CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates

Mary Mapes Dodge · *1865 · original English text*

On a bright December morning long ago, two thinly clad children were kneeling upon the bank of a frozen canal in Holland. Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates, is Dodge's complete story of a poor Dutch brother and sister, a father's injury, and a race whose prize is not the only recovery in the book.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

What is a silver prize worth beside a father's mind restored, and how should a story of Dutch canals be read as a family novel, not as a travelogue only?

"On a bright December morning long ago, two thinly clad children were kneeling upon the bank of a frozen canal in Holland."
The opening of the tale proper, after the preface

The hosted text is Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates (1865, PG #764), complete as Dodge's novel. The tale proper opens exactly, including "two thinly clad children" and "a frozen canal in Holland." A preface on Dutch customs stands before this opening; quote the tale, or quote the preface only if the stretch appears in both files. Excellent for a wide younger and middle band. The famous dike story is a tale told inside the book, not the frame plot; keep that distinction. Quote this typography.

KEY CHARACTERS

Hans Brinker
The thinly clad boy on the canal bank, whose work and hope carry much of the book.

Gretel
His sister, the other child kneeling on the frozen bank.

the father, and Dame Brinker
The injured father whose memory is the family's wound, and the mother who keeps the household.

the friends of the race
The other Dutch children, and the doctor, who share the later hope.

A FROZEN CANAL

> *"On a bright December morning long ago, two thinly clad children were kneeling upon the bank of a frozen canal in Holland."*
> The opening of the tale proper

Grades 3–5
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
A Frozen Canal
THE OPENING OF THE TALE PROPER

On a bright December morning long ago, two thinly clad children were kneeling upon the bank of a frozen canal in Holland. The sun had not yet appeared. The book begins in poverty, and in winter work, not in the race only.

- The opening is exact in both witnesses.
- The two children are Hans and Gretel.
- Excellent for a wide younger and middle band.

> *"On a bright December morning long ago, two thinly clad children were kneeling upon the bank of a frozen canal in Holland."*
> The opening of the tale proper

02
A Father's Injury, and a Family
THE MIDDLE OF THE BOOK

The Brinkers' poverty is bound to the father's injury and lost memory. The silver skates are a hope, but the family's need is larger than a race. Teach the domestic plot as the spine of the book.

- Do not flatten the novel into the race only.
- A preface on Dutch customs is not the tale; quote the tale proper.
- A wide younger and middle band can read this with help.

03
The Race, and a Recovery
THE LATER BOOK

The race comes, and so does a hope of healing. The famous dike story is a tale told inside the book, not the frame plot; keep that distinction. The close belongs to the family as well as to the prize.

- The dike story is an inset tale, not the whole novel.
- Map the complete book, including the father's recovery as Dodge writes it.
- Cite this typography.

04
A Complete 1865 Novel
THE HOSTED FILE

PG #764 and the site EPUB are this complete book. Quote stretches that appear in both, from the tale proper.

- Complete Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates.
- For a wide younger and middle band.
- The opening is a bright December morning long ago.

A Family's Need · A Frozen Canal · A Prize, and a Healing · Work and Hope · A Dutch Winter

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 3–5

1. The hosted text is Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates (1865, Project Gutenberg #764), complete as Dodge's novel. The tale proper opens exactly: "On a bright December morning long ago, two thinly clad children were kneeling upon the bank of a frozen canal in Holland." A preface on Dutch customs stands before this opening; quote the tale, or quote the preface only if the stretch appears in both files.
2. Excellent for a wide younger and middle band. The famous dike story is a tale told inside the book, not the frame plot; keep that distinction. Do not flatten the novel into the race only.
3. Quote stretches that appear in both the Gutenberg text and the site EPUB.

Quotations are verbatim from the original English text, Project Gutenberg #764, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/hans-brinker/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.