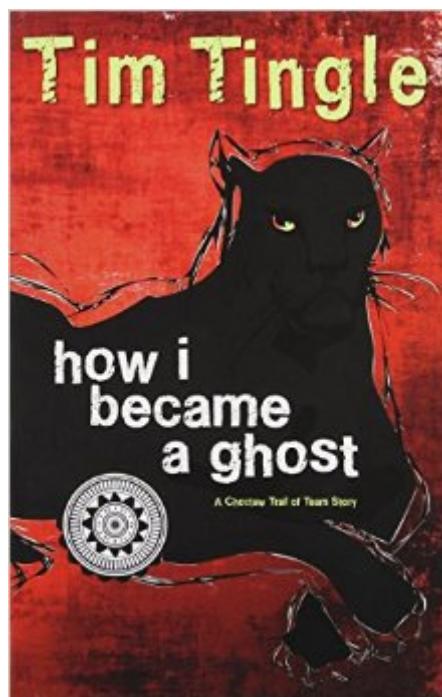


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# How I Became A Ghost - A Choctaw Trail Of Tears Story (Book 1 In The How I Became A Ghost Series)



## Synopsis

A Choctaw boy tells the story of his tribe's removal from its Mississippi homeland, and how its exodus to the American West led him to become a ghost --one able to help those left behind.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 480 (What's this?)

Series: Book 1 in the How I Became A Ghost Series

Paperback: 141 pages

Publisher: Roadrunner Press (September 8, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1937054551

ISBN-13: 978-1937054557

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.5 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (25 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #43,917 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans #65 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s #284 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Spine-Chilling Horror

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

This middle level book complete with engaging characters, an aggressive plot, and, yes, ghosts of one sort and another, shows Tingle's mastery of historical fiction. Set in the actual walking of the Trail of Tears, the very personable and smart main character - and his family - are engaged in the mosh pit of history that surrounds all people all the time; but, this history is personal for Tingle. I gave the book to my eleven year old grand-daughter and it scared her. Why? Because 11 year olds most often know a traditional Thanksgiving version of the First Nations. Yet, 11 year olds are so capable of understanding the long range conflict brought about by the European settlement of this continent. She and I talked about Tim Tingle's imagination and how he constructed the narrative so that it was true to Choctaw thinking and history, and why ghosts might be part of that thinking and history. I asked her if she liked the characters, and she did.....because they were strong, clever, and determined.

Though *How I Became a Ghost* is listed as a middle grade novel, its attraction goes far beyond the target audience. This is truly a great work with crossover appeal, for early teen through adult readers. In fact, in a culture where everything must be labeled, this book transcends labels. When all the elements are considered, the reader is treated to quite the literary buffet. The story is a rich exploration of Choctaw history and culture, family roles and dynamics, coming of age, generational wisdom, supernatural fiction, classic struggle of good versus evil, ecology, the hero's journey, transformation and redemption...yet to focus your lens too sharply on any one part is to lose sight of the greater merit of this amazing work. It is written from the perspective of the main character, a 10 year old boy, in a deceptively naive, at times even lighthearted voice--one that is capable of finding humor even in the most dire situations. Yet the boy, who is thrust into tragic circumstances, seems to comprehend their severity and responds with maturity and resolve that both reflect and go beyond his age. It is a delicate balancing act that Tim Tingle's fluid narrative walks with passion and dexterity. Don't be fooled by its easy, and even sparse, conversational style, *How I Became a Ghost* plays masterfully on a broad range of human emotions. This is storytelling at its finest--put it on the top of your "must read--now" list. It is a book that will stay with you long after you finish it.

Master storyteller and award winning author Tim Tingle weaves history, Choctaw culture, stories told to him by his ancestors, and humor into this "can't put it down," middle level novel. Compelling characters and fast-paced plot lay the groundwork for Tingle to introduce an oft overlooked part of history--The Trail of Tears. Tingle's use of ghosts and aptly placed humor, to tell this difficult part of history, is genius. The wisdom imparted in this novel is timeless--" 'Son,' he said, 'you cannot keep your eyes on the bloody footprints you have left behind you. You must keep your eyes on where you are going.' "From the very first sentence--"Maybe you have never read a book written by a ghost before"--to the last, Tingle takes middle level readers and adults alike on a journey we might not otherwise choose to take. His characters are strong and determined, and wise beyond their years. This first book in the trilogy left me wanting more of Nita, Naomi, Joseph, Isaac, and of course Jumper, the talking dog, as they make the long and arduous journey to Oklahoma. I can hardly wait for the next book in the *How I Became a Ghost* series!

"How I Became A Ghost" swept me right onto the Trail Of Tears more deftly than anything ever has. Because it comes from a ten-year old boy's point-of-view it has that rare childlike innocence, candor and vulnerability that much of the world's best storytelling does. I quickly cared deeply about Isaac,

its narrator, as well as his family and friends. I was plunged deeply and vividly into Choctaw culture and cosmology as an observer rather than as one being instructed. Choctaw cosmology and spirituality is like unto the great Japanese filmmaker, Miyazaki's, but because of the "Choctaw Way" and their vibrant Christian faith, it perhaps feels even more like the cosmology of the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament. Yet it is completely enculturated and rings so very true. I felt like I was walking the trail with Isaac and his loved ones so the book quickly becomes quite the page-turner. I give it my highest recommendation!

What a great gift! I've read few middle grade novels in my time. I don't remember the category when I was in junior high in the early 60's. If a friend, who is Choctaw Indian, had not given me this book, I would never have picked it up. I had no intention of reading it, till I turned to the first page and read the following: "Maybe you have never read a book written by a ghost before. I'm a ghost." Now I'm an old Alfred Hitchcock fan. How could I not continue reading? I'm also a dog lover, so I understand about talking dogs. This book pulled me in so deep. It also deepened my friendship. Our conversations are different. I ask more, talk less, listen more. This is a moving and unforgettable book. Before reading it, I knew nothing of the Trail of Tears. I am in awe and can't wait for the next book. Isaac is my newest hero and this book needs to be a movie!

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