read this book multiple times, since I have used it as a read-aloud for intermediate students as well as in book groups with adult ESL students. I love how the books grow in sophistication with Panchito, who wrote the books as an adult, using notebooks he kept as a young man, as well as his memory. This book, the first, is very simply written, and the second, about his high school years, grows more explicit about the barriers he faced as a boy from a migrant-worker family. The third and fourth books deal with his time at Santa Clara University, and his graduate time at Columbia in New York. As a frequent reader of the series, and particularly this book, I can state that I have never grown tired of the story, from Panchito's memories of the train trip to Tijuana to crawl under a fence to be met by a coyote who would take the family to the fruit fields, to his first day at school in a time before bilingual education, to his growth in conscience and social awareness, to the family's

eventual deportation. These are great books, especially in this time when empathy for "economic refugees" seems in short supply in our nation's political life.

The trials of this little boy and his family were often heart-rending. Their work ethic in satisfying their employers and overseers as well as trying to create decent living conditions in deplorable conditions was inspiring. After reading his story, I felt great sadness for the people who travel from place to place to make a bare living and find the lives of the children especially horrendous. They lacked a sufficient education, friendships, and normality in their lives. Jimenez has written several other books that I am especially interested in reading.

I read this book as required summer reading with little to no expectations. The reviews from my older classmates about this book had been mostly negative, so I wasn't very thrilled going into this read. After finishing the book I have a POV of my own that is very different from my classmates. I enjoy how the story is told in many different short stories each with their own meaning and relevance in the author's life. I enjoy how, this book may not be directly related to me and my story it gives me a mere glance into someone else's world that I didn't even know existed. In conclusion this story is one of triumph and heartbreak that culminates in a true masterpiece.

I loved and hated *The Circuit*. I loved reading the words that were so clear I could see the movie in my head. At the same time I hated reading about the suffering of my people. I am honored to have read your words and am so proud of you for all you've accomplished. Incidentally, my daughter is a junior at Santa Clara.

I loved reading this book by Francisco Jimenez. He does a great job of showing the life of the migrant workers through the perspective of a child growing up and going to school in California. His story is genuine and simple and easy to follow. As a future educator I think this is a great book that can bring the Hispanic culture to the classroom. I come from a Hispanic culture/migrant worker family and I was able to relate to the story. I think that schools need more stories like these so that the students feel part of the classroom. I think it would be great if the students' culture be part of the classroom. I think that if someone wants to be more informed about the migrant population this is the book for you!

True life stories growing up as the child of migrant workers . Told in a journal like fashion . Gave me

some insight as to how my father and siblings spent there summers for 5 years .

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