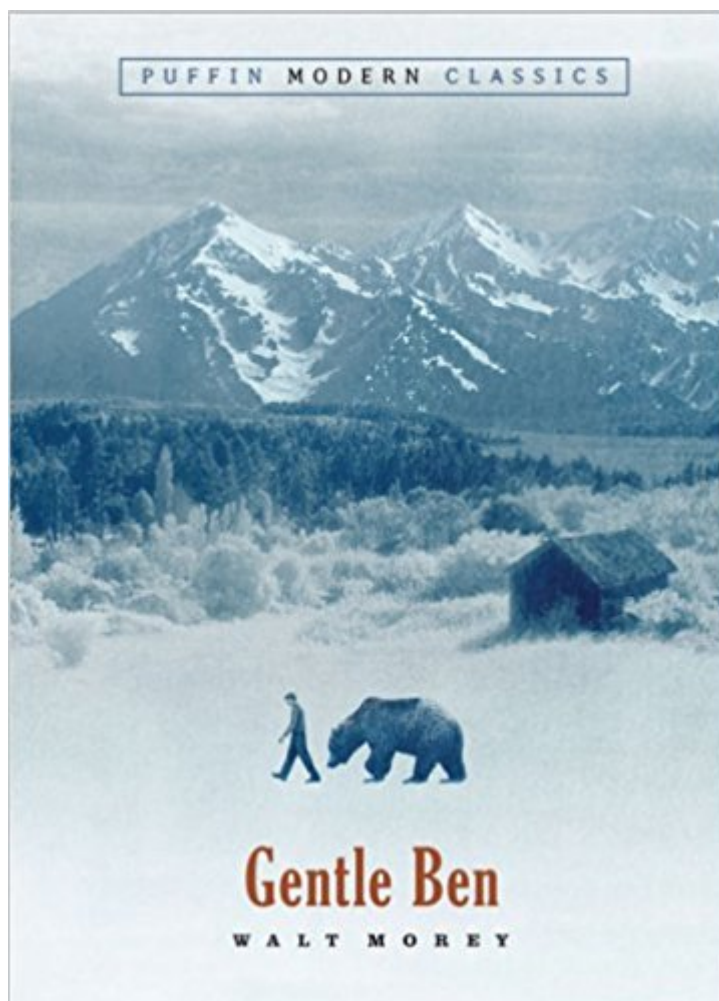


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# Gentle Ben (Puffin Modern Classics)



## Synopsis

The Alaskan wilderness is a lonely place for Mark Andersen, especially after the death of his brother. But Mark finds a friend named Ben, who happens to be an Alaskan brown bear. Ben and Mark form a special bond, but the townspeople are determined to destroy it. It is only through the strength of an enduring friendship that Ben and Mark have a chance of being saved.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0740 (What's this?)

Series: Puffin Modern Classics

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reissue edition (February 2, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142405515

ISBN-13: 978-0142405512

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.5 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 53 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #93,644 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #114 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Death & Dying #275 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Boys & Men #346 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Bears

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

"More than a fine animal story. Gentle Ben is a memorable reading experience." Library Journal

Walt Morey was an award-winning author of numerous works of children's fiction set in the U.S. Pacific Northwest and Alaska, the places where Morey lived for all of his life. His book *Gentle Ben* was the basis for the 1967 movie *Gentle Giant* and the 1967-1969 television show *Gentle Ben*.

Mark, 13, lives in Orca City, a coastal town in Alaska. His father, Karl, is a seine fisherman getting ready for the yearly salmon run. Fishermen in these parts have to make their annual wages in the next six weeks. After returning from school, Mark goes to visit Ben, a brown bear. Ben was captured as a cub by Fog Benson five years ago. He has been kept captive in a dark shed with little food. Mark brings him spare sandwiches and lets him have some sunshine all the time wishing that Ben was his. Mark knows just how to tickle Ben's ears and if he scratches him under the chin, Ben will stretch it out further and start grunting like a pig! Imagine Mark's surprise when his dad says that Fog has been trying to sell Ben for \$100. With no interest he is now trying to sell tickets for \$5 each. The winner gets to set Ben free and use him for target practice! Another surprise follows when Mark's mom tells him and his dad that she knows Mark has been spending his time with Ben. Can she persuade her husband that this is just what Mark needs. The doctor has said that Mark is showing the signs of TB like his deceased brother, Jamie. Prescription? Plenty of fresh air and exercise. When Mark tries to set Ben free, Karl makes Mark bring him back. Why? A good lesson on doing things honestly. What are the conditions that Karl puts in place in order for Mark to own Ben? Karl, unlike Mark and Ellen (mom), doesn't trust the Brownie so follows with rifle in hand when Mark takes Ben down to the tundra and creek. He can't believe that he is truly like a pet. When Karl's not available, Clearwater, a friend of the family goes. Lovely to watch how Clearwater goes from scared to convinced! Having been captive so long and taken from his mother at an early age, Ben doesn't know how to fish. Who will teach him and how? Another encounter with a drunken Fog Benson and his friends changes Ben's life forever. You'll likely feel some tears trickling in this section. I'm not going to ruin the suspense by giving you anymore of the story but this is a MUST read for all families! (What I have described is just the beginning. There is so much more!) We read it as a read aloud to our 13, 10 and 7 year old. We were ALL captivated. The author does an incredible job of describing not only the area but the people and of course Ben. However, it is not over described allowing your imagination to kick in. There are a few illustrations in the book to help the reader see how truly massive Ben was compared to his human companions. We see Mark, a somewhat naive, pale, 13 year old at the beginning of the story turn into a responsible teenager. The happenings in this book and the subsequent consequences were not easy to live with but Mark, encouraged by his parents, did what was right. This story does have a happy ending so your tears will have dried up. Grab a copy today, you won't be sorry. We purchased this book at full price. We were not required to write a review but chose to do so. Thanks, Liz

two thumbs up by my granddaughter age 12

A classic that is still relevant today. A gripping story. Perfect for kids 11 and up.

A fun read for reading group. Feel good ending.

This book changed my life. It helped me develop a deep love for nature and animals, as well as adventure. It holds all the emotions and is very well written for young adult readers and even adult readers who want to explore back to another time. Highly recommended. Patrick Michael

Murphy

### ACROSS THE DESPERATE MILES

Excellent condition and loved the book

I have reread this novel many times, beginning with my children and now in my old age. It encourages the best in people and caring for animals. This is indeed a unique relationship with a wild animal, but shows the value and many lessons we learn from them, and for caring for them. In a desensitized world in which we live, we recognize basic moral values of honesty, work ethics, and great loyalty to family, animals and environment in this well written novel.

Unlike many other animal-human bond stories, this is geared for both adults and kids, individuals and societies. Well written, captures feelings and the environment of the story, and a great easy-to-follow style.

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